

1. The Life of Solomon

Solomon was born into royalty. He was King David's son. He became king at a young age (**1 Kings 1:33-40 Solomon made King at young age**).

When Solomon's reign began, God appeared to him in a dream. God asked him for whatever he wanted and he would give it to him. Solomon was young and humble. He answered by saying that he is just a little child and doesn't know how to be king. So, he just asked God for wisdom and discernment. God was impressed with Solomon's humbleness and not only granted his request of wisdom and discernment, but also gave him wealth and honor (**1 Kings 3:5-14 God granted wisdom, wealth, and honor**).

In the fourth year of Solomon's reign, Solomon began to build the temple of the Lord. He built it with all the specifications from God. He put the Ark of the Covenant in the temple as instructed by God. It took seven years to complete it (**1 Kings 6:36-38 Solomon built Temple of the Lord**).

Solomon also built a royal palace for himself. It took him thirteen years to build his palace (**1 Kings 7:1 Solomon built palace for himself**).

Building the temple and palace was Solomon's focus and was all he had all he had desired. Once the temple of the Lord and royal palace was completed, God appeared to Solomon a second time (**1 Kings 9:1-9 God appeared again and gave warning**). God told Solomon that he had consecrated the temple and that his heart and eyes will be there always. He also warned Solomon to observe his laws and commandments. Failing to do so and turning to other gods would cause Israel to be cut off from the land and the temple would be rejected. Therefore, Solomon was well aware of God's commandments and consequences of not obeying them.

The Lord had told the Israelites not to intermarry with foreign women, because these women would turn their hearts after their gods. However, Solomon still loved women from other nations and had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines (**1 Kings 11:1-3 Solomon married foreign women**).

As God warned, Solomon's foreign wives turned his heart after other gods (**1 Kings 11: 4-12 Solomon worshiped other gods**). He followed Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek, the detestable god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord became very angry and told Solomon he will most certainly tear the kingdom away from Israel. Nevertheless, for the sake of David his father, he would not do it during Solomon's lifetime. He will tear it out of the hand of Solomon's son.

Solomon reigned in Jerusalem for forty years. Then he died (**1 Kings 11: 42-43 Solomon died after reigning 40 years**) and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David.

When I first read about Solomon, I was perplexed how a person so full of wisdom could do something so stupid. But now I think of Solomon's life a little differently. He was given so much at such an early age. Being that he had everything he could ever want, he really had nothing to strive for except building the temple and palace. Once that was done, even though he was a great king, he must have felt his life had no purpose. He also may have felt that he was denied a childhood and never got to just have fun like the other children. Striving to fill a void in his heart, he turned to foreign women and gods. Makes me feel grateful for my hardships and trials, for they make me turn to God and God goes through them with me, strengthening me.

Scripture 1. Solomon made king at young age.

1 Kings 1:33-40 he (King David) said to them: "Take your lord's servants with you and have Solomon my son mount my own mule and take him down to Gihon. 34 There have Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel. Blow the trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35 Then you are to go up with him, and he is to come and sit on my throne and reign in my place. I have appointed him ruler over Israel and Judah." 36 Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, "Amen! May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, so declare it. 37 As the LORD was with my lord the king, so may he be with Solomon to make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord King David!" 38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon mount King David's mule, and they escorted him to Gihon. 39 Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" 40 And all the people went up after him, playing pipes and rejoicing greatly, so that the ground shook with the sound.

Scripture 2. God granted wisdom, wealth, and honor.

1 Kings 3:5-14 5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." 6 Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. 7 "Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. 8 Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. 9 So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?" 10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. 11 So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, 12 I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. 13 Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. 14 And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life."

Scripture 3. Solomon built Temple of the Lord

1 Kings 6:36-38 36 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, the second month, he began to build the temple of the LORD. 37 The foundation of the temple of the LORD was laid in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv. 38 In the eleventh year in the month of Build, the eighth month, the temple was finished in all its details according to its specifications. He had spent seven years building it.

Scripture 4. Solomon built Palace for himself

1 Kings 7:1 It took Solomon thirteen years, however, to complete the construction of his palace.

Scripture 5. God appeared again and gave warning

1 Kings 9:1-9 When Solomon had finished building the temple of the LORD and the royal palace, and had achieved all he had desired to do,² the LORD appeared to him a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon.³ The LORD said to him: "I have heard the prayer and plea you have made before me; I have consecrated this temple, which you have built, by putting my Name there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there.⁴ "As for you, if you walk before me faithfully with integrity of heart and uprightness, as David your father did, and do all I command and observe my decrees and laws,⁵ I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, 'You shall never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.'⁶ "But if you or your descendants turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them,⁷ then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples.⁸ This temple will become a heap of rubble. All who pass by will be appalled and will scoff and say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this temple?'⁹ People will answer, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD their God, who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, worshipping and serving them—that is why the LORD brought all this disaster on them.' "

Scripture 6. Solomon married foreign women

1 Kings 11:1 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. ² They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. ³ He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.

Scripture 7. Solomon worshiped other gods

1 Kings 11: 4-12 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.⁵ He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites.⁶ So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.⁷ On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites.⁸ He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.⁹ The LORD became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.¹⁰ Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the LORD's command.¹¹ So the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates.¹² Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will not do it during your lifetime. I will tear it out of the hand of your son.

Scripture 8. Solomon died after reigning 40 years

1 Kings 11: 42-43 Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ⁴³ Then he rested with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king.