

CHAPTER 10

IDOLATROUS SOLOMON

What is an IDOL? An idol is an object of passionate devotion. It is something that is worshiped and loved as a god. An idol is something in a person's life that takes the place of the true God. An idol is a person or thing that becomes a SUBSTITUTE for God.

How are we to love God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)?

_____ God demands our supreme devotion! The Lord Jesus said that He wants us to love Him even more than we love our own F _____ and our own M _____ (Matthew 10:37). In Exodus 20:3 we read the first of the 10 Commandments: "Thou shalt have no other _____ before Me." There is no other God because He is the only true God, *but* it is possible for us to make gods and give them the devotion that we should give to the true God. In this first commandment God was saying, "I COME FIRST! BE SURE TO GIVE ME FIRST PLACE IN YOUR LIFE!" Anything that we let have first place in our lives other than God is an idol. Anything that occupies the place in our hearts that is due to God is an idol.

Sometimes people make a god out of things and possessions (boat, car, house, money, etc.). This is another form of idolatry. The Bible says that the covetous man is an _____ (see Ephesians 5:5) and that covetousness is the same thing as _____ (Colossians 3:5). Covetousness is "the desire to have more (and more and more)." This would be true in the case of the person who worships the dollar bill!

If a person wants to serve God, then what should be done with idols (see Exodus 32:20; 2 Kings 18:4)? _____ The believers who lived in Thessalonica once worshipped idols, but after Paul preached the gospel to them they "turned to _____ from _____ to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9). They turned from the cheap substitutes to serve the real thing!

Solomon Started Well

Solomon was David's son. When Solomon became king over all of Israel he started off well. He was a wise and godly king.

At the end of David's life, he gave his son Solomon very important instructions. We can read these instructions in 1 Chronicles 28:9-10 and 1 Kings 2:1-4. What were some of the things that David told Solomon? (You can put these in your own words.)

Solomon had a godly father who wanted God's best for him.

What does the Bible say in 1 Kings 3:3 that shows us that Solomon started off well?

_____ In 1 Kings 3:5 God made an amazing statement to Solomon. He said something like this: "SOLOMON, YOU ASK WHATEVER YOU WANT AND I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU. WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU?" If God were to say this to you, what would you want God to give you? Riches? Long life? Happiness? What did Solomon ask for (1 Kings 3:9-12)?

_____ What else did God give him as a bonus (1 Kings 3:13)? _____ God is a very generous God who loves to give to His children. If we seek first the kingdom of God (put God first in our lives), then He has promised to add all kinds of things (see Matthew 6:33). Those who put God first can never lose out. Those who do not put God first always lose out.

An example of Solomon's wisdom is given in 1 Kings 3:16-28. If you had been in Solomon's place would you have thought of this solution?

God's rich blessing was upon Solomon and upon his kingdom. Do the following MATCHING problem to see some of the ways that God blessed this man:

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| 1. | _____ | Solomon was given literary ability to write songs and proverbs. | A. | 1 Kings 4:21 |
| 2. | _____ | An abundance of horses and chariots | B. | 1 Kings 4:24 |
| 3. | _____ | Riches (gold and silver) | C. | 1 Kings 4:26 |
| 4. | _____ | Dominion (ruled over all kingdoms) | D. | 1 Kings 4:29 |
| 5. | _____ | Ability to answer hard questions | E. | 1 Kings 4:32 |
| 6. | _____ | Wisdom and Understanding | F. | 1 Kings 4:33 |
| 7. | _____ | Fame | G. | 1 Kings 4:34; 10:1 |
| 8. | _____ | Peace | H. | 1 Kings 10:3 |
| 9. | _____ | Scientific Knowledge pertaining to nature, plants and animals. He could have been the perfect guide to any "museum of natural history." | I. | 1 Kings 10:14-17, 21, 27 |

God's great blessing was upon Solomon. In the early chapters of 1 Kings you can read about how Solomon built the most beautiful and magnificent temple the world has ever known. When Jesus wanted to talk about a glorious kingdom, whose kingdom did He choose to use for His illustration (Luke 12:27)? _____ When Jesus wanted to compare His wisdom with the wisdom of some other man, what man did He choose for His illustration (Matthew 12:42)? _____ Solomon's wisdom is even seen in his great prayer at the time when the temple was dedicated (see 1 Kings 8:22-61). Solomon was a God-fearing and a God-conscious man!

