

Day 6—Feast of Tabernacles The Lessons of Solomon

It's not how you start, it's how you finish!

Fred R. Coulter—October 22, 2016

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Day 6 of the Feast of Tabernacles!

We have an example in the Bible of what happens to people when they have *everything!* All during the Millennium people are going to have the best that there has ever been for all humanity for a thousand years. Many will be brought into the Kingdom of God during that time. But there will be those who will not go God's way.

As we read in Isa. 65, the sinner shall 'die accursed.' How could it be, when you have everything so good—everything you ever need, everything you ever want—that you could possibly go wrong, that you could possibly—having known God—knowing God, leave Him? How does that happen? And it gets down to the same thing, like we've mentioned before: *it's not how you begin, it's how you finish!*

Let's look at the example of Solomon, the son of David, who is made king over Israel after David died. Yes, he had to put down a revolt by his brother Adonijah and get everything all lined up. He was blessed to build the temple. God gave the plans to David to give to Solomon, and he gave him many charges on how he should keep the commandments of God, seek God and do what is right.

So, let's come to the book of 1-Kings, and after all the good things that God did for Solomon, providing the things so that Solomon could build the temple: he finished his own house and then:

1-Kings 3:3: "And **Solomon loved the LORD...**"

- Do you love God?
- Do you know people who did love God?

But are no longer with Him!

- How did that happen?
- How could that be?

"...walking in the statutes of David his father. Only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place...." (vs 3-4).

That's where the tabernacle was. Remember that during the reign of Saul, the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant for a while. Then it was returned and David got it and he had it put in his house. He had a special place in his house for the

Ark of the Covenant.

But the tabernacle was up at Gibeon and there they offered the sacrifices, so you had a split priesthood. You had most of the Levites offering the sacrifices at Gibeon, and then in David's house you had Asaph the priest and the different priests that were there administering to the Ark of the Covenant.

So, here we have the picture, "...Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings upon that altar" (v 4). Notice how Solomon started out:

- he was loved of his father and mother
- heir to the throne
- received all the plans for building the temple
- his heart was young and tender when he began

Verse 5: "In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night. And God said, 'Ask what I shall give you!'" I want you to notice Solomon's attitude:

Verse 6: "And Solomon said, 'You have shown to Your servant David my father great mercy, according **as he walked before You in truth and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart with You...**'" David was called 'a man after God's own heart.' Why? *This is how he walked before God!*

Solomon continues answering God: "...And You have kept this great kindness for him, that **You have given him a son to sit on his throne**, as *it is today*" (v 6). Notice how he expressed that. *He didn't say*, 'I was chosen to sit on the throne.' Notice the humility.

Verse 7: "And now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of David my father.... [giving God all the credit] ...And I *am* a little child; I do not know *how* to go out or come in! And Your servant *is* in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a numerous people who cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Now, therefore, **give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people...**" (vs 7-9). Notice what he asked for: *the right thing in the right attitude*, and directly to God. That's something!

"...to discern between good and evil, for who is able to judge this, Your great people?" (v 9).

Now, notice God's response—how God responds to us—and His response is in accord with our response to Him.

Verse 10: “And the word was good in the eyes of the LORD that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said to him, ‘Because you have asked this thing and **have not asked for yourself** long life ...’” (vs 10-11)—not interested in self.

We're going to see that that is the key and the answer to *how* Solomon went wrong, and how people can, during the Millennium, go wrong and end up rejecting God.

“...and have not asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to judge justly, behold, I have done according to your words. Lo, I have given you a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like you before you and after you none shall arise like you. And **I also have given you that which you have not asked**...” (vs 11-13).

- Does God want to bless us with more than we ask?
- How should we ask?
- What is the purpose of asking?
- Why should we do it?

“...**you have not asked**... [but I'm going to give you]: ...both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like you all your days. Therefore, **if**...” (vs 13-14). There it is *choice*—IFMA—*independent free moral agency*, and the **if** is conditional always upon us, not upon God.

“...**if** you will walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days” (v 14). God has given Solomon everything that everyone would want in life.

Verse 15: “And Solomon awoke, and, behold, *it was* a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.”

