

WEEK 36.

1 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs (Solomon Builds Temple and Palace and Gathers Great Wealth)

Sunday ([1 Kings 5–6](#), [2 Chronicles 2–7:10](#))

Solomon Gathers Building Materials for the Temple

5:1 (5:15) King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to Solomon when he heard that he had been anointed king in his father's place. (Hiram had always been an ally of David.) 5:2 Solomon then sent this message to Hiram: 5:3 "You know that my father David was unable to build a temple to honor the Lord his God, for he was busy fighting battles on all fronts while the Lord subdued his enemies. 5:4 But now the Lord my God has made me secure on all fronts; there is no adversary or dangerous threat. 5:5 So I have decided to build a temple to honor the Lord my God, as the Lord instructed my father David, 'Your son, whom I will put on your throne in your place, is the one who will build a temple to honor me.' 5:6 So now order some cedars of Lebanon to be cut for me. My servants will work with your servants. I will pay your servants whatever you say is appropriate, for you know that we have no one among us who knows how to cut down trees like the Sidonians."

5:7 When Hiram heard Solomon's message, he was very happy. He said, "The Lord is worthy of praise today because he has given David a wise son to rule over this great nation." 5:8 Hiram then sent this message to Solomon: "I received the message you sent to me. I will give you all the cedars and evergreens you need. 5:9 My servants will bring the timber down from Lebanon to the sea. I will send it by sea in raft-like bundles to the place you designate. There I will separate the logs and you can carry them away. In exchange you will supply the food I need for my royal court."

5:10 So Hiram supplied the cedars and evergreens Solomon needed, 5:11 and Solomon supplied Hiram annually with 20,000 cors of wheat as provision for his royal court, as well as 20,000 baths of pure olive oil. 5:12 So the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as he had promised him. And Hiram and Solomon were at peace and made a treaty.

5:13 King Solomon conscripted work crews from throughout Israel, 30,000 men in all. 5:14 He sent them to Lebanon in shifts of 10,000 men per month. They worked in Lebanon for one month, and then spent two months at home. Adoniram was supervisor of the work crews. 5:15 Solomon also had 70,000 common laborers and 80,000 stonecutters in the hills, 5:16 besides 3,300 officials who

supervised the workers. 5:17 By royal order they supplied large valuable stones in order to build the temple's foundation with chiseled stone. 5:18 Solomon's and Hiram's construction workers, along with men from Byblos, did the chiseling and prepared the wood and stones for the building of the temple.

The Building of the Temple

6:1 In the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites left Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, during the month Ziv (the second month), he began building the Lord's temple. 6:2 The temple King Solomon built for the Lord was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high. 6:3 The porch in front of the main hall of the temple was 30 feet long, corresponding to the width of the temple. It was 15 feet wide, extending out from the front of the temple. 6:4 He made framed windows for the temple. 6:5 He built an extension all around the walls of the temple's main hall and holy place and constructed side rooms in it. 6:6 The bottom floor of the extension was seven and a half feet wide, the middle floor nine feet wide, and the third floor ten and a half feet wide. He made ledges on the temple's outer walls so the beams would not have to be inserted into the walls. 6:7 As the temple was being built, only stones shaped at the quarry were used; the sound of hammers, pickaxes, or any other iron tool was not heard at the temple while it was being built. 6:8 The entrance to the bottom level of side rooms was on the south side of the temple; stairs went up to the middle floor and then on up to the third floor. 6:9 He finished building the temple and covered it with rafters and boards made of cedar. 6:10 He built an extension all around the temple; it was seven and a half feet high and it was attached to the temple by cedar beams.

6:11 The Lord said to Solomon: 6:12 "As for this temple you are building, if you follow my rules, observe my regulations, and obey all my commandments, I will fulfill through you the promise I made to your father David. 6:13 I will live among the Israelites and will not abandon my people Israel."

6:14 So Solomon finished building the temple. 6:15 He constructed the walls inside the temple with cedar planks; he paneled the inside with wood from the floor of the temple to the rafters of the ceiling. He covered the temple floor with boards made from the wood of evergreens. 6:16 He built a wall 30 feet in from the rear of the temple as a partition for an inner sanctuary that would be the most holy place. He paneled the wall with cedar planks from the floor to the rafters. 6:17 The main hall in front of the inner sanctuary was 60 feet long. 6:18 The inside of the temple was all cedar and was adorned with carvings of round ornaments and of flowers in bloom. Everything was cedar; no stones were visible.

