

Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, OT History, Lit., and Theology, Lecture 25

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This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his Old Testament History, Literature, and Theology course lecture number 25: David's sin with Bathsheba and transition to Solomon.

A couple things before we get started. Let me just say that the test for this class is on Monday from 9:00-11:00. Is that correct? Can anyone confirm that? Monday 9:00-11:00 right here. I think that is correct. So Monday 9:00-11:00 in here for our final exam.

There are a couple other things. The review sessions, Grace has got this room reserved on Friday night from 6:00-8:00. She'll be doing a review session in here. On Tuesday night it won't do you any good. So Friday night and Tuesday night in here from 6:00-8:00 in the evening she has got the room reserved for a review session.

I'm feeling kind of lousy with this thing in my throat and I coughed half the night away. So I'm glad I'm not sitting where you are or I'd be falling asleep. When you teach it is hard to fall asleep. But also when I get sick I get cranky. So I'll probably be a little bit more cranky than I am normally. But I also realize that I am cranky. So I realize this is a New Testament concept but it is called the concept of grace. I would like to introduce a little bit of it here. Some of you skipped class, shame on you, Tuesday before Thanksgiving and you still have not taken the makeup which is a week over due. You get a week to make up your quizzes. Tomorrow I will be in my office from 9:00 until 2:00 if you haven't taken that Tuesday quiz after you shamefully skipped before Thanksgiving, you can come in and take the quiz. Tomorrow is absolutely it. This is just a special deal. Does that make sense for everybody? So if you haven't taken it please think about it. After this it is over. I'm down the road. I'm returning it to the other people who took it.

Now one other thing, on the transcriptions that some of you have done for extra credit. It was due Tuesday, last week; it was due Dec. 1. If you've done one already it is

over. But if you have not done anything and you realize you are in trouble in this course and you want to do extra credit I've had several people bail out. So I've got about ten of these transcriptions if anybody is interested. If you have already done one it's over. If you had one and didn't do it I don't want to mess with you again. But if you have not tried it and you'd like to try it there are about ten of these transcriptions. Email me and I'll try to set that up for you. That's what they call *charis* which means "grace." So that's where we are for the course. The makeup is on Wednesday.

The other thing, is I cleared off my desk for the first time in a long time and I have a bunch of quizzes here. The people turned in their quizzes with no names on them. I have no clue who these people are. If you go to Blackboard, Blackboard will have your grades listed. You guys have been to Blackboard. They are not weighted there but they are listed. If you find you took a quiz, you know you took the quiz, it may be you didn't write your name on the quiz. So I've got the quizzes here that are unnamed. And if you find that to be the case come up and see me and we'll try to figure out which one is yours. I think that's all I need to say. Any questions on any of that?

We've got a quiz on Thursday and then a final exam on Monday. The final will not be comprehensive and I will have a study guide out for you guys Friday morning. I'll teach this class Thursday late in the afternoon and Thursday night I'll produce the study guide. Friday morning I will be emailing you the study guide so that you'll have it for the weekend. So the study guide will be coming out this Friday morning first thing in the morning. The exam will cover from the last exam until now, or until Thursday. The exam is Monday 9:00-11:00.

Let's begin with a word of prayer and we'll get started: *Father, we thank you for this day. We thank you that you put things in our lives to make us realize that we are but dust. That life passes, we get sick and things happen so easily to us. We're so frail in one sense. Father we thank you for your Word. We thank you for David who was a person after your own heart. We pray you may help us to learn things from David and his son Solomon who you gave the gift of wisdom. May we also have wisdom for this time of the semester, Father, when there is pressure on everybody. We pray you might*

help these folks to study hard and learn much and that even their studies might be an act of worship to you. Realizing that you have given us minds to explore all these different disciplines that you have created and to see your handiwork in art, and history and music, and science, sociology and psychology. And now we have the great privilege of reading your word. We pray you might help us to understand it this day, in Christ's name, Amen.

Review of David's Sin with Bathsheba

We are going to jump back into David. We were talking last time about David and Bathsheba. We talked about David's sin with Bathsheba, right? When kings went out to war over here in Jordan. Joab and the boys are fighting while David's over here in Jerusalem. He has an affair with Bathsheba. He calls Uriah the Hittite back. We talked about the process of temptation and how guys often times have a problem with their eyes, and the problem with "second looks" and intention, and action based on desire. Then I've heard people preach this passage and they blame Bathsheba for this thing. I don't think Bathsheba is really at fault, David's the one who's at fault here. But it's a normal thing, and I kind of like it, whenever a guy gets in trouble he always blames it on the woman, it's a good method--doesn't work in my house, but some people try to pull it off.

Uriah, as it turns out, is an upright person. Uriah comes back from the war in Transjordan where he has been for several months fighting, and he does not go back and sleep with his wife even though David's trying to set that up to cover over the pregnancy. So Uriah is upright. The reason Uriah doesn't go to his wife is because the ark of God is out fighting and Uriah says, "how can I sleep with my wife while the ark of God is in a tent in battle." David then gets him drunk, but even drunk, Uriah doesn't go down to her.

Nathan the Prophet confronts David with a story

Nathan tells the parable about the guy with the little lamb and the guy with hundreds of sheep, and how the guy with hundreds of sheep takes the other man's one sheep that he had. Basically Nathan is rebuking David. Nathan is the prophet--the prophet rebukes the king. The prophet keeps the king in check. Then what usually happens is, the prophet goes to the king and says "repent." Then what does the king usually do? The

king beats up on the prophet. So the prophets get beat up a lot. The kings have a lot more power than the prophets do. The prophet speaks the word of God.

Another role that I didn't develop last time, do you remember how God gave his word in the covenant, this treaty, this oath, between God and the people from Mount Sinai? The prophet is kind of like a prosecuting attorney, that he goes at the king and says, "King, you've sinned, you've broken the covenant with God." So the prophets are like prosecuting attorneys prosecuting on the basis of the covenant of God and they come to the king. They are a check and balance, almost like in America how we're supposed to have checks and balances, between Congress, the Executive Branch, and the Judicial Branch. This is a system of checks and balances between the king and the prophets.

David's response: repentance

So Nathan goes to David, tells him the story of the little lamb, David gets really upset, Nathan says, "David, you're the man. You took this guy's one little wife that he loved. David you've got how many wives now? You took Uriah's only wife. David you're the man." Nathan's a good guy. David doesn't beat up on Nathan, David repents. We want to walk through that.

