

I KINGS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Kings chapter 3 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we saw last time, the reign of David is over and now Solomon his son is the king over Israel. And as he ascends to the throne his father, David, gives him some godly advise. He told him, **“I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; that the Lord may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,’ He said, ‘you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’”** I Kings 2:2-4.

In other words, be a man and follow the Lord. Don't let others influence you away from the Lord. Very wise words. Not only that, but David tells Solomon to tie up the loose ends, to take care of those who rebelled against the authority of David and that is exactly what Solomon does. Adonijah is executed for his rebellion. Abiathar the priest is removed from his position. Joab is executed for his rebellion. And Shimei, who cursed David, was executed for his rebellion. The kingdom is firmly established under Solomon, who may have only been some 15 to 20 years old at the most when he became king! And that may be one of the reasons he asks for godly wisdom to rule the nation and as much as God gave that to him, as we will see tonight, he did not apply it to his own life, his own walk with the Lord.

With that said, let's begin reading in I Kings chapter 3, starting in verse 1 and see some of the things that Solomon did that were right and some of the things that he did wrong so that we can learn from them and grow in our relationship with the Lord.

I KINGS 3

VERSE 1

1. First we see Solomon marry the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Now the reason he did this was not that he loved her, but I believe it was more of a political alliance. You see, if you married the daughter of a leader of another nation, chances are that they would not rise up against you and try to take over your kingdom, your land. Also, Egypt was not a powerhouse at this time and for them, this was also a good deal. The problem for Solomon and the children of Israel is that God had said that they were not to marry the people of Canaan, and in a sense Solomon obeyed that, he did not marry from the people of Canaan, but he disobeyed the spirit of what God was saying and married the Pharaoh's daughter!

Was this a big deal? Absolutely and we will see as we come to I Kings chapter 11 the result of these marriages to foreign women upon the life of Solomon and his relationship with the Lord. We read "**For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David.**" I Kings 11:4. How often we think that God's ways are unfair when in reality they are what is best for our lives, if we would only listen!

2. We also see Solomon begin a massive building project in the city of Jerusalem.

During the reign of David the city of Jerusalem was small, only some 2 city blocks long and 1/2 city block wide. And if you remember, David purchased not only the threshing floor of Araunah, but also the land around it, and now with that land, Solomon is expanding the city, building a wall around the city, and a house for himself and for God. When you look at what Solomon accomplished outwardly, it was very impressive as we will see, but spiritually speaking, he was very dry. His focus was taken off the Lord by trade, by wives, and by wealth! Everything that God warned the kings of Israel not to get involved in, he got involved in!

VERSES 2-3

1. What were these high places that are being spoken of? First of all the high places were nothing more than an elevated spot where pagan's worshiped their god's. They felt that being higher up you were closer to god, and if you were closer to god, then he might hear what you are saying to him. A sad day when the god you worship has a hearing problem, maybe he needs a hearing aide?

Here we see the children of Israel worshipping at these high places, how come? I think as they looked at Solomon, who was the king over Israel, they saw him sacrifice at these high places and thus, as the people watched Solomon, they followed his example and went to sacrifice at the high places. Understand that they were not worshipping foreign gods at this time, but the God of Israel. The problem with what they were doing was God had forbid this kind of behavior. I do realize that some feel that God was accepting this kind of worship because the temple was not built yet and once it is built, then they were to worship only at the temple, that was the central place of worship.

But listen to what instructions God gives the nation of Israel for what they were to do when they entered into the land of Canaan. We read in Deuteronomy 12:1-5, 13-14, **“These are the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things. But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His habitation, and there you shall go. . . . Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; but in the place which the LORD chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.”**

You see, God instructed them that once they entered the land they were not to do their own thing, but to worship Him according to the standards which He has set forth. God has a specific place where sacrifices and worship are to be done, in the tabernacle. And don't think that Solomon's behavior was benign, for it confused the people and he was leading them down a path in which one day they would not be sacrificing to the Lord, but to these foreign god's. And as much as Solomon loved the Lord, the Holy Spirit puts this word in there, "except" and that was the problem. As you open the door to compromise, it is hard to close it!

