

WHO WAS SOLOMON?

Solomon was one of the sons of the great king David. Solomon was the third king of Israel. In fact Israel only had a king because they were envious of the nations around them who already had kings. Israel had decided that they no longer wanted just God – they also wanted a king. Solomon became king in around 970 AD and reigned for about 40 years. When he came to the throne, Solomon was quick to get rid of his rivals and enemies. He also married the daughter of the Pharaoh, traded widely and brought a period of peace and calm to Israel that was rarely found even in the days of David. Solomon was also a writer, writing at least 2 Psalms plus many passages in the book of Proverbs.

WHAT ABOUT SOLOMON?

When David was dying, he spoke to Solomon. In 1 Kings Chapter 2 David said, 'Do what the Lord your God commands and follow his teachings. Obey everything written in the Law of Moses. Then you will be a success, no matter what you do or where you go.' The scene was set. David had told Solomon that if he obeyed God, he would be a success. This was not the only time that God made this known to Solomon.

In 1 Kings 3 we read that one night, God appeared to Solomon in a dream. He said this:

'Solomon, ask for anything you want, and I will give it to you.' Solomon replied, 'Please make me wise and teach me the difference between right and wrong. Then I will know how to rule your people. If you don't, there is no way I could rule this great nation of yours.' God said to Solomon that he was pleased with what Solomon had asked for and because he asked for wisdom and not riches, God said, 'I'll make you wiser than anyone who has ever lived or ever will live. I'll give you what you didn't ask for.' By this God meant riches, respect, long life and that Solomon would be a greater king than any other.

Solomon was indeed the wisest man around. In 1 Kings 4 we read that Solomon's wisdom exceeded all known human wisdom. We also learn that Solomon built the Temple of the Lord. He was also very wealthy – he got 27,000 Kg gold each year. We read in verse 20 that, 'no other throne in the world was like Solomon's.'

HOWEVER..

As we move on throughout the reign of Solomon we see that he turns away from God. What does he do? He starts to worship the gods of his wives and even puts up statues to these gods. Unlike king David who worshipped God only, Solomon disobeys God and follows worthless things. This is despite God appearing to Solomon again in a dream and once again telling Solomon that he must obey God like his father David and follow God's teachings. If he doesn't the nation of Israel will become a joke and Jerusalem will be destroyed. But Solomon ignores this and when he dies and his son Rehoboam comes to power, the nation of Israel splits into 2 kingdoms and is torn by war and bad kings.

SO WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS?

1. We can learn that God is a good God. If we put him first in our lives and follow him, then we won't need to worry about money or clothes because God will provide for us.

Luke 12:30-31, 'Don't worry about having something to eat or drink, your Father God knows what you need. But put God's work first, and these things will be yours as well.'

2. God is a faithful God. If we put our trust in him, he will do exactly as he promises. That's pretty unusual today in our world. Remember that God loves everyone really deeply. If you laugh, so does God. If you cry, so does God. God didn't create us and forget about us, he cares passionately for us and communicates with us daily if we let him.

3. God doesn't necessarily promise us riches on earth but in heaven. In Luke 12:33, Jesus said that we should steal up our treasures in heaven where thieves cannot nick it. What does this mean? It means we should follow Jesus and do what he says. If we do we are guaranteed that one day we will be given far more than we have now.

4. We also learn that we should follow God, and follow God alone. There is nothing else that will give us the same satisfaction, nothing else that matters more than God. God loved us so much his own son was killed before his eyes. That's how much he loves us. But we should fear God. God does exactly as he says and if we disobey him and ignore him, our lives won't be anywhere near as good. If we do obey, we will get more and do more than we ever thought possible.

5. We can also see that we need God in our lives. When Solomon spoke to God, he said that he needed wisdom because otherwise he wouldn't be able to rule Israel on his own. We need to recognise that God is the truth, and that we need him in every aspect of our lives. Without him, we are simply not human in the true sense of the word. Without him we are unlikely to have the strength to continue if times get hard. Without him, the enjoyable times won't be anywhere near as fulfilling.

SO..

1. Put God first in your life.

2. Psalm 37:4, 'Do what the Lord wants, and he will give you your heart's desire.'

3. Do the things that Jesus did, and would do if he were here now. Wisdom is doing now what you'll be glad you did when you look back in the future

4. Follow God alone (he's so much bigger than following someone on social media!) and life will be way more rewarding.

5. We need God in our lives so much. Just ask him to be fill you in every way and in all that you do.