

II CHRONICLES

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to II Chronicles chapter 7 as we continue our study through the Word of God. If you remember from our last study, Solomon is dedicating the Temple and he concludes chapter 6 with a powerful prayer. In fact, this is how his prayer was concluded starting in verse 40 of II Chronicles chapter 6, **“Now, my God, I pray, let Your eyes be open and let Your ears be attentive to the prayer made in this place. Now therefore, Arise, O Lord God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength. Let Your priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, And let Your saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed; Remember the mercies of Your servant David.”** II Chronicles 6:40-42.

How will God respond to this prayer of Solomon? We don't have to guess because that is where we will pick up our study this evening beginning in verse 1 of II Chronicles chapter 7. And let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word!

II CHRONICLES 7**VERSES 1-3**

1. So as Solomon finishes his prayer to the Lord we see the Shekinah glory, the presence of God fill the Temple for a second time. The first time was in response to worship back in chapter 5 of II Chronicles and this time it is in response to prayer. What does that mean to us today? If you feel a lacking of the presence of God in your life, then fill your life with worship and prayer and God will fill you with His presence. The more you know Him the more you will worship Him, and the more you worship Him the more you will spend time with Him. God's presence in our life gives us the right perspective of who He is and it causes us to worship Him, just as the people did here.

2. How did the people know that God had accepted their worship and prayer? Not only do we see the Shekinah glory fill the Temple but we also see that a fire from Heaven consumed the sacrifices, their burnt offerings. It was a vivid display of the power of God and I want you to notice how the people responded to this. You would think they would be fearful, fearful of the judgment of God but instead they focus on God being good and merciful, that His mercy is forever! How could they respond that way as this fire came down from Heaven? Because they knew God, they knew His great works and all that He has done and they understood that He is not only good but He is merciful or they would not even be around, they would be toast! May we as Christians see that the Lord is good, that His mercy is everlasting towards us!

VERSES 4-5

1. Look at the number of sacrifices that were made as this Temple was dedicated. There were 22,000 bulls, 120,000 sheep. What an extravagant amount of sacrifices, don't you think? Not really. You see, God wants us to understand the cost of sin and yet, these animals could never take away sin, they could only cover it for a time. Now, in saying that, there is the Lamb of God who has come and this Lamb was able to pay in full the penalty for all our sins and as extravagant as all these sacrifices that were made here by Solomon, they don't compare to this Lamb. You see, God was that perfect sacrifice for our sins; He is the Lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world! What Jesus did for us does not even compare to all those sacrifices that were made and have been made over the years.

It is as Peter tells us in I Peter 1:18-19, "**knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**" And in I Peter 3:18 he wrote, "**For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.**" That is what our Lord has done for us, the perfect sacrifice!

VERSES 6-7

1. Here we look back and see what David had established, this worship team you might say. You see, David was truly a man of worship. He organized the worship people, he had worship going day and night, he made instruments used in worship, and he wrote songs and psalms of worship unto the Lord. That is what flowed from the heart of David - **WORSHIP!** If you truly love the Lord then worship will flow from your life as we see with David.

2. Obviously there were many sacrifices being made and that bronze altar, the altar of sacrifice, which stood some 15 feet high by 30 feet long by 30 feet wide, was not big enough for all the sacrifices that were being offered. So Solomon sanctified the whole outer court in order to offer all the sacrifices. That is the other reason all the priests were in attendance, for all the sacrifices and the work that needed to be done.

VERSES 8-10

1. Keep in mind that this celebration was around the Feast of Tabernacles. And this was a feast and this phrase, “**... from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt**” is speaking of the people coming from the north and the south for this celebration! And it seems that the dedication of the Temple lasted seven days, the Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days and on the eighth day they had a sacred assembly. Thus, the whole feast lasted 15 days, and as Solomon dismissed the people to their homes, how did they leave? They left with a joyful heart. May we leave with a heart that is full of joy as we worship the Lord and see the things that He is showing us! And as difficult as some of those lessons may be, may we rejoice that God is working in us and He loves us.

