

God's Providence in God's People

Contra Costa Gospel Church
Adult Sunday School

SOLOMON

King David was the greatest king of Israel, but he was not the one that would fulfill the mission of building the Lord a house; that was up to his son, Solomon. Solomon was poised to be the man that would fulfill not only the role of "Temple Builder" but also was a leading candidate for "Son of God." Could he be the one that would restore the former glory of Israel and usher in an age of peace?

- 1) Solomon is a perfect example of someone with great potential, much of which is unrealized because of his own shortcomings. This is what makes him frustratingly capable. How does the author describe Solomon's potential for being a great ruler? See the following passages and summarize what qualifications are described here:
 - a. 1 Kings 1:29-30

 - b. 1 Kings 1:50-53

 - c. 1 Kings 2:5-9

 - d. 1 Kings 2:36-46

 - e. 1 Kings 3:5-14

 - f. 1 Kings 4:21-34

- 2) At the same time, with boundless potential and the opportunity to be more faithful to the Lord than his father, the author shows us that he is not immune to shortcomings. These are what make the reader still long for someone better, despite the fact that he is already so qualified. Read these passages and identify what shortcoming the author points out in each:
 - a. 1 Kings 3:1

 - b. 1 Kings 3:3-4

 - c. 1 Kings 6:38-7:1

- 3) As Solomon's kingdom grows so does his fame. Read 1 Kings 10:1-9.
- a. In Matthew 12:42, Jesus refers to this incident in His condemnation of the Pharisees (read Matthew 12:38-42). How are the "men of Nineveh" like the "Queen of the South"? What do they have in common?
 - b. Read also the account of the Ninevites' response in Jonah 3:1-10. How would you characterize their response to the preaching of Jonah? How is this response similar to the response of the Queen of the South in 1 Kings 10?
 - c. What is Jesus' teaching point in Matthew 12:41-42?

At the very moment that Solomon distinguishes himself as a man of wisdom, power, glory, and fame, the author reminds us that he is still merely a sin-cursed man, prone to the same flaws as his father. Read 1 Kings 11:1-6. This results in the splitting of the Kingdom of Israel into the Northern Kingdom (called *Israel* or *Samaria* henceforth) and the Southern Kingdom (called *Judah*). The people of Israel were divided into these two nations for the next several hundred years: "So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day" (1 Kings 12:19).

We come to the end of this long saga. We started with the first people, Adam and his wife Eve, and their children. The intent was to create a people for Himself, but Adam and Eve dashed that hope with their rebellion.

Their sons failed in the same regard through their rebellion.

Noah had an opportunity to salvage mankind and start anew, but failed because of his rebellion and sin.

Abraham was given grace upon grace and acted unbecomingly time and time again.

His descendants, the forefathers of Israel, each acted in one way or another, less than honorably. And they failed to be the leader Israel hoped for because of their sin.

Moses failed to lead Israel rightly because of his sin.

Joshua led Israel well, but only in so far as to take over the physical land of Canaan, doing nothing for the sin that resided in their hearts.

The Judges fought hard and well, but were so filled with flaws and imperfections that they could not have been Israel's promised savior.

Saul looked the part and was chosen by the people, but he failed miserably to be the man that Israel needed to lead her.

David and Solomon, each with so much potential and so much right about them, still fell short of being the *man* because of their lust and the corruption that resided in their hearts.

All of these individuals were woven together as characters in this grand "story" in order to point us to *the* individual who is better than all of them, more qualified than all of them, and worthy of more honor and glory than all of them. You know His name...