Then his first judgment—we won't go through that—he was able to handle quite well. We find in 1-Kings 6 that Solomon finished the house of God. Then he dedicated it and it was quite a thing.

Solomon brings the things from Gibeon down to the temple, has the Ark put into the temple by the priests and the Levites, had them bring and setup the altars and everything was done for the house of the Lord (1-Kings 7:51).

1-Kings 8:1: “Then Solomon assembled the

elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem, so that they might bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which *is* Zion.”

So, they brought it and had a great ceremony, and actually, this apparently started on the first day of the seventh month—the Feast of Trumpets—and the dedication of the Feast lasted seven days. Then there was a pause for the Day of Atonement. After that they had the Feast of Tabernacles, then all the people went home.

- God was pleased with the whole affair!
- God was pleased with the prayer of Solomon!

You can read that in all of 1-Kings 8, so read all of chapters 7 and 8. Let's see the real pinnacle of Solomon with his relationship with God. How did it go so wrong? You would think that if you were that close to God, that God appeared to you and told you what He was going to give you.

- all accomplished
- the temple is finished and everything is set in order
- great feast to dedicate it
- great Feast of Tabernacles
- everyone is happy and joyful
- God is with you
- the angels are protecting you
- everything is righteousness, goodness, joy and happiness

Let's see that even God was really pleased. Can we please God? Can we do those things that please Him? *Yes (1-John 3)*! That's how are prayers are heard; when we do the things that please Him and keep His commandments. This is exactly what Solomon had done here.

1-Kings 9:1: “And it came to pass as Solomon finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon” (vs 1-2).

Notice these words; He heard the prayer, a wonderful prayer; v 3: “And the LORD said to him, ‘I have heard your prayer and your cry which you have made before Me. I have made Holy this house which you have built to put My name there forever. And My eyes and My heart shall be there perpetually.’”

That's something! What greater blessing from God could you possibly receive? Think about us:

- God has called us
- God has given us understanding of His Word
- God has given us knowledge of His Truth
- God has given us His Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit of God the Father and Jesus Christ, the two aspects of the Holy Spirit, **We will make Our abode with!** Think of that!

Verse 4: “And **if** ...” There is that word again. Why does God do that? *Because we are to choose!* Everything that we do is a *choice!*

- to love God
- to serve Him
- to keep His commandments
- what we think
- where we go
- what we eat

These are all choices! The most important choices are those choices between us and God. This is important for us to realize so that we can know and understand how it is that we stay consistent and not make the mistakes of Solomon.

Verse 4: “And **if** you will walk before Me as David your father walked...” How is your walk with God? As we go through I want you to ask yourself these questions.

“...in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you; and **if** you will keep My statutes and My judgments, **then**...” (vs 4-5). *If* and *then*; exactly the same thing for the New Testament, exactly the same thing for those during the Millennium.

IF, and you’ve got a hundred years to live, how are you going to live that? What’s it going to be? He says:

Verse 5: “**Then** I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever as I promised to David your father, saying, “There shall not be cut off from you a man upon the throne of Israel.””

Now, God gives him another choice, just like with us, just like with the people during the Millennium.

Verse 6: “**If you shall at all turn from following Me...**” How are we to have a relationship with God? *To love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being!* How long should we do that? *Our entire life long!*

For Pentecost we covered what it was with the seven churches. Did they have to be corrected because they didn’t do what God wanted? *Yes, they did!*

Here is another *if*, v 6: “**If** you shall at all turn from following Me, you or your children, and will not keep My commandments *and* My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them.” Think about that!

That is true today. Like today, everyone wants to know what’s happening in the world. **Well, the world has turned its back on God!** That is the great apostasy of 2-Thess. 2. Not just something within the Church, but the *whole world* against God. That’s why Christ is coming back the way He’s coming back with all power, signs, wonders, and the earth and the heavens shaking, the armies fighting against Him.

Verse 7: “**Then** I will cut off Israel from the face of the land, which I have given them. And this house which I have made Holy for My name **I will cast out of My sight...**” Did God do that? *Yes, He did! Twice!*

“...And Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people” (v 7). Did that happen? *Yes, it did!* **How was it then that Solomon got to where he ended up?** That is the question, and that is the lesson. That’s going to be something that’s going to be answered by the people all during the Millennium:

- How was your relationship with God?
- What is it?
- What do you do?
- How do you maintain it?