2. As you look at the church today there are many who want to worship God the way they want, and yet it is in direct opposition to what God has said, and thus, it is not true worship. Our worship of God must be centered in Christ and it must be done in truth, according to the Word of God. But instead, people today want to worship God through experience and thus, are they doing anything different than worshiping at the high places as we see here with the Children of Israel? I don't think so! It is as Morgan wrote, "The perils of mixed motives and a divided heart are terrible indeed."

VERSE 4

1. Keep in mind that the Ark of the Covenant was in Jerusalem, brought there by David according to II Samuel 6:17 and II Chronicles 1:4. But there was also a tent or tabernacle in Gibeon, which was located about 6 miles northwest of Jerusalem. And it seems that king Saul brought it there and we are told that Gibeon was the place that the offerings were made, according to I Chronicles 16:39-40.

VERSES 5-9

1. Here we see the Lord appear to Solomon in a dream, but why? Was it because he offered 1,000 burnt offerings on the altar? Absolutely not! It was because his heart was surrendered to God and the burnt offerings were just the manifestation of that! And the Lord asks Solomon what he would like, anything at all! Imagine that, he could ask for riches, kingdoms, wives, well, maybe not wives, but anything in the world he wanted and what does Solomon do? Solomon asks for, not knowledge but wisdom. Knowledge is information and wisdom is the application of that knowledge, knowing what to do with it! Solomon was young, maybe in his teens at this time and thus, it is easy to see why he would ask for this. But think about it, what if you were 30 or 40 or 50 or 60, could you rule over a kingdom or nation? I would want that godly wisdom to assist me in the job and I think you would too. The task seemed overwhelming by human standards, and he thus asks God for wisdom in leading this nation. The Hebrew literally says a “hearing heart.” Solomon wanted ears to hear the voice of God, so that the nation would not be lead by man, but by God through man. What a beautiful request for any leader to make, that they would be sensitive to the voice of God and then put that wisdom into action. Solomon wants to be able to discern between good and evil and that is a key component of leadership. Tragically, many leaders today do not have this discernment or they don’t have the courage to use it! And I am not speaking of the unsaved, but the Christian leaders! Solomon is asking for that kind of wisdom to tell between right and wrong, good and evil and we will see how the Lord responds to his request in a minute.

2. Have you ever wondered why God does not ask us what we want, to give us what is on our heart? Folk's, He has! In Matthew 7:7-11 Jesus tells us, **“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”** In other words, we need to bring our requests to the Lord and does that mean I can get anything I want? If I name it and claim it, blab it and grab it and put “In the name of Jesus!” on the end, the Lord has to give it to me? Absolutely not! We are not praying for our will to be done, but His. And when we say, “In the name of Jesus!” we are saying that we are praying as if Jesus would be praying, not self-centered but others centered. And if you don't believe that, then listen to what John tells us in I John 5:14-15, **“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.”** And The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“And this is the confidence (the assurance, the privilege of boldness) which we have in Him: [we are sure] that if we ask anything (make any request) according to His will (in agreement with His own plan), He listens to and hears us. And if (since) we [positively] know that He listens to us in whatever we ask, we also know [with settled and absolute knowledge] that we have [granted us as our present possessions] the requests made of Him.”**

May we not forget that, it is His will and not ours!

You see, what you pray for shows where your heart is. Where is your source of joy found? Is it the Lord or is it material things. Jesus rightly said in Matthew 6:19-21, **“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”** If your treasure is the Lord, then your prayers will reflect that. I am not saying we can't pray for our needs, but may they be what we need and not just what we want!

VERSES 10-15

1. God was pleased with Solomon's request and He granted him this wisdom. And Solomon did use this wisdom, as we will see in a minute. The problem for Solomon is that he did not apply it to his own life, his own walk with the Lord. I wonder if He prayed for a heart of worship if that deep walk with the Lord would not only have blessed him with godly wisdom, but also keep his walk with the Lord in line. Yes, he did not ask for fame or power or wealth for himself, but wisdom to rule a nation and that was good, but again, he fell far short of all that God had for him.

Listen to the summation of Solomon's life by Adam Clarke. He wrote, "Instead of being the *wisest* of men, did he not become more *brutish* than any man? Did he not even lose the *knowledge of his Creator*, and worship the abominations of the Moabites, Zidonians, and [so forth]? And was not such idolatry a proof of the *grossest stupidity*? How few proofs does his life give that the gracious purpose of God was fulfilled in him! He received *much*; but he would have received *much more*, had he been faithful to the grace given. No character in the sacred writings disappoints us more than the character of Solomon." He was given what he needed to walk with the Lord, but he did not apply to his life the things the Lord gave to him and that was truly tragic.

