



# Message Guide

FOR MAY 25, 2025

## "CHOICES"-2: THE RIGHT CHOICE, WRONG APPLICATION



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We are in a series of messages called, "Choices." Last week we talked about the path to the Father through a costly choice. That how David, as a precursor to Christ, offered a costly sacrifice in response to his sin which was honored by God. And how Christ would later offer Himself as the once for all, infinitely precious sacrifice for our sin.

Throughout this year, we have been taking a look at the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel and the genealogy of Jesus. Old Testament characters can be tough. We know their names and associate them with a lot of good, but when we look a little deeper than the stories they are known for, there is a lot of brokenness. But seeing these stories in the Bible can give us the assurance that God uses messed up people, people like us.

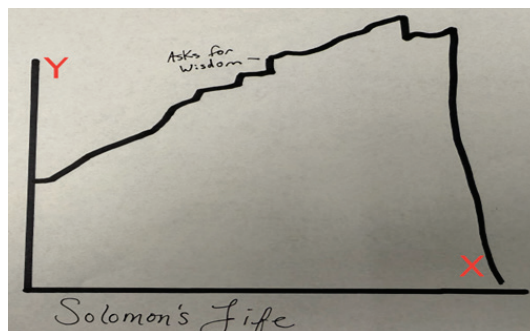
### 1. Do you see yourself as being a little messed up? How has God used you in spite of your messiness?

One of the messed-up people from the Old Testament that God used, is a man named Solomon. Solomon was the third king of Israel and the son of King David. Solomon was the wisest and richest man in the Bible who established the Kingdom of Israel as a regional power and symbol of wealth. If you read 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles, where the life and reign of Solomon are depicted, you will read about his absurd wealth and influence. He wrote the Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and most famously, the Proverbs. Undoubtedly, Solomon is one of the most influential figures in all the Old Testament. The Jews really believed that Solomon's kingdom was the apex of their history and that Messiah would return them to a similar kingdom, which is why it really ticked off the religious leaders when Jesus said of Himself, "Behold, something greater than Solomon is here" (**Matthew 12:42b (ESV)**).

#### Solomon's life graph:

"X axis" - Represents the span of Solomon's life

"Y axis" - Depicts a variable over the course of Solomon's life.





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We are examining Solomon's life in the Kings narrative and not Chronicles. The reason for this is that even though Kings and Chronicles hold much of the same information, they have two wildly different agendas. The Chronicler (maybe Ezra) is speaking to a post-exile people to give them hope as they rebuild their once prosperous kingdom. It is much more encyclopedia than editorial. Conversely, the writer of Kings (maybe Jeremiah) is speaking to an audience in the midst of exile to tell them where they went wrong. It is much more editorial than encyclopedia. So, I think we will gain from the author's not-so-subtle commentary on Solomon.

## Solomon's Story:

Solomon is born in 2 Samuel 12 to King David and Bathsheba. We skip over his childhood and land in 1 Kings 2, where Solomon is anointed King of Israel. Then Solomon wins this Game of Thrones type power struggle between himself, one of his half-brothers, and one of King Saul's relatives. As king he starts to build alliances with places like Egypt, so the man is a politician. He marries a princess. He acknowledges that God is still above him and makes a sacrifice of 1,000 burnt offerings to the Lord. He's generous! But here's what would really bring a tear to your eye: The Lord appears to Solomon in a dream and offers him anything. Solomon admits that being king is hard and he doesn't really know what he's doing. He's humble. So, he asks for wisdom so he can govern God's people well. And God gives it to him. Not only that, but God promises wealth and honor on top of wisdom that will surpass every other person of his day. That's just the beginning of Solomon's reign!

Solomon built an amazing elaborate temple for the Lord out of stone and cedar; he built his own house too. He established trade relations with Egypt and because of that, he had 40,000 horses, 12,000 horsemen, and 1,400 chariots. He continued to make sacrifices to the Lord 3 times a year. Yes, there were some questionable decisions along the way. He allowed foreigners into the land... but he made them slaves (points off for Solomon). He had over 700 wives and 300 concubines. But "he made silver as common as stone" and "cedar as common as sycamore." We can look past some moral issues in his personal life because he's an amazing king. We all have our issues, right?

But then we get to the end of his reign, and out of nowhere, Solomon build alters to false gods like Molech, who, if you don't know about Molech, was a god who people would sacrifice their babies to but placing them on red hot bronze. "Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord." So, God surrounded Solomon with adversaries in nations to the North and South and even raised one up in Jerusalem. Then... Solomon dies.

It was going so well! We were so proud of our boy Solomon. He was successful, influential, savvy, wise, godly. Did he really go from glory to depravity so quickly? What happened?

Three options:

- Solomon made a really dumb decision and God quickly and harshly punished him.
- Something happened in Solomon's life that caused him to turn away from God.
- Solomon fooled everyone. Including himself.



