

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

JUNE 25

MONDAY

All Solomon's cups and glasses were made of pure gold. He had ships out on the seas, and every three years, they would return loaded with gold, ivory, silver, apes, and peacocks! Having an abundance of all these things marked him as the richest king on earth. His wisdom marked him as the wisest king on earth.

READ: I Kings 10:21-23

From the items listed, and with the three year time frame in mind, Solomon's ships were traveling down the western shore of Africa and trading along the coast. In other words, his influence was huge. Even trading partners in Africa came to know of Solomon. They could only imagine his wealth. Where his wealth is mentioned, so is his wisdom! Part of Solomon's heritage and story had to do with the wisdom that comes from Above. Do any of us need wisdom? Let us ask it of God for He gives it.

TUESDAY

Additional wealth came into Solomon's treasury as his fame spread far and wide, and others came to Jerusalem to pay homage to him. They all brought valuable gifts. He also had a great number of horses and chariots, and had, apparently, had entire cities built to stable the horses and keep the chariots.

READ: I Kings 10:24-26

1,400 chariots was a huge army! 12,000 horses was an astounding number, as well. How did Solomon ever acquire such a force? Part of the answer, at least, is connected here to the gifts everyone brought to him. Solomon used his wealth to buy horses and chariots. The problem was this: God had strictly forbid Solomon from gathering to himself an abundance of horses. When God delivered Israel from any enemies, He did not want the glory to go the cavalry! Solomon ignores what God has said in order to do what kings do - they build up the military. Solomon begins to slide from the path he started out on so well, as his choices in life are more and more centered in his own glory and happiness.

WEDNESDAY

Beautiful and expensive things were seen everywhere in Jerusalem - and became as common as stones, we read. As a business, Solomon imported horses and chariots from Egypt and Kue and then re-sold them to the Hittites and the Arameans.

READ: I Kings 10:27-29

Solomon promoted business knowing that healthy businesses promote a healthy government. In other words, his wisdom extended even into the business world. God will help you when it comes to business and money matters. His wisdom reaches to every corner of our lives. He cares for you today, and would be the God of every phase of your life - as we surrender ourselves to Him.

THURSDAY

Solomon had many wives - 700 altogether - and another 300 concubines. Many were from other countries (part of a treaty in some cases). These wives turned Solomon's heart from the Lord. God had warned Israel that such a thing would happen if they married wives from un-believing nations, but Solomon disregarded what God said, and did what he wanted. We're told that he held fast to his wives. He was not about to give them up regardless of what might happen.

READ: I Kings 11:1-3

A sad affair. Solomon throws his wisdom to the winds - he ignores what God had said about avoiding alliances with the heathen nations around Israel and he marries 700 wives! And these wives turn his heart from the Lord. How much pain and sorrow these wives brought into Solomon's life. A great start turned into a sad ending. How important is it for us to follow the Lord? I can think of 700 reasons! (and 300 more!)

FRIDAY

In the previous verses, we read that despite God's warnings that marrying heathen women would cause His people to follow after their false gods, Solomon took 1000 wives and concubines. Now, here, we read that what God had warned against, came to pass: his women turned Solomon's heart away from the Lord.

READ: I Kings 11:4-6

Notice the emphasis on Solomon's incomplete obedience. He was not wholly devoted to the Lord; he did not follow the Lord fully. It sounds as if, in some ways, Solomon continued to do what he had always done when it came to his worship of God. That is, in some ways, on the surface at least, everything appeared okay. But God is not impressed with "okay" and is not fooled by outward appearances. He's the searcher of the heart! Your heart and mine are being searched by God! That is why we do well to start each day by praying, "Clean my heart, O God."

SATURDAY

To please his wives, many of whom were apparently from Moab and Edom, where Chemosh was worshiped, Solomon built a high place (a temple of some sort?) for Chemosh. He built it on a mountain just east of Zion - God's holy mount.

READ: I Kings 11:7-8

Do not imagine that God is making a mountain out of a molehill - that what Solomon did wasn't all that bad. He built the temple to Chemosh! God earlier called Chemosh "an abomination to Edom". And he built the temple to the east! That's the direction God instructed His own Temple face. For us, east is also the direction of the rising sun - a daily reminder of the daily provision of God, and of his faithfulness day-by-day. And the eastern sky is a daily reminder that our Redemption draweth near!