Let me read the story, "Then Nathan said to David, 'David, you are the man. This is what the Lord God of Israel says, I have anointed you king over Israel, I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. If all this had been too little I would have given you more.'" God just tells David all the benefits. Then he says, verse 10: "Therefore the sword will never depart from your house because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own." And God says then, "Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you. Before your very eyes I will take your wives and give them to one who is close to you." I'm going to take your wives and give them to someone else. So, it will be just like how David took Uriah's wife. Now who would take David's wives and violate them openly? It's Absalom, David's own son who's going to violate his own concubines in full view of everybody. So David is going to be shamed by his own son Absalom. What happens next? "You did it in secret but I

will do it in broad daylight before Israel. Then David said to Nathan ‘I have sinned against the Lord.’” David repents. He realizes he’s sinned. He doesn’t get mad, he admits, “I have sinned against the Lord.” “Nathan replied, ‘The Lord has taken away your sin. You are not going to die. But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the Lord to show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.’” So now David knows that the son who’s going to be born is going to die.

Now how does that affect him as a father? He starts fasting and praying. He knows God has already told him the child is going to die, nevertheless he prays. Is it possible to pray against God’s will? David already knows God’s will is to take the child but David prays against it anyway. He’s hoping that God might be merciful and God might change his mind. We’ve seen God be merciful in several examples in Scripture. So David prays for that mercy: “David pleaded with God for the child and he fasted and spent nights in his house laying on the ground. The Elders of the household stood beside him to get him up from the ground but he refused and he would not eat any food with them.” So David now is fasting, he won’t eat any food. He is really really upset. “On the seventh day the child died. David’s servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead. [Why were the servants afraid to tell David the child was dead] while the child was still living we spoke to David but he would not listen to us, how can we tell him the child is dead, he may do something desperate.” David’s child dies because of David’s sin. It is possible they think David may kill himself. He may do something stupid because he’s so upset. “David noticed that his servants were whispering among themselves and he realized that the child was dead. ‘Is the child dead?’ he asked, ‘Yes’ they replied ‘he is dead.’”

Now watch David’s reaction here, it’s really kind of interesting: “Yes, they replied, he is dead. Then David got up from the ground and after he had washed his clothes and put on lotions and changed his clothes he went into the house of the Lord and he worshipped, then he went into his own house. At his request they served him food and he ate.” Now all of his servants are freaking out saying, “Wait a minute, we told you the kid was dead.” When David is told the kid is dead he gets up, takes a shower and eats. What kind of grieving process is that? “So his servants asked him, ‘why are you acting

this way? While the child was alive you fasted and wept but now the child is dead you get up and eat?" He answered, "While the child was still alive I fasted and wept, I thought, who knows, the Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live. But now he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again?" Then David makes this statement, "I will go to him, but he will not return to me. And David comforted his wife Bathsheba and then they had another son, by the way, their next son was named what? *Shlomo* (Solomon).

Stages of Repentance

So, I want to talk through the stages of repentance. I want to use Psalm 51 because it is the story of David's repentance. So David actually records his reaction to this incident with Bathsheba in Psalm 51. It's a beautiful Psalm you're going to recognize some of these verses. First, let me set the stage. Has somebody ever said they were sorry to you? Has someone ever hurt you, and then said they were sorry? Are there different ways of saying you're sorry?

Try this, last night I was teasing my wife and she was getting more and more angry and I thought it was funny that she was getting all upset over this thing that was so minor. So I kept at it and she kept getting angrier and angrier. I thought this is totally absurd and then I realized I had gotten her really, really angry. So I said to apologize "Annette, I need to apologize. I'm sorry that you feel that way." Question: what kind of an apology is that? Is that an apology for what you did? Is that like the worst apology ever? You're putting the blame on her for overreacting. "I'm sorry you're feeling that way." That's really stupid. That's no apology at all, as a matter of fact is that an insult? "I'm sorry you feel that way." It's like saying, "you're the one who overreacted, chill out!" I've seen people apologize like that and it was bogus.

The first thing to do is acknowledge "I did it and it was wrong." I shouldn't have egged her on last night unto the point she got angry. It was wrong. The first thing you've got to acknowledge was: "I did it and it was wrong." It is an acknowledgement that it was wrong.

Now, do some people have a difficult time acknowledging they were in the

wrong? The first stage of repentance is to realize that what I did was not right. Now David says this, “Have mercy upon me, O God according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion, blot out my transgression, wash away all my iniquity, cleanse me from my sin for I know my transgressions, my sin is always before me. Against you and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So that you may be proved right when you speak. Surely I was sinful at birth.” Then he goes on, this is where it turns beautiful, “Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean. Wash me and I will be whiter than snow. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.”

Now, when he says “God please don’t take your Holy Spirit from me” what was probably going through his mind? Have we seen the Holy Spirit taken from another king? The Spirit of God went off Saul to come on David. So David is saying “I know I messed up but don’t take your Holy Spirit from me like you did with Saul.” So, “I did it and it was wrong.”

The second level to repentance is “I did it, and it hurt you.” This is the stage when the person realizes that what they did actually hurt the other person. We live in a very narcissistic society that’s focused on the “I” and “me.” What this says is you’ve got to get out of yourself and realize with compassion the damage you’ve done on another person. I know a couple that’s on the verge of divorce. This guy goes to his wife whom he loves and he says to her “I love you.” After all the stuff she’s done to him he says, “I still love you. I love you and I want to let you know that I’ll forgive whatever you’ve done, I just love you.” She looked at him and she said, (they’ve been married for five years) “I don’t love you, and as a matter of fact, I’m not sure I ever loved you.” Question: what does that do to that guy? In other words, this is all about her and her happiness. Did she realize what she just did to him? The problem is she can’t get outside of herself. So she just stuck a knife in him and yet it’s like nothing ever happened because she didn’t have any feelings outside of herself because she’s so centrally focused on herself. Basically it’s called narcissism, you can only feel for yourself. In marriage you have to be able to feel what’s going on with the other person, you have to put yourself in their

shoes and say, “I’m really so sorry I hurt you like that” By the way, suppose you did say something like “I never loved you in the first place,” what should you do after that? Now is there a need for an apology? “I really didn’t mean to hurt you like. I’m sorry. What I said was really wicked.”

So first of all, “I did it, it was wrong,” acknowledging what you did, then “I did it and it hurt you,” realizing the damage in the other person. But David doesn’t stop there. David says, “I was sinful from the time I was born.” In other words, David says this isn’t something that I’m just going to change, it’s not, “O, I did something wrong, but I won’t do it again.” Now David’s saying, “No, it’s not what I did, it’s me. The whole of my being is corrupt. It’s not just what I did, it’s me at the core of my being, I’ve been sinful from the time I was born.” It’s “I wholly I.” In other words, this singular act the killing of Uriah and the taking of Bathsheba, is not just a separate act that was done. This reflects who I am, to the core of my being, I’m a sinner to my core. “I wholly I.” This is when a person realizes how sin is in the core of their being.