But God knew that Solomon's heart was sinful and God gave him a strong warning in 1 Kings 9:6-9. What was Solomon told not to do (1 Kings 9:6)?

Solomon's Downfall

At the end of his life Solomon made this wise statement: "For there is _____ a just man upon earth, that doeth _____ and _____ not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20). Solomon was not an exception to this. He too fell into sin and great was his fall! We learn about Solomon's downfall in 1 Kings chapter 11.

In 1 Kings 11:1 the word "strange" means "foreign." Rulers would often marry foreign wives for political reasons. In this verse we see that Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh the king of Egypt. He also married the daughters of other foreign kings. In this way these kings would think twice about getting angry at Solomon and attacking his land. After all, who would want to endanger his own daughter or go against his own son-in-law?

The problem was that these foreign women would bring their own religions and their own false gods with them! Was Solomon paying attention to what God had said (Exodus 34:13-17; Deut. 7:1-4)? _____ Why did God tell the Jews not to marry foreign women (Deut. 7:4)?

_____ Did this happen to Solomon? _____ Read John 14:15,23. Did Solomon love the Lord at this point in his life? _____ Did God's Word have first place in his life? _____

Read 1 Kings 11:3. A concubine was a secondary or inferior wife. For example, Jacob had two wives (Rachel and Leah) and two inferior wives who were slaves (Bilhah and Zilpah)--see Gen. 29:21-29.

How many wives did Solomon have in total (counting both wives and concubines)--1 Kings 11:3? _____ [A little boy came home from Sunday School one day and said, "Mommy, today I learned that Solomon had 700 wives and 300 porcupines!"] Did God warn the king not to "multiply wives" (Deuteronomy 17:14-17)? _____ Did Solomon heed this warning? _____ As we saw in the last chapter, David also multiplied wives and had concubines (see 2 Samuel 5:13 and 15:16).

When in Solomon's life did his downfall come (1 Kings 11:4)? _____ Did he follow the Lord fully (1 Kings 11:6)? _____ If a person does not go fully after the Lord then that person has idols in his life that need to be destroyed! See 1 Kings 11:7-8. Solomon built high places (shrines, places of worship) for all his wives to honor their pagan gods. These shrines dotted the hills surrounding Jerusalem. Two of the false gods that Solomon honored were C _____ and M _____ (verse 7). Children were sacrificed to these gods in fire! Parents tried to show their love for this false god by sacrificing their own child! What a cruel and wicked practice in the name of religion! What did God think of all of this (1 Kings 11:9)? _____ Was Solomon obedient to God (1 Kings 11:10)? _____ In 1 Kings 11:11 and in the verses following you can read about the terrible punishment and trouble that came upon Solomon and those who followed him because of his great sin.

Consider Nehemiah 13:26: "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things?" Read the rest of this verse! Solomon had so much going for him but he let certain things become more important to him than God and God's Word.

Idols Today?

You might say, "I have never built a shrine to the god Molech and I never plan to have more than one marriage partner." This may be so, but this does not mean that we do not have idols in our life. Anything can be an idol: Sports (baseball, football, skiing), girl friend, boy friend, television, money. Can you think of other things? **HERE'S THE IDOL TEST:** Think of those things in life that mean a great deal to you. If you were to lose this thing, would it destroy you? Take football for example. Suppose you were not able to play football because of an injury or for some other reason. What would that do to you? **REMEMBER 1 JOHN 5:21.** Keep yourself from the false, empty and unreal gods because we have the **REAL AND TRUE GOD** (1 John 5:20)!

*"Little children, keep
yourselves from idols.
Amen" (1 John 5:21)*