First, we’re going to see **what was it that Solomon did that he turned from God!** Let’s see what God said that the king was to do all his lifelong. Here are some very tremendous instructions for the king. Also, we can take this as parallel for us. Are we not going to be kings and priests and rule in the Kingdom of God? *Yes!* What should we do? *We have been called to prepare for that task right now!*

Deuteronomy 17:14: “When you come to the land, which the LORD your God gives you, and shall possess it and shall live in it and shall 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 shall choose. You shall set a king over you from among your brethren. You may not set a stranger over you who is not your brother. Only **he shall not multiply horses to himself...** [which Solomon did] ...nor cause the people to return to Egypt... [the first think he did was marry the daughter of the king of Egypt] ...so as to multiply horses because the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again’” (vs 14-16)—and Solomon multiplied horses!

Verse 17: “**Nor shall he multiply wives to himself...** [Solomon did] ...so that his heart does not turn away. **Nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold to himself.**” God gave Solomon all he needed!

Here was the smartest man in the world, the richest man in the world, the greatest king that could possibly be. **God gave warning**—didn’t He?

Verse 18: “And it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book from that which is in the custody of the priests the Levites.”

Solomon was to go to the temple, he was to have a scroll, and he was to copy from the scroll, the copy that the priests and the Levites had. The original was in the Ark of the Covenant. He was to copy it. Why copy it? *Because the way you learn is to write it out!*

Verse 19: “And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life...”

Sidebar: What do you hear preached all of the time? *Prayer and study!* This is what the king was to do all the days of his life:

“...**so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them** so that his heart may not be lifted up above his brethren, and that he does not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel” (vs 19-20).

- Did he not have all the Psalms of David? *Yes, he did!*
- Did he not also collect thousands of Proverbs? *Yes, he did!*
- Did he not also compose many songs? *Yes, he did!*

Here are some of the lessons that Solomon should have learned from his father David, who wrote these Psalms. What did God tell Solomon to do?

- **IF** you do all these things rightly, **THEN** I will bless you!
- **IF** you do not do what I say, **THEN** I will even destroy this house and get rid of it!

Psalms 39:1—David writing: “I said, ‘I will take heed to my ways so that I do not sin with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked are before me.’ I became dumb, keeping silent; I said nothing good, and yet, my sorrow grew worse. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned; then I spoke with my

tongue: ‘O LORD, make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is...’” (vs 1-4). What it is to understand the frailties of human nature.

“...**that I may know how short lived I am.** Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth...” (vs 4-5). We’re going to see the mistakes of Solomon in just a little bit. He was humble to start, but he was not humble at the end.

“...and the span of my days is as nothing before You. Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah” (v 5). It’s very interesting. We’re going to see some very interesting things. Solomon learned the lesson of vanity to a great degree, but he didn’t apply it to himself the way he should have.

He was the most intelligent man the world has ever known; you would think that he would have done that. God appeared to him twice; blessed him and told him what He would do. Everything was laid out clear as could be. He did understand about the vanities. He pointed them out: this is vain, that is vain, the other thing is vain. But as we will see, **he did not do it to himself!**

Ecclesiastes 1:1 “The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. ‘Vanity of vanities,’ says the Preacher, ‘vanity of vanities! **All is vanity.**’ What profit does a man have in all his labor, which he labors under the sun? One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth remains forever. The sun also arises, and the sun goes down, and hurries to its place where it arose. The wind goes toward the south, and it turns around to the north; it whirls around continually; and the wind returns on its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet, the sea is not full; to the place from where the rivers come, there they return again. All things are full of labor; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. That which has been *is* that which shall be; and that which has been done *is* that which shall be done; and *there is* nothing new under the sun” (vs 1-9).

So, Solomon was really philosophical in everything that he was thinking about here.