VERSE 11

1. All that began in the heart of David to build God a house was now fulfilled in the life of his son, Solomon. And you can read in I Kings chapter 7 of the elaborate house that Solomon built for himself. His kingdom was spectacular in regards to wealth and beauty, but as we have seen in the life of Solomon, his heart was not steadfast upon the Lord and in the end; he saw all these things as empty apart from the Lord! You see, even in our own lives it is usually after a time of great blessing that we stumble, we become complacent in our walk with the Lord and that is where the danger lies. We need to be steadfast, immovable, have a single-heartedness upon the Lord!

VERSES 12-16

1. Here we see the Lord appear to Solomon a second time. The first time was back in I Kings 3:5-9. And here we see the Lord answer the prayer of Solomon that he had made. Now, before we get to what the Lord is saying here, let me ask you this. In selling a house what phrase is often used? It is “Location, Location, Location!”

Who is God speaking to in these verses? He is speaking to the Jewish people. And in verse 15, what is the location He is speaking of? The location He is speaking of is Jerusalem and specifically the Temple that was just dedicated! So the Lord is saying to the Jewish people that when they sin and they will, because the Lord says that when He does do these things, there is something they can do. They can humble themselves, they can pray, they can seek His face, they can turn from their wicked ways and then God will respond and heal their land, the land of Israel!

2. Now I have been guilty of this, of applying this verse to our nation. But don't make the mistake and say that this verse does not apply to us then, because it does. You see, when we turn from God, when our lives are dry, when our lives are eaten up by things, when our lives are filled with diseases, I truly believe we can humble ourselves, we can pray, we can seek His face, we can turn from our wicked ways and God will bring healing to our lives. You see, are we not His people? Absolutely and thus, I do think we can apply this to our lives even though specifically speaking, in regards to the land; this is speaking to the Jewish people and the land of Israel, specifically Jerusalem where the Temple was located!

VERSES 17-22

1. When you look at all that the Jewish people, the nation of Israel went through you may wonder why? The reason is simple. They turned from the Lord and God warned them of what would happen if they did. You see, the Jewish people were given much by God and thus, where much is given much is required. They were to point people to God and in their rebellion against God they still were an object lesson of what happens when a person turns from the Lord. You see, they were uprooted because of their sins, their idolatry, and taken captive by the Babylonians. The city and the Temple were destroyed. And the Jewish people have become a byword. Look at the rise of anti-Semitism today. Almost every part of the world we see this going on! Now please don't come to the conclusion that God hates His people, the Jews. God does love His people and He will restore them one day. But there is coming a day in which 2/3 of the Jewish people will be destroyed by the Antichrist. There are some 15 million Jewish people living today and what that tells me is that some 10 million Jewish people will be killed in the Tribulation Period! (Zechariah 13:8-9). It is after this that they will turn to the Lord and God will protect them and He will heal them. It is as Clarke wrote, "The *manner* in which these disobedient people have been destroyed is truly *astounding*: no nation was ever so highly favoured, and none ever so severely and signally punished."

Now please understand that they were warned, as was Solomon. They just refused to heed that warning and this is a lesson for us. May we never think we are so strong, so far above that, so spiritual that it would not happen to us! That is what Solomon thought and please take a good look at how he fell. If you are a child of God please understand that the Lord will let you go, but you are going to come back. He will let you pursue your own pleasure and He will let you go until you are ready to look up and return. The question is, "How far do you want to fall?" The Lord loves you too much to let you stay in that condition and thus, what will it take to bring you back?

II CHRONICLES 8

VERSES 1-6

1. It is interesting to note that Solomon spent 7 years in the building of the Temple, and another 13 years in the building of his own house and administrative buildings. Solomon thought this would bring him joy, but in Ecclesiastes 2:11 he said, "**Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done And on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.**" Why was Solomon not satisfied, not content? Because satisfaction only comes in the Lord, true contentment is found in Him and apart from Him it is only vanity! Solomon had it all but he did not have the Lord and thus, he had nothing!

2. Now we are told that the cities that Solomon gave to Hiram for the work he had done for Solomon is now given back to Solomon, but why? In I Kings 9:10-14 we are told, **“Now it happened at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord and the king's house (Hiram the king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress and gold, as much as he desired), that King Solomon then gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. Then Hiram went from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, but they did not please him. So he said, ‘What kind of cities are these which you have given me, my brother?’ And he called them the land of Cabul, as they are to this day. Then Hiram sent the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold.”**

In other words, Solomon gave him 20 cities in the upper Galilee area for the wood, the labor that Hiram had given to Solomon for the building of this Temple and his home. This land for Hiram increased the borders of Tyre. But there was this problem. You see, Hiram was not happy with what he got in return for his money; he saw these cities as worthless. Thus, he called these cities “Cabul” or “good for nothing”! And it seems that he gave them back to Solomon and Solomon has built them up and settled the children of Israel there.