The last stage I want to look at is just briefly, David makes a statement in Psalm 51, verse 4, “I know my transgression and my sin is always before me.” Then David makes this statement, question: is this statement always true? David says, “Against you and you only have I sinned” (he’s talking to God) “and done what is evil in your sight.” Is that statement true. “Against you, God, and you only have I sinned.” Is that true? I don’t think that’s true. I’m not saying there’s an error in the Bible. This is poetry. In poetry do you have hyperbole? What is hyperbole? It is an overstatement for emphasis, an exaggeration. In poetry do you focus on one thing at a time and give it all sorts of metaphors in poetry focusing on that one thing. I think David here is focusing on his relationship with God. He is so focused on God all the other things drop away. Now has David sinned against Uriah? He had killed Uriah! Had he sinned against Bathsheba by taking Bathsheba? He had sinned against Bathsheba. But his focus now is on God, when he sees God everything else pales so he says, “Against you and you only have I sinned.” I think it is a poetic expression. I don’t think he’s denying that what he did hurt Bathsheba, we see that the child dies and Uriah is dead. I don’t think he’s downplaying

that, but he's focusing on his relationship with God. It's a poetic expression. It's a hyperbole not meant to show that he's downplaying what he did to Uriah. This is the stage when a person realizes that their sin affects their relationship with God. So there are different stages of repentance.

Let me give an example of that. Once upon a time we moved to a church of about three hundred or four hundred people. One of my former students that I taught the book of Psalms to in a seminary/college context was the pastor of this church. He had a wonderful wife with five kids, young kids, probably all below ten, and a wonderful wife. We went to the church and he would preach. He was a good preacher, so every week we would go and hear him preach. One week they caught him in an affair with the church secretary. Now that's a problem. He then got up in front of the church and with great tears he acknowledged what he had done and repented in front of the church. By the way, do tears always mean repentance? No. I saw one of my best friends in tears and it wasn't repentance. Be careful, tears can be used deceptively. Now I think in this case it was legitimate, he was caught, he confessed his sin in front of the church, he wept, and the church embraced him. About two weeks later he said, alright, it's over now, I won't do that again, I'd like to get up and start preaching again. What do you think?

There are different levels of repentance. He repented for having gotten caught, but when we talk about repentance does he have to reestablish with his wife a relationship? Does that get reestablished in two weeks? Trust, how long does it take you to break trust? In a snap. How long does it take you to re-establish trust? A *long* time. Question: does he have all sorts of things he needs to talk to his kids about and his wife. The church realized that this guy doesn't have a clue what he did. After two weeks to get back up and preach? The church was good, it worked with him for about a year or two. I think he ended up getting into life insurance or selling cars or something like that afterwards. Anyway, he needed to get his relationship back with his wife first and that takes time.

Now I was personally hurt because I taught him this passage about David and Bathsheba! It's like, I taught that, why didn't you learn that? So I'm ready to judge him. Question: is that the way I came off with him? The answer is, no. Now I'm going to show

you the “one step” principle. It works really well up on the front here. If I’m on the edge here, if I go just a half of an inch could I fall on my head because there’s a step here. All it takes is less than half an inch and I’m down. I use the one step principle says “there but for the grace of God go I.” I’m not in a position to say, “Hey, man, you committed a sin before God, look at all these people that are all messed up now.” I’m not the person to point my finger because that could have happened to me, “there but for the grace of God go I.” One step and I fall on my face. So what I’m saying is that when you find people who are repenting, be careful about judging. Jesus said it the best, “He who’s perfect cast the first stone.” Should the Christian community out of all communities be the most compassionate when a person has fallen into sin. Now, by the way, does that mean we excuse sin? No. He needed to be worked with for a long time as he reestablished his relationship with his wife and kids. All I’m saying is be careful in these areas.

So David gives us a great example of repentance. The power of cleansing: “cleanse me with hyssop and I shall be clean.” Have you ever sinned and felt the filthiness of it? “Cleanse me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.” Beautiful passages. “Create in me a pure heart O God.” Wonderful statements you sing the songs in church even to this day. “And renew a steadfast spirit in me.”

Can God use a person who has committed immorality? Can God use a person like David who has murdered? I think the answer is yes. David writes this Psalm, does he write it before or after his affair with Bathsheba? David writes Scripture, Psalm 51, one of his best psalms actually, after his sin with Bathsheba. He is a broken man and he’s praying for God’s forgiveness. I used to work in a maximum security prison, to be honest, a lot of the guys I know are murderers. I was just thinking of Brian today. He must have been in prison for 25, 30 years. He murdered somebody when he was 19 years old. He’s out of prison now, he’s doing God’s work in a wonderful way. Can God use a person who’s a murderer? This man is in jail 25 years and now he’s an older guy and he’s out helping kids. I’ve seen it happen over and over again. One of the guys I most look up to was Norm Askew. Everybody in Gary Indiana knew this guy. You name it he sold it

and did drugs, and maybe even killed someone. He was in prison. One of the most godly fellows I've ever met in my life was a murderer. He'd get up at 5 in the morning and he'd be by his toilet seat. I don't want to get into details in the prison. He's on his knees and the other guys thought he was sniffing something, they used to mock him out, but he was praying. What I'm saying is be careful, God can use people even after major, major sins. He seems to delight in using the contrite or broken ones.

I say that because some of you during your life will do stuff and feel you are beyond redemption and that God can't use you now because of what you did. That's not true. God uses broken vessels. God's in the process of redemption. He takes broken things and he fixes them! And that's us.

Do babies go to heaven?

Back to David: Do babies go to Heaven? Now this question comes up in 2 Samuel chapter 12. After seven days the child dies. Do babies go to heaven? Chapter 12, verse 23, "But now that he is dead why should I fast, can I bring him back again? I will go to him but he will not return to me." Now does that mean that after the child is dead that David is going to die? The question is, what does the Bible say about infants who die? Is there anywhere in the Bible where it says babies go to heaven? There's nowhere in the Bible that says what happens to babies. It doesn't exist in Scripture. Question: back in David's time would this be a really important question? Did they lose a lot of babies back then.