2. And God not only blessed him with this wisdom but also wealth, honor, so much so that there has never been a man like Solomon and there never will be another like him, except the Lord. And again, may we not forget what the Lord promises us as we seek Him first, seek His kingdom first, all the other things that we need will be provided for us, not wants but needs! And remember what Paul said in Ephesians 3:20-21, "**Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.**" What a promise that God has given to us, that He will and has provided exceedingly abundantly above all we could ever ask or think, super-abundantly!

3. As Solomon wakes up from this dream, as God says He will bless him, he goes back to Jerusalem and offers sacrifices unto the Lord. In fact, it was a celebration! Now what are these burnt offerings and peace offerings that he made to the Lord all about? Listen carefully.

A. BURNT OFFERING: It was an offering of consecration, that you were giving everything to the Lord. Thus, the entire sacrifice was roasted before the Lord.

B. PEACE OFFERING: This was a fellowship offering where some of the sacrifice was given to God, some to the priests, and some was given back to you. And as you ate this before the Lord it signified that you were one with the Lord.

4. Now that Solomon has received this gift from God, it was now time to put it into use, and in a very difficult situation, as we will see. Please understand that God does not bless us with things for ourselves, but to minister to others with, to bless them, encourage them, help them, correct them and-so-on. That is what we see here! It wasn't that Solomon went around with a tee shirt that said, "I'm the wisest man in the world!" No, he used the gift that was given to him and others saw that God had blessed him!

VERSES 16-22

1. This is obviously a very difficult situation for Solomon to make judgment on. Two harlots, both gave birth to sons within a three-day period. They lived together and one night one of the mothers rolled over and suffocated her child while she was sleeping. Now she took this dead child and switched him with the other child, hoping to fool her friend. But when she awoke and examined the child, she knew that this was not her son.

Now they are both saying that the living child is hers, and without the Jerry Springer Show and DNA testing, how in the world would this situation be solved? Simply, Solomon had something better than the Jerry Springer Show and DNA testing, he had the wisdom that came from the Lord! Listen to how he responds to this and look at the goodness and generosity of Solomon here. Think about how many kings would take the time to listen and try to settle this dispute, but he did. That should be a lesson for us, that no matter how insignificant to us the problem is, no matter how busy we are, we need to be there for people just as the Lord is there for us!

VERSES 23-27

1. When you first look at Solomon's solution to the problem it seemed foolish, reckless, dangerous and yet, it was the wisdom of God. You see, Solomon's solution to the problem was to cut the living child in two, and give each mother half of the child. Well you can imagine what the birth mom felt, and in no way was she going to let her child be put to death. So she tells Solomon to let the child live. The other mother, who has no real feelings toward this child, says that it is good to cut him in two. Thus, by their words Solomon was able to discern who the real mom was, and gave the child to the woman who requested the child to live. It is as John Trapp wrote in regards to this sword being brought to Solomon, "For what purpose? Thought the standers by; wondering and perhaps laughing within themselves. The actions of wise princes are riddles to vulgar constructions: nor is it for the shallow capacities of the multitude to fathom the deep projects of sovereign authority." Godly wisdom being manifested in the life of Solomon, just as God had promised him!

2. Now, how does this apply to us? What should we do when we are unable to discern in a given situation? Listen carefully; we are to bring out the ***SWORD!*** Now please don't go on-line and buy a sword and try to be Conan the Christian cutting up people to try to find the answer to the problem. What we are to use is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Allow God to speak to you through His Word and He will show you what needs to be done in a given situation. Even when things seem to be clouded over, as was the case with the situation that Solomon was in, God is able to see through it and if we have a "hearing heart" He will reveal to us the things we need to know and do.

Remember what Paul said in Hebrews 4:12-13, and this is from The Amplified Bible, "**For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart. And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open and exposed, naked and defenseless to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.**" If you want to find out answers to difficult situations, bring it to the Lord and bring out the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God and He will show you because nothing is hidden from Him!