3. Also, these other cities he built up were located on the trade routes, and Solomon was using the wisdom that God had given him for his own personal and financial gain. These cities were located as follows. Hamath Zobah was located some 300 miles north of Jerusalem. Tadmor was a desert oasis located on the main highway from Mesopotamia, about 150 miles northeast of Damascus. Beth Horon was located about 10 miles northwest of Jerusalem on the boarder between Judah and the Northern tribes. And Baalath was located in the territory of Dan. It seems that whatever Solomon wanted to do he did, but we don't see the Lord mentioned here and that is the problem. It is what Solomon wanted to do and not the Lord!

VERSES 7-10

1. On the surface, what Solomon had done seems fine, not a big problem, in fact, very wise to make these people serve him. But here is the problem. These nations were to be driven out when Joshua and the children of Israel entered the land. But after 7 years of fighting, after they had established a foothold in the land, it was now time for the individual tribes to remove the pockets of enemy resistance that remained in the land. And God warned them that if they did not do this, if they did not drive out the enemy, neither will He, and that enemy will become a thorn in your side. Now Solomon has the opportunity to drive out the enemy, which his ancestors failed to do, but instead of driving them out, he uses them for his own personal and financial gain. Again, it shows that Solomon's heart was focused on satisfying self instead of obeying the Lord. And once you open that door of compromise, it is hard to close and the consequences can be deadly!

VERSE 11

1. Here we see Solomon marry the daughter of Pharaoh for political reasons and not necessarily because he loved her. You see, this would ensure that your father-in-law would not rise up and attack you and your nation, for you were married to his daughter. And maybe that is why Solomon married so many pagan wives, for peace, for protection but again, there is no seeking God in this matter, maybe because he knew what God would say!

But Solomon does recognize that this is wrong, he is still feeling the conviction of God upon his heart for what he has done, he understands that God is not pleased with his actions. How do I know that? Because Solomon does not allow her to dwell in the house of David, for this was the area where the Ark of the Covenant was located, before it was placed in the Temple, and so he builds for her another house, away from this area.

2. Now as we read these stories we may wonder how Solomon could have done these things when he knew the Lord and what the Lord desired? Folk's, don't we do the same? These lessons are not for someone else, they are for each of us. You see, many times God speaks to our hearts and warns us that what we are doing is wrong. And it is very clear that He is not pleased with our actions. But instead of turning from what we are doing, we try to justify our actions and we may even do some minor changes, as Solomon did, so that we can make ourselves look better and ease the conviction that God has placed upon our hearts. But that does not change how God feels about what we are doing, be sensitive to His leading and then follow His direction or there will be consequences!

VERSES 12-16

1. What you see Solomon doing here please understand that there are many people today who are following in the footsteps of Solomon. He was backsliding, moving away from God, and he was aware of it. And yet he continued with offering sacrifice unto the Lord, he was involved with religious activity, and he looked good outwardly. He was doing all the motion without the emotion. The problem is that when your heart is far from the Lord, all the religious activity you do won't change that. Remember what the prophet Samuel said to King Saul. He said, "... 'Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king.'" I Samuel 15:22-

23. God is looking for obedience and as we are obedient to Him, then what flows from our lives is sacrifice and service, don't put the cart in front of the horse!

2. Now we see that all the work is completed and Solomon places the priests and Levites in the work that they were to do. Outwardly things are looking good, functioning the way they should. But inwardly Solomon is preparing to build up his kingdom. The focus is now on self instead of the Lord. And what is taking place on the inside of Solomon will eventually overflow into his actions, the way he lives and the same is true in our own lives if we don't deal with our walk with the Lord!

VERSES 17-18

1. Now keep in mind that the Jews were not a sea faring people, even though they sailed on the Sea of Galilee and some were fishermen. You see, the Sea of Galilee is not really a sea but more of a lake, some 7 miles wide and 17 miles long. It was not like the Mediterranean Sea. So Solomon hires Hiram, king of Tyre, to assist him in obtaining riches from other nations by his ships. Solomon does send some of his own men to assist in the work, but the Phoenicians were truly a great sea faring people. And these ships would return every 3 years full of riches and possessions from various nations. Again, you see Solomon building up his riches, his possessions but there is nothing about growing in the Lord and that is very dangerous!