Do we lose a lot of babies now? Once upon a time I had three kids. My wife got pregnant with a fourth kid. We were not ready financially or emotionally because we had three young kids and we didn't know whether we could handle this. It took several weeks to try to get up because when we told the other kids we wanted to be really gung ho. Finally, we got up for it and we were ready to tell the kids that they were going to have a baby brother or sister and we're all for it and this is good. I walked into the bathroom and it looked like a slasher movie. Blood was everywhere. My wife was in a white gown, it was totally red. I picked her up. I ran down to the car. I don't think I've ever driven so fast my entire life, I just hit the gas pedal and we were at the hospital. It was really scary,

she was as white as a ghost. I get into the hospital, I'm covered too, sitting in the emergency room and all of a sudden I hear over the loud speaker "vital signs unstable." I took Latin so I knew "vital" meant like, "life!" "Vital signs unstable" means, holy cow-- is she going to die? I didn't know someone could lose so much blood so fast. What happened. God spared her and they pumped a whole bunch of blood in her, but long story short. What I'm saying, is it really important to me to know what happens to infants? I've often thought when I get up to heaven some kid's going to come over and be like, "Hey, old man! I've been waiting for you, what took you so long?" What happens to infants like that?

Now I want to give just another aspect of this and this is totally conjecture on my part. Now, some people argue like this: all humans are sinful through Adam's sin, "Adam sin comes upon all mankind" (Romans chapter 5). Babies are human. So all humans receive sin through Adam sin. Babies are human and therefore babies are sinners. Well what happens to sinners? Well if you're in Massachusetts's nothing because everyone goes to heaven in Massachusetts. Other places in Scripture it says the wages of sin are death. So all sinners must face the penalty of eternal punishment unless they believe. But how does a baby believe? A baby can't even understand what you're saying? So therefore using this line of argumentation certain people will conclude that infants don't make it. They never accept Jesus, so they don't make it. That is the way some people argue.

Now I want to argue a different way. In Isaiah chapter 7 verse 15, now remember, nowhere in Scripture does it say that babies make it. But in Isaiah chapter 7 verse 15 it says this and this is a fairly famous passage, "therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign, the virgin will be with child" (sounds familiar, doesn't it). "She will give birth to a son and you will call him Emmanuel." This is quoted in the New Testament referring to Jesus. "He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right." So is this trying to say that when a child gets to a certain point, "eating curds and honey," that the child will recognize what's right and wrong. Some folks use this then to say there is an age of accountability. Before that point the baby doesn't

realize if he's sinning or not, the baby's a baby. But at a certain point, by the way, that point would differ for each person--it's not just "at age two you are accountable," babies really differ. Some kids know right from wrong earlier, others later some will have to wait until they're 15 or 16 until they get that awareness.

Now the question is, when David says, "I was sinful from the time my mother conceived me," is that poetic language? Is that hyperbole? I don't want to push the poetry into being a doctrinal statement necessarily. So I think you ought to be careful about doing that.

Another verse that's been helpful to me is this other one in Genesis 18:25, "will not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Who ultimately makes the calls? God makes the call. God's going to do what's right. So I may not know but I trust him.

But the question comes up: why doesn't God tell us what happens to infants? That's a really important question to me, and frankly, to David it would have been a very important question also. I'm going to make up a reason. I'm making this up the Bible doesn't tell us this. Suppose God said all infants before the age of two are innocent and therefore automatically go to heaven and God said that in the Bible. What would people do? Would people kill babies? Have many cultures killed babies anyway. Now they would have rational for doing that. Would Christians kill babies if they knew all babies before the age of two go to heaven? Would Christian people go into Islamic countries (I think they called it the Crusades) and kill infants? Abortion clinics would be "mass evangelism," right? It would give approval to abortion clinics because they would be sending all these babies to heaven. So what I'm suggesting is that God doesn't tell us whether or not they go to heaven because he doesn't want us to do that and he knows that we are corrupt and this kind of stuff would happen. Now, do I have a clue why God does this? I don't have a clue, I made it up. I just want to be honest with you. It does make sense to me but you have to be careful, God knows why he does these things. God could have told us but he's chosen not to. I wonder if it's because the human heart is so corrupt he knew we would end up killing infants. But big question marks there, Hildebrandt just

made that up.

David's Numbering the People

Let's continue on with David. Another sin that David did over in chapter 24 says, "Again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel and he incited David against them saying 'Go take a census of Israel and Judah.'" So David sends out Joab to number the people. What's interesting to me is that if you look at the other verse over in 1 Chronicles chapter 21. We haven't done much with Chronicles but Chronicles parallels Kings. Here's what it says there, "Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census." In Kings who incited David to take the census? God. In Chronicles, who incited David to number the people? Satan. Do you see, as monotheists do we have a problem? We have one God who is over everything. Is God over what is good and evil? Is evil outside the control of God? No. We have one sovereign God, he is the king over everything. Is it God over here and Satan over there. Is that the way the Bible portrays it? No. Satan is under God.

In the book of Job, could you say that God did that to Job? Yes, you could say that, but did Satan do that to Job? Satan was allowed to do that by God. I think this is what you get here too. God is going to judge Israel but what he does is he allows Satan then to cause David to number the people so they would be judged. So God is going to bring judgment on them; he uses Satan to bring that judgment. So Satan is being used as an instrument of God's bidding. Now Satan is trying to do evil and God is trying to do good with it.

David in 2 Samuel chapter 24 verse 10 acknowledges it was sin on his part. And after he had counted the fighting men he said to the Lord, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done." Why is David a man after God's own heart? Because he acknowledges his sin. He repents and he keeps turning back to God even though he's done some pretty bad stuff. He turns back to God, he repents.

God gives him three options: you've got three years of famine, or you've got three months of running from your enemies, or you've got three days of a plague. David looks at that and says, "who's involved with the plague? If the plague comes, it's God.

Therefore if it's God maybe I can pray to God and God will spare my people. Maybe God will be merciful to us. So I'm going to pick the three days of plague." Three months before the enemies will they be merciful? Probably not, but God's involved with this one.

This angel basically stands up and is slaying the people and David prays. But then what happens. This angel is slaying the people from the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. David sees this angel slaying the people from the threshing floor of Araunah. God tells David "buy the threshing floor of Araunah." Now when I say, threshing floor, is the threshing floor high or low. It is at the top of the mountain. This threshing floor of Araunah is a flat area where they would do their threshing on a high place. This place of judging the people will be the very place God will choose to put his temple. David buys the threshing floor from Araunah, Solomon will build the temple right there. The very place of judgment turns into a place of blessing, where God's presence is found. This is a kind of cool reversal you find in Scripture.

Student: are the people being judged for David's sin?

Response: No, God was going to punish the people anyway because they had sinned and he uses the sin David did as the means by which to judge the people. So there are multiple factors here, basically the people are judged for their sin but the means of judgment comes through these plagues. So it's kind of tricky there.