Verse 10: “Is there a thing of which it may be said, ‘See, this *is* new’? It has already been in days of old, which were before us. *There is* no memory of former *things*, neither shall there be any remembrance of *things* that are to come by those who shall come afterwards. 12: I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem” (vs 10-12).

I want you to start measuring and counting:

I, me, my and myself. We will see **the way that Solomon started drifting away from God was looking to himself!** Yes, still giving God some credit. Yes, still acknowledging that we need to keep the commandments of God; that's what he said at the end. But we can see from what he wrote here, *how he began to drift away from God, by concentrating on himself!* Have you heard of that before? *Yes, indeed!*

We will see that Solomon became philosophical and self-centered rather than God-centered and humble. It's all right here in the book of Ecclesiastes. There are 41 **I**s in the first two chapters. There are 16 **my**s, two **me**s and 8 **myself**s!

- Do you think that that is self-centered?

Listen, too many people take the blessings of God for granted!

- Has this happened in this nation?
- Has that happened to other people?
- How do their lives get cutoff when they turn their back on God?

Or, if they don't know God, turn their back on doing what is right and end up destroying their lives with various things, especially thinking of the entertainment industry and all of these 'great musicians' that die of drug overdoses: vanity and self. People just worship them as idols.

Let's see what Solomon did, all recorded for us. Instead of writing the Law of God so he could study that and live by that, *he wrote about himself!*

Verse 13: "And **I** gave **my** heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under the heavens. *It is* a grievous task God has given to the sons of men to be exercised by it." He's looking out and seeing all these things.

Verse 14: "**I** have seen all the works that are done under the sun... [really not quite] ...and, behold, all *is* vanity and striving after wind." He had that point correct.

Verse 15: What *is* crooked cannot be made straight; and *what is* lacking cannot be numbered. **I** spoke within **my** own heart, saying... [instead of praying to God about it; 'God, give me wisdom and understanding'] ...'Lo, **I** have become great and have gathered more wisdom than all that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, **my** heart has experienced great wisdom and knowledge'" (vs 15-16)—*me, myself and I!*

Verse 17: "And **I** gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; **I** perceived that this also *is* striving after wind. For in much wisdom *is* much grief; and he who increases

knowledge increases sorrow" (vs 17-18).

Quite a thing! Let's see what he did. Instead of loving and serving God the way he should have, he became exactly like the men that David wrote of concerning what happens to important people. All Solomon had to do was read the Psalms of his father David. There's some really good Psalms.

Psalm 62:7: "In God is my salvation and my glory..." Did God not give all the glory to Solomon? *Yes!* Think about it with us; God is going to glorify us and He is going to give us the rule of His kingdom. Think of what a great thing that is. We need not get caught up in the foolishness that Solomon got caught up in.

"...the Rock of my strength; my refuge is in God. **Trust in Him at all times,** you people..." (vs 7-8). That's what Solomon forgot to do. He began to trust in himself and in his wisdom, and in his philosophy while giving some acknowledgment to God. "Trust in Him at all times..." Not part of the time, not some of the time, but *all times!*

"...pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah. Surely **men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie...**" (vs 8-9). That's what Solomon turned out to be, *a lie*, because God appeared to him twice, and he went against everything that God had told him to do.

"...when weighed in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. Trust not in oppression, and do not take pride in stolen goods; if riches increase, do not set your heart upon them. God has spoken once; twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God. Also to You, O LORD, belongs mercy; for You give to every man according to his work" (vs 9-12).

Just think of what it would have been like if Solomon had lived by that. Let's see how:

- Solomon experimented
- how he thought
- how he acted
- what he did

Ecc. 2 is very profound! This tells you how, if you analyze it, Solomon got away from God. He got his mind on himself and what he was doing. He used *his own* wisdom and *his own* intelligence, rather than keep coming to God, rather than remembering and learning that in God *we live, move and have our being! That as human beings we have nothing we didn't receive!* All of it comes from God!

We will see the seeds of Solomon's own destruction were sown beginning in Ecc. 2, *because*

he turned his heart and mind from God to himself!

(go to the next track)

As we begin Ecc. 2, remember there were 42 Is in chapters 1 & 2. Would you say that was self-centered? Would you say that was God-centered? *No!*

Ecclesiastes 2:1: “I said in my heart, ‘Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.’ and, behold, this also *is* vanity.” Because only real good comes from God.