II CHRONICLES 9VERSES 1-4

1. The nation of Israel was to be a witness of the true and living God and at this point in their history they were. Later on they became self-centered, trying to keep God for themselves instead of sharing their faith with others. And now with this magnificent Temple, the fame of Solomon was spreading and the Queen of Sheba heard of the wisdom of Solomon, she heard about his kingdom and she traveled some 1500 miles from southern Arabia, a place called Sheba and also known as Sabea, which is modern day Yemen and she came to test Solomon's wisdom by asking him some tough questions.

Tradition tells us that Solomon was tested with riddles and we are not sure if this is true or not, but it is interesting. You see, one of the riddles that the Queen of Sheba gave to Solomon had to do with two bouquets of flowers. One was real and the other was fake. And as she stood at some distance from Solomon, he was to decide which one was which. Now from that distance it was impossible to tell with the naked eye. So Solomon told one of his servants to open the doors and when they did some bees flew into the place they were at and landed on the flowers, and thus Solomon was able to tell which were real and which were fake. The wisdom of Solomon was truly great, but that wisdom is going to go to his head, as we will see.

Also, Wiseman makes this point in what the Queen of Sheba was asking Solomon, “The hard questions were not just riddles, but included difficult diplomatic and ethical questions . . . The test was not an academic exercise but to see if he would be a trustworthy business party and a reliable ally capable of giving help.”

2. What does that mean to us today? I think Meyer got it right when he wrote, “Bring your hard questions to Christ; He is greater than Solomon.” May we not forget that fact! You see, we tend to bring our problems to man instead of Christ and I think the Creator of Heaven and Earth can answer our tough questions, don’t you?

3. And as the Queen of Sheba sees all that Solomon possess, all that is brought before his table each day, she is blown away. We are told back in I Kings chapter 4 of what they partook each day, Solomon and his men and it is mindboggling! There were 30 kors of flour, which equals about 200 bushels. There were 60 kors of meal or about 400 bushels. There were 10 prime oxen, 20 commercial grade oxen, 100 sheep plus deer, gazelles, roebucks, fatted fowl! That is some provisions for one day! And as she sees all this and hears the wisdom of Solomon, she can't believe it, she is completely overwhelmed!

VERSES 5-8

1. Yes the Queen of Sheba heard all those things by others about Solomon but when she came to Jerusalem, when she saw and heard him speak, it blew her away. And keep in mind that Israel was to be a witness to the other nations of the true and living God and this witness would either be born out of the blessings for obedience or the discipline for their disobedience. Obviously here we see it is for their obedience.

2. Now the question here is this. Did the Queen of Sheba get saved? It seems like she did by what she said but many say it was just a polite gesture and recognition of Israel's God but it speaks nothing of her faith or turning to the true and living God! And I would have to agree if all we had were these verses here regarding the Queen of Sheba, but we don't. And as you will see, I believe that the Queen of Sheba did turn and believe in the true and living God.

In Matthew 12:41-42 we are told, **“The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.”**

You see, just as the entire city of Nineveh turned to the Lord at the preaching of Jonah, we also see the Queen of Sheba turning to the Lord with the preaching of Solomon. It would make no sense to say that the men of Nineveh were saved and yet, the Queen of Sheba is not since she will rise up in judgment against those nations that refused to hear Jesus, the greater than Solomon!

VERSES 9-12

1. Here we see the exchange of gifts between the Queen of Sheba and Solomon. Keep in mind that the Queen of Sheba came with many gifts for King Solomon, but she left with much more than what she came with. Does that sound familiar? It should because what we give to the Lord He gives back to us even more. 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.”**

In other words, God desires to bless us more than we can imagine and as we give to Him, He is a debtor to no man and thus, He will give back to us exceedingly abundantly, above all we could ask or think. That is our God. Now if you give to get back, your motives are wrong and God will not honor that. But if you give to the Lord because you love Him and want to see His Kingdom grow, He will honor that, not necessarily monetarily, but He will bless you. We leave more fruitful than when we came as the Queen of Sheba did!

