

King solomon: a history



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

King Solomon

King Solomon was the third and the greatest king of Israel. He " was the second son of David by his wife Bathsheba, and the acknowledged favourite of his father" (Oussani). Solomon is mostly known for his great wisdom and just soul. His main accomplishment, the construction of the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, also made him well-known and honorable among his people and among other nations as well. Apart from great wisdom, God also gave Solomon discerning heart, wealth, and honour, but still, at the end, this didn't prevent him from making the mistake of following other gods.

God played the major role in the king's life. Since the day Solomon was born, the LORD guided him through his righteous life; he made him a successful, wise and discerning ruler, helped govern the nation, and build the temple and the the palace in Jerusalem. The fact that Solomon asked God to give him wisdom to govern his people, not long and joyful life, great power and wealth, makes us admire the king and honour his purpose to put the prosperity of his people before his own needs.

Long before Solomon grew up and became a powerful king of Israel, we, the readers of the Bible, could foresee his upcoming success. God always was with him since the day he was born, " and because the LORD loved him, he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah" (2 Samuel 12: 25). The name Jedidiah means " loved by the LORD".

" Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the Earth" (1 Kings 4: 30). He used his astute and wise mind to rule over his nation and to educate people. He gave them useful knowledge about plants,

animals, birds, reptiles and fish. The king became famous and honourable, not only among his people, but also among other nations. "Man of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom" (1 Kings 4: 34).

Apart from having a great wisdom, Solomon was also a just and discerning judge. The scene in which two women ask him to decide who is the real mother of the child is the most famous example in which the king uses his discerning heart to judge people. Solomon didn't even need any evidences or the witnesses to make the right judgement.

Soon after ascending his father's throne, Solomon "began to build the Holy Temple" (Schoenber). He was controlling the whole process of building it. The temple and its construction were very important for the king. By this, he showed his gratitude towards God and also fulfilled the intention of his father David. It took Solomon seven years to build the temple. In the end he also brought up the ark of the LORD's covenant in it.

During his life, Solomon "composed 3,000 proverbs" (Shoenberg), which are mostly related to people's everyday life. Through centuries, his proverbs helped people telling them how to live a righteous and successful life and teaching them how to be right before God: "Do not envy a violent man or choose any of his ways, for the LORD detests a perverse man but takes the upright into his confidence" (Proverbs 3: 31-32) Nowadays, we can still extract some useful knowledge from these proverbs and use it to make our lives better.

One of the proverbs that we can find in the book of Proverbs tells: " The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline" (Proverbs 1: 7). After becoming familiar with this proverb and knowing that Solomon was wise, and that the LORD is a jealous God, the following question arises: " Why did Solomon follow other gods?" Only after God had punished him, Solomon understood that he did evil in the eyes of the LORD. Then, after Solomon's confessions, which were not completely sincere, God showed his mercy on the king, but after his death, the LORD divided the kingdom into two, and the son of Solomon got the smallest part of it.

According to the Bible, Solomon was the greatest king in the Old Testament, who " ruled over the people of Israel about three thousand years ago" (Maris). Thanks to his wise and discerning heart, that he got from the LORD, the king had no equals. Being a successful ruler and a just judge, Solomon taught people, had built the temple for the Name of the LORD his God in Jerusalem, and had written " 3, 000 proverbs" (Schoenberg). Despite of his great wisdom that was given to him by God, Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD and followed the gods of his wives. Still, he is remembered as a great and wise king. Wouldn't it be better if our governors would follow his example of being just and discerning towards the people?

References

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