Solomon's installation as king

David has a son named Solomon. Let's jump over to David's son Solomon. Under Solomon things are going well in the kingdom. Did you notice I put bubblics around it. This is Solomon. This is the bubbly time of the kingdom when things are going well. 1 Kings chapters 1-11 is the story of Solomon. His real name is *Shlomo*, but if you say *Shlomo* people think you're doing something bad. Now what Hebrew word do we hear in "Shlomo?" *Shalom*. Solomon's name means *shalom* "peace." Why was David not allowed to build the temple? We didn't read Chronicles, but Chronicles tells us that David was a man of blood. And God says, David you can't build my temple, but David does store up lots of gold and silver for Solomon. So David bought the threshing floor of Araunah. David set up and saved up and made these great provisions so Solomon could

build the temple. Solomon also was wealthy himself. This period of Saul-David-Solomon is called “The United Monarchy.” This is when Israel is all united as one under Saul, then David. In this course there are four dates to learn. David’s date is 1000 B.C. Abraham was 2000 B.C. and Solomon comes 40 years after David. Solomon is David’s son. Under these three kings Israel was united, it hadn’t yet been broken up into Northern Israel and Southern Judah. Once Solomon comes, Solomon does some pretty nasty stuff at the end of his life and the kingdom is going to split north and south. So you’ll have Israel in the North and Judah in the South. The kingdom will actually split north and south.

So, let’s talk about Solomon and this transition of power. In 1 Kings chapter 1 this is where we begin to see Adonijah’s bid for the throne. Adonijah was Solomon’s older brother, we actually get this statement about him, “Now Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, put himself forward and said ‘I will be king.’ So he got chariots and horses ready and about 50 men to run ahead of him.” Then it makes this comment about David, “his father never interfered with him by asking him ‘why do you behave as you do.’ He was also very handsome and was born next to Absalom.” Does it help to be handsome if you’re going to be king? Yes. It points out that this guy is really handsome. And it says, “his father never interfered with him.” Is one of the roles of a father to discipline his child? David asked him “why are you doing that?” He never really interferes with or disciplines this child.

Now let me set this up geographically too. You guys are going to be the City of David. This is Jerusalem. You guys over here are the Mount of Olives. Mount of Olives is about 2700 feet high. There is a valley, the Kidron Valley, that goes between the Mount of Olives and the City of David. It goes into the Dead Sea. There is another valley here called the Central Valley and there is one over to the west called the Hinnom Valley. There are two springs, En-Rogal (*en* meaning “spring” of Rogal). So Adonijah comes from Jerusalem, he takes his boys and his chariots and comes down to En-Rogal where he’s going to announce himself as king. David takes Solomon and you guys know where the other spring is. It’s close to the city. It’s the “Gihon” spring. Does anyone remember

Hezekiah's tunnel and the *Get Lost in Jerusalem* program. What happens is David is going to announce Solomon right next to the city, Adonijah is farther away. So the geography works in Solomon's favor.

But now let's see what happens. First of all, David doesn't know what's going on. In 1 Kings 1 David is out of it. He's an old man, he's so old that he can't get heat. So they find this woman Abishag, who's this beautiful, gorgeous young woman. She sleeps with David, not to have sex, but basically to keep him warm. So what happens is Nathan goes to Bathsheba and says, "David is so out of it, didn't David say that Solomon should be the next king? Well, Adonijah is down here making himself king." So Bathsheba and Nathan make this plot. David is out of it and Bathsheba goes in to talk to David to secure things for Solomon. So let me read chapter 1 verse 31, it says, "And Bathsheba bowed low, her face to the ground, kneeling before the king and said, 'may my lord, the king David live forever' and David said, 'call Zadok and Nathan the prophet and Beniah and Judah and take my own mule.'" Get his royal mule. So he's going to put Solomon on the royal mule. You ride the royal mule into the city, that means you're king. Tell me about another king who's going to ride a mule into the city and be a king: Jesus, in the triumphal entry. When Jesus enters he enters on a donkey and the people are crying "Hosanna, Hosanna." So Solomon is going to ride this donkey, this royal mule. Solomon is going to be pronounced king. Solomon is Bathsheba's son.

The Difficulty with Solomon

As I've studied 1 Kings 1-11, I'm really into Solomon, I mean, I teach the whole Bible but Solomon actually Proverbs is really my area of expertise. Now I have studied Solomon a lot and it has bothered me over and over again and I'm finally talking about it. In 1 Kings 1-11, Solomon rarely speaks. Solomon himself rarely speaks except when he's speaking officialese, speaking as the king or something like that. It has bothered me for years. When you read about David, do you learn about David's heart? When you read the stories about David and Jonathon, do you learn about David's heart? When you read the Psalms, do you learn about David's heart? You study David for a while and I feel like I know David really well because I've seen his heart. I've seen his ups, his downs, I've

seen how he's reacted to things. With Solomon, I've studied him a lot more and I feel like I don't know him. Where's Solomon? He never speaks very much in the narrative; it's always people speaking about him. When he does speak it's always speaking and praying "as the king," not personally. So this bothers me and I want to come back to this later, why Solomon is so far out of the narrative.

As a matter of fact, when Solomon is made king, does Solomon do any of this plotting? Does Solomon plot to become king himself? No. All of the plotting is done by Nathan and Bathsheba and these other guys. Solomon is put on the royal donkey. It's not like he's saying, "Hey, I want to be king, let me ride on the royal donkey." No, other people put him on the donkey. So Solomon is not a "go-getter" kind of character, where he's wearing his heart on his sleeve and that bothers me and we'll come back to that in a little bit.

David's advice to Solomon

Now David gives some advice to Solomon as a father would give to his son in chapter 2 verse 2, this is an interesting passage: "Now the time drew near for David to die. He gave charge to Solomon his son." These are the last words of a father to his son. Do you remember the last words of a father to his son when your father dies? Yes, you remember those words forever. "I am about to go the way of all the earth" he said, "so be strong and show yourself a man" interesting there, "strength." This verse is not politically correct, "be strong and show yourself a man." What does it mean to be a man in our culture? This is very politically incorrect. I love it though.

"Observe what the Lord requires of you. [What does the Lord require of you?] Walk in his ways. Keep his decrees and his commands, his laws and his requirements as written in the law of Moses." So, is David aware of the law of Moses? Now some of your liberal critics will say, "the law of Moses wasn't written yet for 150 years with that JEDP stuff that we looked at earlier. Question: is David aware of the law of Moses? Does David tell Solomon, you better keep your head in the law of Moses--the Torah?