Verse 2: “I said of laughter, ‘*It is* madness,’ and of mirth, ‘What does it accomplish?’ I sought in my heart to give myself unto wine... [see what it’s like to get drunk] ...yet, conducting my heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, until I might see what was good for the sons of men, what they should do under the heaven the few days of their life” (vs 2-3).

Did not God already tell us what was good? *Yes!* That’s what Solomon should have sought out. You talk about a colossal Laodicean attitude—rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing—that’s Solomon!

Verse 4: “I made great works for myself; I built houses for myself; I planted vineyards for myself.” Remember Pasadena (WCG)?

Verse 5: “I made gardens and orchards for myself, and I planted trees in them, of all fruit. I made pools of water for myself, to irrigate groves of growing trees. I bought men slaves and women slaves, and servants *were* born in my house; also I had great possessions of herds and flocks, above all that were before me in Jerusalem” (vs 5-7). ‘How great was I?’

He ended up by saying that this is all vanity, but he never really got to the point of complete dedication to God the way that he should have.

Verse 8: “I also gathered silver and gold to myself...” It’s said of Solomon that there was so much silver that it was counted like gravel in the streets. Quite different from what it is today!

“...and the treasure of kings and of the provinces. I got men singers and women singers for myself, even the sensual delights of the sons of men, and many women” (v 8). Oh yes, we will see that. How did that go?

Remember that God said, ‘IF you will love Me and serve Me, I’ll bless you. IF you will not, *then* I will even destroy this house.’

Verse 9: “So, I was great and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem; also

my wisdom remained with me. And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure...” (vs 9-10).

The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Is that not true? *Yes, indeed!* Who is going to know it? When you search into yourself for the answers to life, you’re never, never going to find it. Notice that this was over a period of time, a period of years. This was not something that happened immediately. This is a summary of what he did for years.

- he had plenty of time to return to God
- he had plenty of time to come back to God
- he had plenty of time to repent of this

1. there is no place where it says that Solomon repented
2. there is no place that says that he was totally cast away as Saul was

So, what happened to Solomon? *We don’t know!* We’ll have to await the resurrection to find out.

Verse 11: “Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and, behold, all *is* vanity and a striving after the wind; and *there is* no profit under the sun.”

Did it really turn him to God? *or* Did he just become more philosophical? What did this do?

- we will see what this did
- we will see where he went
- we will see what God did

Verse 12: “And I turned to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly; for what *can* the man *do* who comes after the king? Only that which has been already done. Then I saw that wisdom excels folly, as far as light excels darkness” (vs 12-13). God already knows that.

Verse 14: “The wise man’s eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walks in darkness; and I myself also perceived that one event happens to all of them. Then I said in my heart, ‘As it happens to the fool, *so* it happens even to me; and why was I then more wise?’ And I said in my heart that this also *is* vanity” (vs 14-15). *NO!* It should have been used for a wise purpose. So you’re smart; you know everything!

Verse 16: “For *there is* no memory of the wise *more than* of the fool forever, since that which is now shall all be forgotten in the days to come. And how does the wise die? Even as the fool!... [poof, his last breath] ...Therefore, I hated life...” (vs 16-17). Why? *Because he was leaving God!*

“...because the work that is done under the sun *is* grievous to **me**; for all *is* vanity and a striving after wind. Yea, **I** hated all **my** labor, which **I** had done under the sun, because **I** must leave it to the man who shall be after **me**” (vs 17-18). What was his son Rehoboam? *No wonder he was upset with it!*

Verse 19: “And who knows *whether* he shall be wise or a fool? Yet, he shall have rule over all my labor in which **I** have labored, and have shown **myself** wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity.”

He couldn't get over the fact that one day he was going to die and leave it all. That's what happens to everyone. There has been no one ever who took everything, or anything, with them. When you die, you leave it all behind; left for the heirs to fight over it. That is vanity!