VERSES 13-14

1. Keep in mind that Solomon placed a heavy tax burden upon the people, and the reality is, he did not need to do that any longer. The Temple and the buildings were all completed, and he could have eased up on the taxation. His son Rehoboam is going to be asked to bring tax reform to the nation, but he refuses and because of that the nation is divided. And it was not only the money he received from this taxation, but he obtained much more from other nations and the ships that he sent out to bring things back for him. Solomon wants just a little bit more and that will never end because apart from God, as I have said, there is no satisfaction!

2. Now this is interesting to me because we see Solomon's yearly income was 666 talents of gold. Of all the numbers that are out there, why 666? I think the Lord is showing us where Solomon was at in his life and it was not in the Lord but in this world with the things of this world.

Also, I think God is trying to show us a comparison or a type here. Listen to what is said in Revelation 13:16-18 as John tells us of the Antichrist. He wrote, **“He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.”**

Now please don't misunderstand me here, I am not saying that Solomon is the Antichrist, but he is a type that is being illustrated for us to see. Look at the comparison that we are seeing here. Solomon came on the scene after a Godly king, David. The Antichrist comes on the scene after Jesus Christ came. Solomon was a man of peace, and the Antichrist comes on the scene as a man of peace. Solomon built the Temple, and the Antichrist will come on the scene and help the Jews to rebuild their Temple. During the reign of Solomon they enjoyed a time of great prosperity, and during the first 3½ years of the Tribulation Period, the Antichrist will bring to the world a time of peace and prosperity. We can see a lot of parallels and I think God is saying to us, don't let the things of this world draw you away from Me, Solomon is now serving himself instead of the Lord and His people. It is not that the money or possessions that Solomon had was evil, nor is it for us, but it is the love of money and possessions that will draw you away from the Lord!

VERSES 15-16

1. We see here some of the wealth that Solomon had. He made 200 large shields of hammered gold and three hundred small shields of hammered gold and put them on display in the House of the Forest of Lebanon, (I Kings 10:17). They were not for use in battle but for display and think about this, it has been estimated that each large shield would cost about \$400,000 a few years back and that figure is much higher today! Not only that but this House of the Forest of Lebanon was one of Solomon's homes. This structure was 150 feet long by 75 feet wide and 45 feet tall and around it were 45 cedar pillars, so as you look at this building, it looked like a forest.

VERSE 17

1. Can you imagine having an ivory throne, the beauty of that throne and yet, for this rich man, he overlaid that ivory with gold! What a waste of God's money and yet, Solomon has so much he doesn't know what to do with it and he wants just a little bit more! Now some feel that this was a gold throne that had ivory inserts, but we are not sure. The reason they feel this way is the amount of ivory that would be needed, but who knows what Solomon was able to obtain!

VERSES 18-20

1. Can you imagine what his throne was like? No kingdom was as wealthy as this one and it was so wealthy that silver was accounted as nothing, if you can imagine that! Solomon is living the life of luxury but it is costing him his walk with the Lord and he will hit bottom before he looks up and recognizes what he has done!

VERSE 21

1. Now we see how some of this wealth was obtain as we are told that every 3 years ships would return from their voyages and bring back with them a huge cargo of merchandise. They would bring back gold, silver, ivory, apes and monkeys, and monkeys should be translated as peacocks in this verse but Solomon wanted more and more possessions. Why apes and peacocks? Maybe for his entertainment, we are not sure!

And that tells me he is not satisfied. You see, the common things are not satisfying anymore and it is taking more and more of the things of this world to try to fill that void. And the things he is acquiring seem to be getting more and more bizarre. That is true for any one that turns from the Lord and tries to fill that void with other things. For example sex, God has given it to us to enjoy, it is a beautiful and enjoyable relationship between a husband and a wife. Outside of marriage we see all kinds of sexual activity that is not satisfying, that gets more and more bizarre, more and more brutal, even to the point of engaging in a relationship between the same sex. Yes marriages can be hard and people can turn from each other, but the reason is simple. It is either one or both of the partners have taken their eyes off the Lord. When that happens our eyes begin to wander and we look outside of marriage to try and find joy, to try and fill that void, and it will never be filled. Solomon found this out the hard way. Stay focused upon the Lord!