"So that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you go and that the Lord may keep his promise to me." What was the promise God made to David? 2 Samuel

chapter 7 verse 14, “David, I will build you a house [dynasty] and your house will last forever” meaning that one of David’s sons would rule over Israel forever. We know that to be Jesus who is going to the Messiah. David comes to Solomon. But notice there’s a shift in the narrative, “the Lord may keep his promise to me” and then he says “if your descendants will watch how they live and if they walk faithfully.” Will some of Solomon’s descendants walk faithfully with the Lord? Hezekiah and Josiah. But will most of them go away? David is saying that the covenant with David is a conditional covenant in some aspects of it. There’s an “if” part to it. You’ve got to walk in the ways of the Lord otherwise the Lord is not going to put your descendants on the throne the way he would have. So there’s an “if” with David there, and that’s interesting. Now, ultimately will Jesus be on the throne forever and ever? Yes, that’s going to happen because God gave his word, but David’s descendants will participate in that at different levels according to their own obedience.

David’s Hit List

Now David’s an old man and he says, “Okay, Solomon, you’ve got to clean up the kingdom” because there are certain things David didn’t do. David gives Solomon his “hit list” as I call it. Who’s going to be on this hit list? Let’s just talk through these guys. Who has more blood on his hands than anyone else in David’s kingdom? Joab. Joab was David’s general and Joab killed Abner in cold blood. Joab kills everyone in the narrative. We’re told in the narrative Joab kills Absalom. And David says, “Solomon, I am a man of blood. You’ve got to take care of this problem. Joab has blood on his hands.” Now, by the way, you may ask, why doesn’t David take care of the problem? Why does he make his son do that? Is it very likely that Joab and David were good friends? They both grew up in Bethlehem together. They both ran from Saul together and fought together. So these guys are life-long fighting buddies. So David is not going to do that to his friend. But Joab has blood all over his hands, so David wants Solomon to take care of that so that his head doesn’t go down in peace. So what does Joab do? After Solomon takes over, Joab goes running into the tabernacle area and takes hold of the horns of the altar for asylum. Solomon says, go in and kill him even there, I don’t want that blood on my kingdom.

Does anyone remember who Shimei was? That's a harder one. He's a minor character. Let me just tell you the story of Shimei. Absalom is coming up to kill his father. David flees from Jerusalem across the Valley of Kidron, over the Mount of Olives. As David's running over the Mount of Olives who shows up but Shimei, a descendant of Saul and he says, "see David, you're finally getting what should be coming to you. David, you were a wicked guy with Saul. So now you're getting what you deserve." So Shimei curses David as David's fleeing from his son, in a weak point. Now, could David have killed Shimei? But David is merciful and spares Shimei, but he's telling Solomon now this guy cursed me, take care of business.

How does Solomon do Shimei? It's kind of interesting how he does him. He says, "Shimei, I'm not going to take your life, but if you ever leave Jerusalem, I will kill you." So what does one of Shimei's servants do? Shimei's servant runs away. What does Shimei do? Shimei runs after his servant to bring him back to Jerusalem, Solomon finds out about it and says, "I told you not to leave the city." So Shimei is taken out.

What about Adonijah? Adonijah has a problem. Do you remember when Abner and Ishbosheth were in Jordan? Abner said, "I want Rizpah, the concubine of Saul;" and Ishbosheth freaked out because it was as if it were a play for the kingship? Adonijah, the son of David says, I want Abishag. Remember that pretty young woman who slept with David? Adonijah says I want her now for my own. Is that a play for the kingship, so that he can sleep with the same woman who slept with David? So it is believed that when Adonijah says he wants Abishag that he is making a bid for the kingship. So Solomon says, you've got to go Adonijah, that's not right. So Solomon takes Adonijah out. With these people, Solomon is basically purging the kingdom and making it purer so that he won't have blood on his hands and avoid backstabbing political intrigue.

Solomon's wisdom

Now what's interesting in this narrative is what I'm going to demonstrate to you is that Solomon was wise before God gave him the wisdom. He's going to have a special dream in chapter 3. He's going to dream at Gibeon and God is going to ask him what he wants. Solomon says that he wants to be wise and discerning. God's going to be

impressed with that and makes him the wiser than anybody else in the world. But Solomon was wise before the dream and David recognizes that as his father. It says in chapter 6, “Deal with him (that is Joab) according to your wisdom Solomon. Do not let his gray hair go down into the grave in peace.” David recognized that his son was wise. This is before the dream. Then if you go over to chapter 2 verse 9 (again, before the dream) David says to Solomon, “but now do not consider him innocent, (This time he’s talking about Shimei) you Solomon, are a man of wisdom. [David says to Solomon] You will know what to do to him, bring his gray-haired head down to the grave in blood.” So Solomon was wise before the dream. Does God often do that to people, take their gifts and then enhance their gifts? It was not that Solomon was a fool before that.

Now this is where Solomon gets his wisdom, 1 Kings chapter 3 at the sacrificial place at Gibeon. Solomon goes up there offering sacrifices before the Lord and God comes to Solomon in a dream and “the king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices and at Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night during a dream and the Lord asked ‘ask what I shall give you.’” Now you know if the genie comes out of the bottle and gives you three wishes. What is your wish for? You have to be smart about this. You do the first two wishes asking for whatever you want and in the third wish you ask for more wishes. Here he said, “ask whatever you want and I’ll give it to you.” “Solomon answered (and this shows his wisdom) “you have shown great kindness to my father, King David because he was faithful.” Then I’m going to jump down a little bit, “but I am only a child. I do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number (do you get the little dig there about numbering people?) so give your servant a discerning heart [or listening heart] to govern your people to distinguish between right and wrong.” Does the king have to make court cases to distinguish between right and wrong? “For who is able to govern this great people of yours? And the Lord was pleased with what Solomon had asked for.” He says, “Hey Solomon, you didn’t ask for long life. You didn’t ask for wealth. God says, I’ll give you those things as well.” So Solomon’s dream at Gibeon shows his humility. It shows Solomon’s humility when he says that he’s just a little child

unable to judge between what is right and wrong. This is true humility in Solomon.

By the way, is there going to be tension between the intellect and this humility? Are most intellectuals you know humble people? Isn't it usually that when a person is bright, they get arrogant? Usually when a person is bright they get arrogant. Here you see Solomon with humility which is really very wise.

The problem is Solomon says "I'm only a child," do you realize at this point he's already got a kid and a wife? At this point in Solomon's life it's not mentioned right there, you have to go back. In fact he's already got a one year old son and he's got an Ammonitess wife. The wife is an Ammonite, she's not Jewish! Do you remember as you read the narrative in chapter 11 it's going to tell us that Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines and they led his heart astray? It tells you at the end of Solomon's life that he's got all these wives and concubines. But when Solomon started out before the dream and before he became king or just as he was becoming king he had an Ammonitess wife and a one year old son. When Solomon dies and Rehoboam his son takes over, his son is 41 years old. Solomon ruled for 40 years. This means that his son was one year old and he was born to a wife who was an Ammonitess at the time of the dream, but it doesn't tell you about the problem with the wives until later on in chapter 11. So you have to work with the narrative and how it works there.