Verse 20: “And **I** turned to cause **my** heart to despair of all the labor, which **I** had done under the sun.... [he had gotten into a really bad attitude] ...For there is a man whose labor is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and with skill; yet, to a man who has not labored in it, he shall leave it *for* his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil” (vs 20-21).

So, he got not only self-centered, but very possessive. ‘How am I going to keep this?’ *You're not! Not a bit of it!* What is his son going to do with it? *If you do what is right, then the blessing of God will come to him, as well!* If you do not do what is right, then the blessing will not come to him. Solomon didn't think of that. He moaned and groaned over all of this.

Verse 22: “For what has man from all his labor, and from the striving of his heart, in which he has labored under the sun?” What is life all about? Just vanity, POOF and you're gone? *No!*

Verse 23: “For all his days *are* sorrows, and his labor vexation; yea, so his heart does not take rest in the night. This *is* also vanity. There is nothing better for a man... [now he comes to a little bit sense] ...than that he should eat and drink and make his soul see good in his labor? This **I** also saw, that it *was* from the hand of God. For who can eat, or who can enjoy it, more than **I**?” (vs 23-25). Boy! Was he self-centered!

Verse 26: “**For God gives wisdom, and knowledge, and joy to a man who is good in His sight**.... [he got that right] ...But to the sinner He gives labor, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to *him who is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and a striving after wind.”

He didn't get it right, because if you heap up all of these things, and they're good and right like David, his father did for him to build the temple,

then that is good! So good that God appeared to Solomon twice and blessed him, and gave him the choices to do what is right. Here we've covered some of them; this is really something! Look at what Solomon did!

He gets really philosophical in Ecc. 3, a lot of good true things. There's a lot of truth that people can find in life about a lot of different things. But to find the Truth of God and our purpose here on earth—why we're here and where we're going—and what God has created for what purpose we can only find from God through His Word and through His Truth.

Stop and think: I wonder what it would have been if Solomon would have been wholehearted and dedicated to God all his life? How would that have been with Israel? As we will see in a little bit, as the king did, so did the people.

Ecclesiastes 3:1: “To everything *there is* a season, and a time for every purpose under the heavens: A time to be born, and a time to die...” (vs 1-2). All that is here is all self-evident, understanding and wisdom. God wants us to have:

- *His* wisdom
- *His* understanding
- *His* way
- *His* Word

This is written for a lesson for us, and to show that we can understand certain things that are true through human living, human wisdom and human philosophy. This is what Solomon was doing, rather than concentrating on God.

“...a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what *is* planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to gain, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace (vs 2-8).

All the exercising of man, what he does, how he lives, where he goes. Stop and think about your life. I don't know how old you are, how young you are, but I can tell you that what he said here is absolutely true, and life goes by *whoosh!* So, the question becomes:

- What are we going to do with our lives?
- How are we going to learn the lesson of

Solomon?

After all, we are living in the Laodicean age! What is happening to us as a nation? as a world? *It's being taken away because of sin!* That's something that we really need to think about, and talk about the vanity of that. And out of that, God has called us, because He is preparing a kingdom to rule this world.

Let's learn the lesson here, the lesson that Solomon lays out for us. The key lesson is that **you begin leave God when you focus on yourself!** That is because, like with Solomon, **he became his own idol!** Yes, he acknowledged God, that's true, but let's see how far that he left God. What happened to him?

1-Kings 10[transcriber's correction]—here's the account of the Queen of Sheba heard of everything that Solomon had, the house that he had built, and she came to see it. She was 'blown away' with the beauty, pageantry, the wisdom, the satiation of everything. It was something. Solomon had a worldwide trading combine that went out with the Phoenicians from the Mediterranean Sea and out from the Red Sea down near Eilate, which is practically the name of it today.

Every three years they would come back. He was so important and so mighty, and all the kings of the world came to him to hear his wisdom. Look what we were just reading, what happened to him when he became self-centered.

When you become self-centered and begin to forget God, you begin to compromise. So, the Queen of Sheba came and she was 'blown away' and saw his throne and everything that there was. Silver was counted as nothing. She went back to her country just absolutely impressed.