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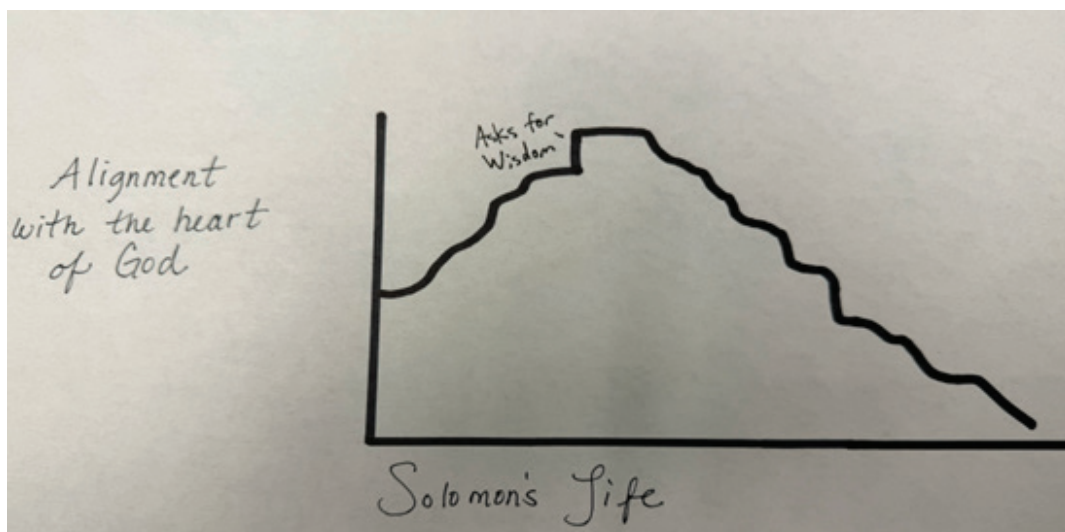
## 2. Why would someone want to live in Solomon's kingdom?

## 3. Do you believe Solomon's kingdom aligns with the heart of God? Why or why not?

To help us answer this second question, let's take a look at what the Bible says that kings should and shouldn't do. Read Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (ESV).

- 1st Note: God's providence is on display. 400 years before Saul was appointed king, God gave instructions for how a king should act. He knew that would be the direction of His people.
- 2nd Note: This is why we need to read our Bible, even books like Deuteronomy. It may be hard to get through, but if you don't you wouldn't see many key teaching points in Scripture, which brings us to our 3rd note.
- 3rd Note: Remember that the author of Kings was writing more of an editorial than an encyclopedia. There are very intentional details regarding Solomon's kingdom. The author of 1 Kings is making a direct reference to God's law in Deuteronomy 17, in order to condemn Solomon. While Solomon's kingdom was shiny, it was dead.

Let's now take a look to see if our "y-axis" is in "alignment with the heart of God" using Deuteronomy 17 as our measuring rod.





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- Solomon is born and does all these great things as soon as he's anointed king.
- Then he asks for wisdom, and God gives it to him and then also blesses him with wealth and influence.
- Next, Solomon starts building the temple. Seems great right?

The choice to build a temple was neither right nor wrong, but it's what Solomon does with it that determines the morality. God ends up blessing it once it is completed, but he never asked for it, yet Solomon makes this grand gesture that was not desired by God, the crowning achievement of his devotion to the Lord.

## 4. When have you achieved something that wasn't necessarily desired by God?

Before the Temple is finished, Solomon builds a much bigger palace for himself above the city and away from the people. Sounds like his heart was lifted up above his brothers. He acquired 40,000 horses and sent his people to Egypt so that they could acquire more. Remember, He must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord has said to you, 'You shall never return that way again' (Deuteronomy 17:16.)

He amassed 700 wives over the course of his reign and stored up incredible amounts of silver and gold - he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold (Deuteronomy 17:17). The Lord's words come to pass, and Solomon turns to the gods of his wives and did what was evil in the sight of the one true God.

What we see here from the perspective of the Lord is not that Solomon was doing everything right and was super successful and was everything we should aspire to be and how God intends for His people to function, we see a young boy in the shadow of his father who receives incredible blessing from God, and makes a series of choices to use those gifts in a way that lead him toward a path of idolatry and spiritual destruction.

So, what is the author of Kings trying to communicate to his audience? Remember, were in the midst of captivity wondering what got them to this point, and how they would do things differently if they ever got out.

### **Application: Wisdom ≠ Obedience**

Solomon was wiser than any other person alive. Not only did he have this innate sense of wisdom, but he also knew the Scriptures. Solomon was not lacking in knowledge; he just chose to use that knowledge to build a kingdom for himself instead of God. Yes, "Solomon built God a temple and sacrificed to him all the time!" But... **do you think as long as you do all the things to make God happy then you can go do whatever you want?**