Marxist interpretations of Solomon and his wealth

Now wealth, what's the problem here? Do Marxists like wealth? By the way, in academia, in colleges across this country, are a many of professors Marxist oriented? The answer is yes. Now the Marxist comes to the book of 1 Kings and they see Solomon being blessed by God with all of this wealth. Do Marxist people like people with wealth? No, they hate them. So when the Marxist gets in here he has to totally turn this passage on its head. It's interesting to me. Here's how the Marxists and this is how many scholars I've worked with interpret it. I look at it and I say, God blessed Solomon with wealth. They say that wealth is bad, therefore this narrative needs to be read in an ironic way. Now how do you read the 1 Kings narrative in an ironic way? "O yeah, Solomon had all this gold and silver. O yeah, Solomon was the most wealthy person at the time. Do you

know where Solomon got all of this wealth? He must have taxed the daylight out of the people.” By the way, later on we do find out that Solomon did tax the people. Where do kings in power get money? They always get it from the same place--they tax the people. Solomon taxed the people, so the Marxist would say Solomon is wealthy, not because God gave him the wealth, but because he taxed the people. So Solomon’s wealth shows his cruelty by him dominating the 99% because he was the 1%. Do you get all of the overtones in that, I hope you do.

What does this interpretation do to the narrative? Rather than wisdom and wealth being a blessing from God, the Marxist reads it that wisdom and wealth are not a blessing from God but Solomon taking wealth from other people. So Solomon was “really wise” and taxed the people. So this narrative is not meant to build Solomon up, this narrative is meant to take Solomon down. Now, by the way, is that quite a different reading from how you read it? What I’m suggesting to you is, is this a wrong way to take it? But this is a lot of people are taking it now, which I think is wrong because it’s denying that the wealth was a gift from God. Now there would be problems with the wealth later on, but you have to be careful when you say, “all wealth is bad.” Long life, again one of the blessings from God. Solomon will rule for 40 years, and God gives him wealth and long life.

Solomon’s wisdom victory

Now, when a new leader takes over, what’s the first thing a new leader’s got to do? He’s got to win a victory. David, 1 Samuel 16 David is anointed king. 1 Samuel chapter 17 is David and Goliath, David’s first victory. Saul becomes the first king of Israel, what does Saul do, he defeats the Philistines. Solomon takes over, where is his battle? Do you ever remember reading about Solomon at war? No. Solomon, rather than having a victory of war, Solomon’s victory is a wisdom victory.

Why is this story about the two prostitutes put in here? Let me just narrate the story of the two prostitutes. There were these two women, prostitutes, each with a child. One rolls over on her child at night and basically smothers, or kills the kid. So she’s killed her own child, during the night she takes her own child, the dead one, and puts it at

the breast of the other woman, then she takes the good child. The woman wakes up in the morning and realizes it. Now, do women recognize their children, even from day one? All babies look-a-like? Is that true? All babies don't look alike so she would realize this was not her baby. So now we have a she-said versus she-said. "It's my baby, no it's my baby" etc. When you have two women fighting like that, what are you supposed to do? "Well," Solomon says, "Give me a sword, I'll chop the live baby in two and give a half to each woman." A mother will have what for their children? Solomon is playing on the fact that a mother will have compassion for her children. In my house, can my children do anything wrong? If anyone attacks our children is my wife always on the side of our kids? Even when the kids do bad stuff, she's always on the side of the kids. She is the mother. So basically cut the child in two. The real mother says, don't cut the baby in two give it to the other woman, just let the baby live. So now Solomon knows who the real mother is, and takes baby from her and gives it to the real mother. It's a victory of wisdom to discern what's right and what's wrong. This is his first victory from these two ladies. It is a wisdom victory.

Now Solomon is the proverbs man. David is the sweet psalmist of Israel. David gives us, almost half of the book of Psalms. Proverbs is written largely by Solomon. 1 Kings 4:30 says this: "he spoke 3000 proverbs." How many proverbs do we have in our Bible? About 375. He wrote 3000 proverbs, we only have 375 --that's around 12% of what he wrote. Most of Solomon's proverbs are gone. "And his songs number 1005." They had one Song of Solomon and they put it in the Bible and they said, "that's enough man." No. Solomon has two psalms in the book of Psalms as well. Song of Solomon is dedicated to him, but it's in actuality "Song of Songs," not "Song of Solomon." Anyway, his psalms number 1005. 1 Kings 4:33, "He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also talked about birds, and animals, and reptiles, and fish. And men from all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom sent by the kings of the world who had heard of his wisdom."

Pharaoh's Daughter, Solomon and Proverbs

You should know that I'm really into Psalms and Proverbs and I'm really into Solomon. What I'm going to tell you now. You're here at Gordon College, there isn't anyone else in the world who is going to say this. This is completely unique you'll never read it in a commentary. Now as soon as I say that, what should you put behind everything I say? A big question mark. Hildebrandt is making this up. Now I've studied this stuff for a long time, but I'm going to make something up. It is tentative and I could be wrong here. I think I'm right, but I could be wrong. Something bothers me in this narrative. As I read this narrative, who keeps popping up in the narrative? This woman, Pharaoh's daughter. Before Solomon had his dream at Gibeon to get the wisdom, in chapter 3 it says "Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh, king of Egypt and married his daughter." That verse is totally out of context, all of a sudden you have Pharaoh's daughter. Where'd that come from? He is going to have a dream to get wisdom and where'd this verse come from there about Pharaoh's daughter. If you go to chapter 9 verse 24 you see the same thing, this thrown in verse about this wife that he's got from Egypt. "After Pharaoh's daughter had come up from the city of David to the palace Solomon had built for her." Solomon built this woman a special palace because he didn't want her in the temple area because she wasn't Jewish, she was Egyptian. So Solomon built a special palace for her to keep things kosher. In chapter 11 verse 1 there's a listing of Solomon's wives and this is what it says, "King Solomon however loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter." Notice how Pharaoh's daughter is privileged. There are all the other wives--but she's special. In this verse there are recorded 700 wives and 300 concubines. Can any man do that? No. A lot of those are political marriages.