Remember what the king was to do: *to copy and study for himself the Word of God!* Plus he gathered many Proverbs, many songs and he had all the Psalms of David all written down. If he would have given himself over to studying those things, rather than what we're going to read. It's interesting to note that when Ezra wrote about Solomon in 2-Chronicles, he did not include what is written in 1-Kings 11. Why he didn't do it, I don't know. But let's see what happened.

- How far would self and philosophy take you away from God?
- How much justification of sin and transgression can you come to?

Look at it from this point of view:

- How about the Christianity of this world?
✓ they claim to follow Christ

✓ they claim to know the way to eternal life

Yet, because they do not love God and keep His commandments—the way God says to do it—and especially rejecting the Sabbath and the Holy Days, **they are completely ignorant of the way of God, though they claim Christianity!**

This is a parallel of what happened to Solomon. What has happened to Christianity? *It has come to the point that it is embracing those abominations and sins that God says you are to never to do!*

- abortion
- homosexuality
- so-called homosexual marriages

The book of Leviticus says that if you cause your daughters to be whores, the land will be filled with violence; all the while we are claiming to be Christian. So there's a parallel, and we can see that follows what Solomon did. Let's learn some lessons and let's learn it in our lives:

- What are we to do with our lives?
- How are we to continue to grow and overcome?
- What do we really need to do so that we can always yield ourselves to God and not get in a situation like God has said to the Laodiceans?

That He has to correct us and stands at the door and knocks and says, 'If you open I will come into you.' The same thing has happened to the Laodiceans that happened to Solomon:

- I'm rich and increased with goods
- I have more than I know what to do with
- look at these buildings
- look at these schools
- Look at all of this that I have

1-Kings 11:1: "And King Solomon loved many foreign women, even the daughter of Pharaoh, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, Hittites; of the nations which the LORD had said to the children of Israel, **'You shall not go in to them, and they shall not go in to you; surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.'** But Solomon clung to these in love" (vs 1-2).

We witness how his heart was being turned in the book of Ecclesiastes. Notice how wholehearted he was in this, instead of being wholehearted to God. Where does it say of Solomon that he loved the Lord his God with all his heart, might, strength and being? *It doesn't!*

- What did he do as a replacement?

- What did he philosophically justify what he did?

Verse 3: “And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines. And his wives turned away his heart...”—that’s from God!

Solomon never really recovered, v 4: “For it came to pass when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods...” First commandments is *you shall have no other gods before Me!* That’s the last half of it. The first part of it is *I am the Lord your God Who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, you shall have no other gods before Me!*

He told him, wrote them, and if Solomon had written the Law as commanded, and

- if he would have studied it
- if he would have applied it to his life
- if he would have loved God

What did Solomon do with his *independent free moral agency* (IFMA)? *He chose to walk away from God!* Let’s see what happened.

“...And his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God as *was* the heart of David his father, for Solomon went after Ashtoreth...” (vs 4-5). Remember this: *as the king does, so do his...*

Sidebar: A young man comes up to his father and he has an attractive young woman from the tribe of the Ammonites and he says to his father, ‘I want to marry her.’ His father says, ‘No, God says you’re not to do that.’ *Well, the king does!*

Isn’t that the way people operate? *Yes!* So, the land became filled with sin; not filled with the blessings of God.

“...after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites” (v 5). [it got so bad that later the children of Israel were actually offering their children as live offerings to the fire god of Molech.

Verse 6: “And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD...” How did he get that way? *By starting to focus on himself! I, me and my!* Just in the first two chapters, 42 **I!**

Verse 7: “Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill, which *is* before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise he did for all his foreign wives, and burned incense and sacrificed to their gods” (vs 7-8). Can you imagine that!

The true God speaking to you in a dream

and blessing you with every possible blessing that you could have: wisdom, wealth, power, authority, worldwide influence. He took in 666 talents of gold as tribute from the world leaders, bringing it to him to hear his wisdom. ***And he turned his back on God!*** They burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. I wonder what he thought when he brought the offering to Molech and the priest of Molech was there, and he gave the offering and then burned incense and bowed down and prayed.

- I wonder what was in his mind?
- I wonder how he justified that?

Remember, it’s not how you start, it is how you finish! That’s going to be the whole story during the Millennium.

