

Putting Life in Perspective



Inspiring Bible Characters

Solomon

As we continue our study of inspiring bible characters, we meet King Solomon. Solomon, the son of King David, is known throughout the Word of God for his wisdom. In fact, the Lord asked him what he wanted most and Solomon requested that he be given a discerning heart to govern and distinguish between right and wrong (I Kings 3: 9). Solomon, in effect, was asking God for *wisdom*.

Scripture tells us that God granted Solomon his heart's desire and gave him great insight and a breadth of understanding. Solomon's wisdom was greater than any other man (I Kings 4: 29-31) .

Because we know King Solomon to be the wisest mortal man on Earth, it makes sense for us to examine his life and words to gain insight for ourselves.

The Bible tells us that Solomon is the author of the Book of Proverbs. Because the Book of Ecclesiastes follows a theme of wisdom and insight, King Solomon is widely believed to be the author of this Book of the Bible as well. Let us be inspired by the words of Solomon.

King Solomon—the **Wisest** Man on Earth...



Solomon puts life in perspective...

- Ecclesiastes 1: 1-4, 2: 12-14
 - King Solomon is saying that when you really think about it that *everything is meaningless—a chasing after the wind.*
 - *Generations come and generations go...* Solomon seems to be saying that our stay on Earth is temporary, therefore, everything in the world is really meaningless.
 - Question for Thought: What does Solomon mean by “everything is meaningless, a chasing after the wind?” *When I think of chasing wind, it seems that one could never really take hold of it. You can chase wind, but it would be pointless. Solomon seems to be saying that much of life is pointless because we’re going to die.*

Solomon searches for the true meaning of life...

- Ecclesiastes 1: 16-18, 2: 1-11
 - Solomon tries diligently to find something that is meaningful. Through scripture we see that he tries the following things to see if he can find true meaning in them: Wisdom, Knowledge, Laughter, Pleasure, Wine, Folly (Foolish Behavior), Great Projects (Career), Slaves, Flocks, Silver and Gold (Wealth), Harem (Sexual Pleasure), and various Personal Achievements.
 - Even after trying all of the above things, Solomon says that they all are really *meaningless...a chasing after the wind*.
 - Life Lesson: We tend to focus our lives on many of the things that King Solomon says are meaningless. Why do we focus so much of our lives chasing things that have no real worth or value?

A Time for Everything

- Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8
 - Solomon acknowledges that life goes through various phases. There will be a time in our life for everything. He seems to be saying that we should not be surprised when we encounter different “times” in our lives. It is to be expected that our lives will have different “seasons”.
 - What season is it in your life? You can be sure that whatever the season is, good or bad, that another season is coming.
 - Sometimes we get consumed with emotion when going through difficulty, we should take comfort in knowing that change is constant in our lives and that things won’t stay difficult forever.

*What **season** is it in your life?
Remember that **seasons change...***



Enjoy Life

- Ecclesiastes 9: 7, 9-10, 12
 - **Solomon is telling us to enjoy life.** We should realize that though the things of this life are meaningless, that the best that we can do while we are here is to enjoy the life we have.
 - **Many of us spend too much time worrying.** Life is temporary. Why worry about something that isn't going to last? Many of us will look back and regret that we spent so much of our time in despair instead of enjoying what we can of our experience on Earth.

Solomon finds the true meaning of life...

- In his search for true meaning in life, Solomon tried it all. He tried pleasure, wisdom, wealth, wine, sex, career, foolishness, and personal achievements—and none of it really meant anything. Solomon realized the reality of what he was facing—death. Because we die, none of what we do here on Earth will provide lasting meaning for us. We won't be able to enjoy it, because we'll be dead. At the end of Ecclesiastes, Solomon finds the only thing that really matters...
- Ecclesiastes 12: 13-14

Solomon Inspires Us

- King Solomon's assertions in Ecclesiastes should inspire us to put our lives in perspective.
 - Why worry about things that in the end really won't matter?
 - Why focus so much energy and time on that which is meaningless?
 - Why chase things that you can have only temporarily?
 - Enjoy your life experience here on Earth.
 - Be sure to focus on the most important thing— Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the **WHOLE DUTY** of man.