3. Now look at how the people saw Solomon, not by what he was wearing, "I'm the wisest man in the world!" tee shirt, but his actions spoke volumes to the people, they will see how God has blessed him. Look at the next verse.

VERSE 28

1. When the people saw Solomon's counsel in this situation, they recognized that Solomon was not using human wisdom, but supernatural, divine wisdom to judge this nation by. They respected his position with a reverential fear. And thus, his fame spread far and wide so that many came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

2. Regarding this wisdom of Solomon, David Guzik tells us this interesting, non-biblical tidbit! He wrote:

The old Jewish rabbis loved to go beyond the Bible and spin legends about Solomon's wisdom. Ginzberg quotes one, telling of the time when a demon showed Solomon something he had never seen before - a Cainite, whom the demon brought up out of the ground, and Solomon immediately saw that he had two heads. When the Cainite wanted to return again, he could not go back to his dwelling place deep under the earth. So he married and had seven sons, one of whom also had two heads. When the two-headed father died, the two-headed son claimed a double share of the inheritance, but the other six brothers thought he should only get one. The Sanhedrin couldn't decide the case, so Solomon prayed for wisdom and finally poured hot water on one of the heads. When he did, both heads flinched and cried out, and from this Solomon deduced that they were one person not two and should only have one share of the inheritance.

- David Guzik, commentary on I Kings 3:28

We should not be surprised the spin that people put on the Bible today, it has been going on for a long time. But keep in mind that God has spoken to us through His Word and we are not to alter it or add to it!

I KINGS 4

VERSES 1-6

1. As a leader, as the King over Israel, it is important to have godly men under you, assisting your in the work and that is what Solomon did. These are the men who made up Solomon's cabinet you might say. They were the ones that assisted him in ruling the nation. Now, what is interesting to me is that it lists Abiathar as priest, but he will be eventually removed from this position and I think he already was, and Zadok will oversee this position alone. Russell Dilday gives us some insight into what might have been going on as he wrote, "Since Abiathar had been exiled by Solomon (1 Kings 2:26ff), his inclusion here as a priest seems to be a problem. It must be remembered, however, that while Solomon could only reassign Abiathar's responsibility, he could not take away his title nor his dignity as a priest." That is why he might have been listed here with Zadok, who was probably in charge and Abiathar was already sent to Anathoth and he was to remain there, punishment for his siding with Adonijah in his rebellion to be king. He was removed from service and as we saw last time, it was the fulfillment of what God said in I Samuel 2:31-35, that the descendants of Eli would no longer function as priests for their abominations before the Lord and Abiathar was a descendant of Eli.

VERSES 7-19

1. These 12 governors were responsible for taxation in their individual districts, and tribal borders did not necessarily separate them but they were spread throughout the land of Israel. Their responsibility was to provide provisions for the king and his household for one month out of the year. Thus, these governors would cover all 12 months. Now don't think this was an easy task, cooking and providing for a few people. There were several thousand people to feed each day. And as we move on you will see what they provided each day for the king and his household.

2. Remember what God warned Samuel back in I Samuel chapter 8 as the people are crying out to have a king just like the other nations have. We read starting in verse 10 of I Samuel chapter 8, **“So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who asked him for a king. And he said, ‘This will be the behavior of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. And you will cry out in”**

that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the Lord will not hear you in that day.’ Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, ‘No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles.’ And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the Lord. So the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Heed their voice, and make them a king.’ And Samuel said to the men of Israel, ‘Every man go to his city.’” I Samuel 8:10-22.

You see, this was an expensive form of government, just as we see today with taxation. And we will read on in this chapter what they provided each day for the king and his men and it is overwhelming when you think about it. And by the time we get to Solomon’ son, Rehoboam, we see Jeroboam come to him and make a request to ease up on the taxes and he refuses and the nation is divided into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah because of it! (I Kings 12).



The growth and extension of Israel's borders under Solomon's leadership required extensive military expenditures. Coupled with this were ambitious building and commercial projects throughout his expanding kingdom. As a result, Solomon faced an urgent need for ever increasing revenues. To address this need, Solomon divided Israel into twelve districts and appointed governors over each district. These governors were responsible for levying and collecting taxes to provide for the needs of Jerusalem and the royal palace. The increasingly heavy taxes upon Israel created major dissension because the region of Judah was exempted. Furthermore, the divisions of the districts violated the old tribal boundaries.