Now what I'm suggesting to you is this: in Proverbs, how is wisdom portrayed? Proverbs chapters 1-9 how was wisdom portrayed? Wisdom is portrayed as a woman. It's Woman Wisdom verses Woman Folly. Woman Folly tries to seduce the young man and Solomon is trying to get his son to date Madame Wisdom. Madame Wisdom is a woman. Do you notice also in the book of Proverbs there is no mention of the temple. Now, is the

temple one of Solomon's greatest life achievements in his whole life? Solomon built the first temple to God, overlaid it with gold and cedar etc. It's not even mentioned in the book of Proverbs. Who would have a little bit of resentment against the temple? Would Pharaoh's daughter have a little bit of resentment because she's not "good enough" for the temple? Solomon builds her this separate palace away from it.

Here's another thing, when you go to Proverbs chapter 22, it's very, very similar to the proverbs of Amenemope from Egypt. What I'm suggesting here is: is it possible Solomon is interacting with this wife, Pharaoh's daughter, is it very likely that she knows the wisdom of Egypt? And is it very likely that Solomon is collecting proverbs from around the world and he goes to his wife from Egypt and he says, "Hey, what kind of proverbs do you have down there?" She would have been trained in the wisdom of Egypt. Yes, she would have been. So what I'm suggesting is that it's very possible that the book of Proverbs has an influence from Pharaoh's daughter mediated through Solomon. What I'm suggesting is I think there's a pretty strong influence there. Now these are the proverbs of Solomon and Solomon was the editor of it, but he probably interacted strongly with Pharaoh's daughter. She is highlighted in the 1 Kings narrative.

By the way, how does the book of Proverbs end (chapter 31). It ends with a "VW," a virtuous woman. Is it possible that this virtuous woman was modeled after Pharaoh's daughter? That's a stretch. Put a big question mark by that one. Just some other ideas there.

Solomon and the Temple

The temple construction: chapter 8, Solomon builds the first temple. The Jewish people organize their history around the temples. Christian people organize their history according to Jesus Christ. We have B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (the year of our Lord). We do things around Christ. The Jewish people have what's called "The First Temple Period." The First Temple Period is from Solomon down to the Babylonian captivity. The Babylonians are going to destroy the temple in 586 B.C. Then remember Ezra and Nehemiah around that time rebuilt the temple and the Second Temple Period goes from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah down to the time of Jesus. Jesus will come into the

second temple and the Romans will destroy the second temple in 70 A.D. So the Jews designate time by the First Temple Period and Second Temple Period.

Solomon is going to put up the first temple. How does he do it? He goes up to Lebanon, David actually set this up with a guy named Hiram, and he goes up there to Hiram and he says, “Hiram, I want some cedars of Lebanon.” Hiram says, “Man, our truckers are on strike, we can’t get the lumber down to you.” No. What they’ll do is throw the cedars of Lebanon into the ocean and they float them down to what today is Tel-Aviv (or Joppa) and then from Joppa they were hauled up to Jerusalem. They throw these cedars of Lebanon into the Mediterranean Sea and float them down to Israel. It’s kind of an interesting way that they built these things, they built ships from the cedars of Lebanon. Solomon then takes the cedar trees, overlays the rocks and then covers them over in gold. It was an incredible thing.

Now Solomon offers a dedicatory prayer here, in chapter 8 verse 27. The temple is Solomon’s biggest achievement. He builds the temple for God that his father always wanted. Solomon actually builds it. This is at the biggest achievement of his life in verse 27, he says, “but will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heavens cannot contain you, how much less this temple I have built.” This is the biggest achievement of his life. Does Solomon still have things in perspective? Yes. This temple is nothing to God. This is the God of the universe and “how much less this temple.” So Solomon seems to have it together. He takes this great achievement and rather than bragging about it, his head doesn’t get too big. So Solomon seems to be pretty wise here.

Solomon’s fame: Queen of Sheba

The Queen of Sheba comes to see Solomon. She travels up all the way from what you guys would call Yemen, on the south side of the Saudi Arabia peninsula (Sheba). She comes all the way up, probably 1000 miles, to see Solomon. And basically she quizzes him with hard questions. One of the translations says “her breath was taken away at Solomon’s wisdom.” She raves saying, “Solomon you are wiser than all I was told from my country. You are wiser than I could have imagined.” And she brags on Solomon.

But do you notice what’s happening here? Does Solomon brag about himself? No.

Other people, like the Queen of Sheba and Hiram they brag about Solomon. So rarely in the text does Solomon speak, other people rave about Solomon. Is that a mark of a wise man? He doesn't brag about himself, other people brag about him. This is the mark of a wise man.

Solomon's folly: turning away from the Lord

Now, Solomon's folly, what's the problem here? Chapter 11 saves it up. Solomon marries many foreign wives and basically his heart goes after them. Now a couple things: Solomon has 700 wives and 300 concubines but before he was king he was married to this Ammonitess and before his dream at Gibeon for the wisdom, he had already married the Pharaoh's daughter. So Solomon had already started on this, in other words, they saved up all these women until this point. Rehoboam, his son is 41 when Solomon dies after 40 years of reigning.

This then raises this question and I'd like to end here. Let me just read what the text says. "They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them...As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of his father David had been. He followed Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the Lord, he did not follow the Lord completely as his father David had done." At the east hill he built an altar to Chemosh, where they offered up their children to their gods. They burned their children to their gods. Solomon burned children to Chemosh the god of Moab or Edom or Ammon.

Is it possible for someone to turn away from the Lord? When I was younger I was very much into Calvinism, once saved, always saved or preservation of the saints. Did Solomon turn away at the end of his life and even serve other gods? Yes.

Now some people suggest that Ecclesiastes tells us Solomon came back to the Lord at the end of his life. In Ecclesiastes 12 Solomon is an old man and he comes back to the Lord. Is that possible? Yes it's possible. Have you seen people go away from the Lord and not come back? I've had a friend who went through a divorce, his wife got the

kid, and this guy taught with me at a very, very, very conservative school. All I can remember of our last conversation is that he said f- God, f-God, thirty times at least in five minutes. He was so angry at God for destroying his marriage. Now question: who really destroyed his marriage? He didn't want to face that so he blamed God for it and he turned his back on God. Now is it possible that he might come back to the Lord? Twenty, thirty years later I might say, yes. All I'm doing is raising this question: is it possible for someone to know God, and then turn away? Is that possible. Again, all I want to say to you is: one step. "There but for the grace of God go I." Don't arrogantly say, "I would never deny the Lord," actually who said that? Peter said that and what happened? All I'm saying is: is humility a good thing? Be careful how you think about people who turn away from the Lord, it's possible that they will come back and we need to pray seriously for those types of people and for ourselves as our hearts are prone to wander.

Okay, see you on Thursday.

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his Old Testament History, Literature, and Theology course lecture number 25: David's sin with Bathsheba and transition to Solomon.

Rough edited by Ted Hildebrandt