

Associates for Scriptural Knowledge • P.O. Box 25000, Portland, OR 97298-0990, USA

© ASK, August 2016 • Telephone: 503 292 4352

Webpage on the Internet: <http://www.askelm.com> • E-Mail address: askoffice@askelm.com

Dear Associates and Friends,

August 2016

The narrative of the glory, greatness, sin, and death of King Solomon is the subject of this month's article "[Israel and Judah: 19. Solomon's Glory and Death](#)." King Solomon's wisdom did not keep him from sinning. His knowledge was not enough, his understanding was not enough, and his wisdom was not enough for him to avoid sinning. Solomon's great wisdom was given to him as a gift from God Himself, but his wisdom was still influenced by his flesh and worldly affairs.¹ As a result, it seems Solomon did not live as long as his father King David who lived an extremely active and dangerous life, suffering many injuries in battle, yet Solomon's reign was peaceful, without any record of revolutions, invasions by foreign armies, famines, plagues, or natural disasters.

Exclusivity

God insists on, and God demands, exclusive worship by Israel toward Him alone. This is what the Old Covenant is about: worship only YHWH. No exceptions ever, for any reason. Other gods exist. They are real. They are active. Israel knew that. Yet God taught Israel what to do when they agreed to enter a Covenant with YHWH at Mount Sinai. Solomon knew what God required. In fact, Solomon correctly taught the people, reminding them what God required of them when he offered His prayer to God dedicating the Temple.² God acknowledged Solomon and the people by having fire consume the sacrifices and God's glory entered the Temple.

Yet, at the end of his life, Solomon, with all his wisdom, went and did the exact opposite of what he knew to do. Let me ask you, don't you wish that one time God Himself would tell you exactly what you should do? He did that for Solomon. He did it twice. Certainly you would do what God told you to do, wouldn't you? Solomon probably thought, surely with my wisdom it will be easy for me to obey God. Yet Solomon sinned big. He helped his wives commit idolatry in Israel. Solomon did this as King over God's people Israel. God was angry.

Not good.

Solomon committed idolatry. How could he be so stupid? Well, there were outside influences. The biblical narratives tell us, Solomon (whose name means "peace") had a long, peaceful, and prosperous 40-year reign, with the prosperity extending to many in his realm, particularly those in Judah (1 Kings 4:27; 2 Chronicles 1:15, 9:27).³ Along with David's 33-year reign over a united Kingdom of Israel, the father-son reigns of David-Solomon were looked upon by future generations of Israelites as a golden age.

You will read in this month's article that even when God gives direct instructions, and gives them to the wisest man who ever lived,⁴ sin still enters to cause even the wisest man to fail. Only God through Christ can

¹ People talk about "the world, the flesh, and the devil" as influences causing us all to sin. There is no evidence in the biblical narrative that the devil directly influenced Solomon. Satan probably did not have to do so because Solomon's flesh and worldly influences (his 700 wives and 300 concubines and their religious "influence" is mentioned) were enough to lead Solomon into idolatry. Satan never had to bother tempting Solomon directly.

² "[Israel and Judah: 18. Temple Interior and Dedication](#)."

³ Jesus said, "**You have the poor always with you**" (Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8). There were poor in Solomon's time.

⁴ Of course, Solomon is the wisest man except for Jesus who did not sin, because of who He was, and because He had God's Spirit without measure (John 3:34). We have a gift from God, "**Who has also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our**

give us the power to save us from sin and resurrect us from death. Remember, this is how God made us. We cannot help but sin because we are all from Adam. Only through Christ, the last Adam, can we begin to overcome sin, the flesh, the devil, and the world (1 Corinthians 15:46 and following). We will not be totally successful this side of death. Christ's righteousness is applied to us by virtue of God's Spirit being resident within us believers.

Solomon had everything going for him: wisdom, fame, power, wealth, lineage (the son of a famous king who never lost a battle) and God's blessing upon him to rule God's own people. But Solomon failed to live up to what he himself promised God when he accepted YHWH's renewal of His Davidic covenant. Solomon's failure is an example to us. Even he was helpless to resist sin without God's Holy Spirit. We should learn from the story of his life, the Proverbs (Solomon compiled most of them) and from the practical advice on living that Solomon gives in the Book of Ecclesiastes.⁵

New YouTube Video Online

On May 18, 2016, I was a guest on a Koinonia House internet radio program with Chuck Missler, Bob Cornuke, and Ron Matsen, broadcast to a large internet audience. This particular show was titled "Searching for the REAL Jewish Temple Location!" It lasts a bit over an hour with no commercials.

Amazon.com and Dr. Martin's Book: The Temples That Jerusalem Forgot

There has been a mistaken perception that Dr. Martin's *Temples* book is not in print because it is not available on Amazon.com. This is not true. On Amazon a used copy of *Temples* sells used for \$60 or more. But I have good news! *Temples is still in print.* It has always been in print, and available for sale through ASK. Order it here! The cost is \$29.95 within the U.S. (\$34.95 to Canada, \$39.95 outside the U.S. and Canada), postage paid.

It is for reasons of cost that none of Dr. Martin's books are currently available through Amazon. At present we barely recoup our costs on books that we sell, and if we sold through Amazon, we would lose money with every sale.

Thank You

It may seem strange, but we should perhaps be thankful we were not Solomon. God has us living at a time when we do not have to obey God's Old Covenant. We can obey God's law of love, which fulfills law — law of any kind (Romans 13:8, 10; Galatians 5:14). And in our present day we have greater resources available to us to learn the Word of God than the world has ever had available. We hope ASK is part of those resources and merits your support.

We are thankful for your contributions that allow us to teach the wisdom and grace of God, not the wisdom and law of men. Trends of today are propelling our world in directions that can be understood in the future. Our purpose is that your faith may flourish and the love of each of you may increase (2 Thessalonians 1:3), no matter what your circumstances.

Thank you all who encourage us in our work and support us with your prayers. May God bless each of you with increased understanding of His Word and proper wisdom to apply that Word in love.

David W. Sielaff
david@askelm.com

hearts" (2 Corinthians 1:22). It may be a tiny smidgen of His Spirit, but it is enough for us "**to be sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise**" (Ephesians 1:13).

⁵ Dr. Ernest Martin, "[The Book of Proverbs: Its Structure, Design and Teaching](#)" and "[The Book of Ecclesiastes.](#)"