- Will God allow people to get self-centered?
- Will God allow people to being to leave Him?
- Will God allow people to not repent and come back?
- Will they reach a point where they will have to go to the ‘repentance center’?
- Will they repent?

Tomorrow we will talk about if they don’t repent when they are there. We do know that ‘the sinner shall die accursed.’ That means that there’s no more hope. That means that in his next waking moment he’ll be looking at the Lake of Fire.

Verse 9: “And the LORD *was* angry with Solomon because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel who had appeared to him twice.” You see the process! *I, me, my, myself!*

Verse 10: “And [God] had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; and he did not keep that which the LORD commanded.” Notice that God gave the sentence of His punishment against him.

The sentence of our punishment, if we don’t succeed—that’s why it’s important for us always have God first, to always remember that the most important thing for you to always remember is ***everything that you are, that you have, that you will be, and that you will have comes from God! Everything!*** That’s why God says that we are to love Him with ***all our heart, mind, soul and being!***

Do you want God to love you? *He’s already expressed it and shown it through Jesus Christ!*

- don’t worry about the things that you have to go through because of this wicked world
- don’t worry about the troubles you may have to face because you serve God

- God is with you
- God loves you
- God wants you in His kingdom

So that we can serve what God is going to do for all people during the Millennium!

Verse 11: “And the LORD said to Solomon... [God spoke to him] ...‘Since this has been done by you, and since you have not kept My covenant and My statutes which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.... [Isn’t that amazing?] ...But I will not do it in your days, for David your father’s sake, *but* I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Only, I will not tear away all the kingdom, *but* I will give one tribe to your son for David My servant’s sake, and for Jerusalem’s sake which I have chosen.’” (vs 11-13).

Think about this; here’s a parallel with our countries today, as the modern descendants of Israel. Take these verses that we just read and apply it to the whole of this nation, and of Britain, Europe, and those people who should be serving God! ***Because you have not obeyed My voice and kept My things!***

Verse 14: “And it came to pass the LORD stirred up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite....”

- Does that sound a little familiar?
- Are we not having the same thing today?
- *Yes, indeed!*

“...He *was* of the king’s seed in Edom” (v 14)—terrorist attacks!

Verse 18: “And they arose out of Midian and came to Paran. And *they* took men with them out of Paran and they came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and appointed food for him and gave him land.” The story is that he then had a terrorist army and came and afflicted the people of Israel with terrorist attacks! Does that sound familiar? *Yes, indeed! It’s right before us today!*

You can read the rest of the story. You can read the rest of everything here in Ecclesiastes to understand what Solomon did. And you can see how *self-deceptive* he was by *turning to himself!* He didn’t learn the lesson that ***the carnal mind is enmity against God, and that the heart of man is desperately wicked and evil!***

This is why these things are here for us, that we learn not do those same things. This is going to be a good lesson for us to be able to be kings, priests, servants and administrators in the Kingdom of God when Christ returns, and as spirit beings.

This is what we are going to teach the people. This is why today, right here at this Feast of Tabernacles that we are keeping, the very fact that we keep the Feast of Tabernacles shows that we understand that we are physical, we’re temporary and everything in this life is going to come to an end!

God has called us to eternal life, *to love Him eternally. to serve Him eternally*, and as we will see on the Last Great Day, to be given the greatest blessing of all: ***to live in New Jerusalem with God the Father and Jesus Christ!***

If we have that as our goal, if we have that as what is set before us by God, then we can set aside all of these physical things that give us problems in this life and bring them to God and ask Him to help us change and overcome. ***That is the lesson of Solomon!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Kings 3:3-15
- 2) 1 Kings 8:1
- 3) 1 Kings 9:1-7
- 4) Deuteronomy 17:14-20
- 5) Psalm 35:1-5
- 6) Ecclesiastes 1:1-18
- 7) Psalm 62:7-12
- 8) Ecclesiastes 2:1-26
- 9) Ecclesiastes 3:1-8
- 10) 1 Kings 11:1-14, 18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Kings 6; 7:57
- 1 John 3
- 2 Thessalonians 2
- 1 Kings 10

FRC:bo
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