VERSES 22-24

1. Now this is interesting. Who gave Solomon this wisdom that others are coming to see? God did! And now Solomon is charging people to share that gift that God has given to him. God gave him this wisdom and now he is making a profit off that which God has given to him. How sad when people prostitute the things that God has given to them. Greed is a terrible enemy in our relationship with God and we see that monster show its ugly face far too often within the church today. And think about this. They come to hear the wisdom of Solomon but we don't read that Solomon spoke to them about the true and living God that has given all this to him. He lost his witness because he was not walking with the Lord at this time!

VERSES 25-28

1. Now Solomon could not say that he didn't know what he was doing was wrong for God said back in Deuteronomy chapter 17, long before they entered the Promise Land and had a king, that the kings of Israel were not to multiply wives, they were not to multiply wealth and they were not to multiply horses and Solomon was doing all those things. One of the most impressive things at Megiddo is the ruins of the stables that Solomon had there. And there are ruins of his stables in several other areas. He really multiplied horses! He had 700 wives and 300 concubines! And the wealth, well, I don't have to tell you, we have read the wealth that he had!

Now here is the problem once again. The kings were to write down a copy of the Law and read it so they would not forget what God wanted from them. Why did Solomon transgress the Words of God? Maybe Solomon thought he was above the common people and that God knew his wisdom and was surely not speaking to him. He found out how wrong he was, how prideful that kind of attitude was.

2. And here is a guy who is very wealthy and yet, he wants more and more. Let me explain. During this time the camel was domesticated and was used for transportation by traders and merchants. They could travel long distances through the desert without the need for water. And Jerusalem was the hub, you might say, between Egypt and Mesopotamia. Thus, Solomon was charging them a toll for using this route. You see, it is not just Illinois that has done this! (See II Chronicles 9:14). He is trying to obtain more and more wealth anyway he can. In fact, he is using his wisdom for the wrong things.

VERSES 29-31

1. Solomon spent his whole life in search for joy, and the book of Ecclesiastes re-counts that journey. His conclusion was simple and right in front of him all the time. Listen to what Jon Courson wrote regarding Solomon and how this is a lesson for all of us. He wrote,

Solomon was wise, wealthy, and successful, but, nonetheless, miserable. In Ecclesiastes, we see from Solomon's own hand that, during this time of incredible prosperity, his life was full of misery. Solomon threw unbelievable parties, gained impressive education, had power, wealth, and influence that was unrivaled in the world. Yet he declared it all to be empty.

All of us think that happiness lies right around the corner - a little more money, and we'll be happy; a little more education or job security, and we'll be content. So did poor Solomon. He was at the top of every conceivable arena. He had nowhere else to go, nothing else for which to strive or hope, and he was still wanting.

It is the wise person who learns from the wisest man who ever lived and sees the fallacy that can so easily penetrate our hearts in thinking that happiness lies right around the corner with the next job, raise, acquisition, spouse, or degree.

At the end of his days, Solomon turned to the Lord, realizing that He was what he was looking for all along . . .

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes 12:13

~ Courson, Jon: Jon Courson's Application
Commentary : Volume One : Genesis-Job.
Nashville, TN : Thomas Nelson, 2005, S. 1171

May we learn that lesson and learn to be satisfied in the Lord for that is where true satisfaction is found!

2. Solomon was not very old when he died, maybe 60 at the most and I think what I Kings 3:14 tells us nail's it for Solomon and his short life. The Lord told Solomon, "**So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.**" Solomon did not obey the Lord and his life seemed to be shortened. It is as Clarke wrote, "When we consider the excess in which he lived, and the criminal passions which he must have indulged among his thousand wives, and their idolatrous and impure worship, this life was as long as could be reasonably expected." That kind of lifestyle will not add years to your life but take them away!

3. As we have seen, the first 9 chapters of II Chronicles dealt with Solomon. Now his son Rehoboam is on the throne, and instead of riding that spiritual wave that Solomon was riding from his father David, Rehoboam is riding that material wave of his father Solomon. And thus we see the downfall of the nation and this will continue till the captivity. Yes there are some spiritual revivals in Judah, but they are few and far between, and not enough to change the direction the nation was heading. Some powerful lessons for us, may we learn them and apply them to our lives! May we pray for our nation that once walked in the ways of the Lord but now is riding a material possession high and has moved far away from God! May we return to the Lord for that is where true joy and satisfaction is found!