- Earl D. Allen, Ronald Barclay, Wayne House,
Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary

VERSES 20-21

1. As we read this we see the partial fulfillment of what God promised Abraham in Genesis 15:5, as we are told, **“Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’”** And starting in verse 18 we are told, **“On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: ‘To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates — the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.’”**

Genesis 15:18-21. And yet, keep in mind that with all Solomon had, this is only a partial fulfillment. It is in the Kingdom Age that we will see the Jewish people; the descendants of Abraham occupy all the land that God had promised them in Genesis chapter 15.

2. As you look at the reign of Solomon, he was not a warrior but he reigned in peace. You see, what Solomon and the nation enjoyed, was brought about by the efforts of his father, David. He was a warrior, a general, a leader and defeated the enemies of Israel that now enabled his son to enjoy this time of peace and prosperity. They had so much materially speaking, lots of time on their hands, not to worry much about wars but just time to pursue pleasure, to enjoy themselves, “me time” you might say! And don’t get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with that, but if it takes you away from the Lord, then that is a slippery slope downward, away from God! Solomon’s kingdom was expanding, it was growing, it was larger than David’s but spiritually speaking, it was not as strong and that is always the danger. When we have nothing, we have to depend on the Lord and when we have everything, we don’t depend on anyone, not even the Lord!

VERSES 22-23

1. Lets look at what it took to provide food for Solomon and his household each day. A kor was about 6 1/2 bushels.

- 30 KORS FLOUR = 200 BUSHELS OF FLOUR OR SOME 55 GALLONS
- 60 KORS MEAL = 400 BUSHELS OF MEAL
- 10 PRIME OXEN
- 20 COMMERCIAL OXEN
- 100 SHEEP
- PLUS, DEER, GAZELLES, ROEBUCKS, FATTED FOWL

That is a lot of food to eat in one day and I like to eat! Some have estimated that with all this food Solomon could have feed some 15,000 to 36,000 people. This was the daily provision and I guess it would seem that Solomon fed a lot of people that worked for him!

2. Alexander Maclaren puts this spiritual application to what is going on here as he wrote, “Whether Christianity helps a man to worldly success or not, it helps him to get all the good out of the world that the world can give. It may, or may not, give wealth, but it will make the ‘little that a righteous man hath better than the riches of many wicked.’” And let me say this. I don’t think we realize how rich we really are. I realize that that might take some of you back, but we are. God has given to us the keys to the kingdom and we will spend eternity with Him, no one can take that away from us. All the other things that God gives to us is just icing on the cake you might say. He blesses us exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think. May we not be gluttonous with what we have, what we take in, but give back to the One who has blessed us. It is not about building our kingdom on this earth, but His. And yes, we are not going to build it, but by the work we do, we are providing people with the keys to the kingdom and those keys are obtained through Christ, it is the Gospel message that is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes!

VERSES 24-25

1. The nation of Israel prospered under the reign of Solomon. The food was abundant and their borders were expanded to cover almost all the land that God had promised them. And this phrase, **“each man under his vine and fig tree”** spoke of peace and prosperity, which they were living in. And ultimately, we see this in the Kingdom Age as the Messiah reigns. We are told in Zechariah 3:10, during the Millennial reign of Christ, **“‘In that day,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘Everyone will invite his neighbor Under his vine and under his fig tree.’”** That day the Lord is speaking of is the Kingdom Age! (See also Micah 4:4). You see, true peace and prosperity will never come until the Prince of Peace is on the throne ruling and reigning! In Isaiah 57:20-21 we are told, **“‘But the wicked are like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. ‘There is no peace,’ Says my God, ‘for the wicked.’”** God will judge the wicked in His righteous judgment and righteousness will flow throughout the land but until that time, we may have short times of peace, but there will be wars and trouble a majority of the time until that happens!

VERSE 26

1. Now as you read this you might not think much of it and just read on, but it is a big deal. You see, Moses told the future kings in Israel what they were not to do and what they were to do and as you listen to this, see how many things Solomon disregarded, disobeyed the Lord with.

In Deuteronomy 17:14-20 we are told, **“When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,’ you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’ Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.”** Solomon broke all three. He multiplied horses, foreign wives, and riches. All these would help turn his heart away from the Lord.

And to copy the Law of God, maybe just the Law, maybe the book of Deuteronomy, maybe Genesis through Deuteronomy, whatever the case he was to write it so he may apply it to his life. For us, we are to read it not just for information, but for application, for that is what wisdom is all about, applying the truths of God to our lives, knowing how we are to live out our faith!

2. Many say that 40,000 stables for horses is an exaggeration, but they have excavated thousands of these stalls in which Solomon kept his horses. So I don't believe it is an exaggeration.

VERSES 27-28

1. So once a month these governors would provide from their own tribe, food for the kings table and food for the kings animals.

2. Now how can we apply this to our own lives as Christians? Spurgeon preached a sermon using this verse and this is what he wrote,

In Solomon's court all his officers had a service to carry out, 'every man according to his charge.' It is exactly so in the kingdom of our LORD Jesus Christ. If we are truly his, he has called us to some work and office, and he wills us to discharge that office diligently. We are not to be gentlemen-at-ease, but men-at-arms; not loiterers, but laborers; not glittering spangles, but burning and shining lights."

He goes on to say,

"Any a servant girl gives her fourpenny-piece to the offering, and if the same proportion were carried out among those who are wealthy, gold would not be so rare a metal in the LORD's treasury. A tithe may be too much for some, but a half might not be enough for another. Let it be, 'Every man according to his charge,' as to measure as well as to matter."

And Spurgeon concluded his message like this,

“Everything for Jesus, the glorious Solomon of our hearts, the Beloved of our souls! Life for Jesus! Death for Jesus! Time for Jesus! Eternity for Jesus! Hand and heart for Jesus! Brain and tongue for Jesus! Night and day for Jesus! Sickness or health for Jesus! Honour or dishonor for Jesus! Shame or glory for Jesus! Everything for Jesus, ‘every man according to his charge.’ So may it be! Amen.”

- Charles Spurgeon

Something for us to think about and learn from as we serve the King of kings and Lord of lords!

VERSES 29-31

1. Again, Solomon’ fame spreads far and wide. It exceeded the fame of the men named in verse 31, who were well known in their day, but are meaningless to us. Ethan may be the author of Psalm 89 and Heman the author of Psalm 88. God truly blessed Solomon above all that he could ask or think and He made his kingdom far greater than David’s. It is as Deuteronomy 28:1 tells us, “**Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.**” And Deuteronomy 29:10 says, “**Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you.**” But tragically, over the years Solomon moved away from the Lord and it was not until the end of his life that he returned with his whole heart!

VERSES 32-33

1. Look at how smart this man was. Solomon was brilliant and we see that as we look at his writings, his knowledge of science and nature and in writing. We only have about 1/4 of the 3,000 Proverbs that Solomon wrote. We have one of his 1,005 songs that he wrote, the Song of Solomon. And we have only two or three Psalms that he wrote, Psalms 72, 127 and maybe 128.

And notice the vast diversity of Solomon, the things he knew and wrote about. It is difficult to be scholarly in one subject, and Solomon's wisdom is spread through 5 areas, besides his proverbs, Songs and Psalms.

- THE STUDY OF TREES - DENDROLOGIST
- THE STUDY OF ANIMALS - ZOOLOGIST
- THE STUDY OF BIRDS - ORNITHOLOGIST
- THE STUDY OF INSECTS - ENTOMOLOGIST
- THE STUDY OF FISH - ICHTHYOLOGIST

Wiseman comments on Solomon's accomplishments as he wrote, "While this account reflects Solomon's education as a wise man comparable with those of other contemporary states of his day in literary and scientific attainment, it was no mere rhetoric. The creation of zoological and botanical gardens in the capital city was an achievement boasted by many kings."

VERSE 34

1. In I Kings chapter 10 we will see the Queen of Sheba who will come to see and hear the wisdom of Solomon. And by the time she leaves she can't believe what she has seen or heard from this man, what she heard of him did not compare to what she saw when she meet him. His fame quickly spread as God gave to Solomon the wisdom he needed. Let me end with this. God's desire is that we would grow in Him, and our responsibility is to surrender to Him, give Him our life and He will bless us exceedingly abundantly above all that we can think or ask! That is our God!