6:19 He prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple so that the ark of the covenant of the Lord could be placed there. 6:20 The inner sanctuary was 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 30 feet high. He

plated it with gold, as well as the cedar altar. 6:21 Solomon plated the inside of the temple with gold. He hung golden chains in front of the inner sanctuary and plated the inner sanctuary with gold. 6:22 He plated the entire inside of the temple with gold, as well as the altar inside the inner sanctuary.

6:23 In the inner sanctuary he made two cherubs of olive wood; each stood 15 feet high. 6:24 Each of the first cherub's wings was seven and a half feet long; its entire wingspan was 15 feet. 6:25 The second cherub also had a wingspan of 15 feet; it was identical to the first in measurements and shape. 6:26 Each cherub stood 15 feet high. 6:27 He put the cherubs in the inner sanctuary of the temple. Their wings were spread out. One of the first cherub's wings touched one wall and one of the other cherub's wings touched the opposite wall. The first cherub's other wing touched the second cherub's other wing in the middle of the room. 6:28 He plated the cherubs with gold.

6:29 On all the walls around the temple, inside and out, he carved cherubs, palm trees, and flowers in bloom. 6:30 He plated the floor of the temple with gold, inside and out. 6:31 He made doors of olive wood at the entrance to the inner sanctuary; the pillar on each doorpost was five-sided. 6:32 On the two doors made of olive wood he carved cherubs, palm trees, and flowers in bloom, and he plated them with gold. He plated the cherubs and the palm trees with hammered gold. 6:33 In the same way he made doorposts of olive wood for the entrance to the main hall, only with four-sided pillars. 6:34 He also made two doors out of wood from evergreens; each door had two folding leaves. 6:35 He carved cherubs, palm trees, and flowers in bloom and plated them with gold, leveled out over the carvings. 6:36 He built the inner courtyard with three rows of chiseled stones and a row of cedar beams.

6:37 In the month Ziv of the fourth year of Solomon's reign the foundation was laid for the Lord's temple. 6:38 In the eleventh year, in the month Bul (the eighth month) the temple was completed in accordance with all its specifications and blueprints. It took seven years to build.

Solomon Dedicates the Temple

7:1 When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the Lord's splendor filled the temple. 7:2 The priests were unable to enter the Lord's temple because the Lord's splendor filled the Lord's temple. 7:3 When all the Israelites saw the fire come down and the Lord's splendor over the temple, they got on their knees with their faces downward toward the pavement. They worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, "Certainly he is good; certainly his loyal love endures!"

7:4 The king and all the people were presenting sacrifices to the Lord. 7:5 King Solomon sacrificed 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep. Then the king and all the people dedicated God's temple. 7:6 The

priests stood in their assigned spots, along with the Levites who had the musical instruments used for praising the Lord. (These were the ones King David made for giving thanks to the Lord and which were used by David when he offered praise, saying, "Certainly his loyal love endures.") Opposite the Levites, the priests were blowing the trumpets, while all Israel stood there. 7:7 Solomon consecrated the middle of the courtyard that is in front of the Lord's temple. He offered burnt sacrifices, grain offerings, and the fat from the peace offerings there, because the bronze altar that Solomon had made was too small to hold all these offerings. 7:8 At that time Solomon and all Israel with him celebrated a festival for seven days. This great assembly included people from Lebo Hamath in the north to the Brook of Egypt in the south. 7:9 On the eighth day they held an assembly, for they had dedicated the altar for seven days and celebrated the festival for seven more days. 7:10 On the twenty-third day of the seventh month, Solomon sent the people home. They left happy and contented because of the good the Lord had done for David, Solomon, and his people Israel.

PRAYER

Lord, the building of a great temple focused the eyes of the people whom You had blessed with peace and plenty upon You. You have said that I am the temple of the Holy Spirit, may I also keep my efforts and the eyes of my heart focused on You.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre reached an amicable barter of wood for the temple in exchange for food for his royal court. Solomon also conscripted tens of thousands of men from the kingdom to work in shifts processing wood and stone for the temple.

Four hundred and eighty years after the Israelites left Egypt Solomon began the construction of the temple and it took seven years to build.

Hiram of Tyre's father was a craftsman in bronze who make massive and small sculptures and tools then Solomon made the articles gold to which he added the holy items passed on to him from David.

The Lord God instructed Solomon that He approved of the construction of the temple and if he followed His rules, observed His regulations, and obeyed all of His commandments He would continue to bless Israel.

Solomon built the Temple then the Levites and Solomon led a massive service of praise, sacrifice, and worship.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Four hundred and eighty years covered the travels with Moses and the taking of the Promised Land with Joshua, the troubles with pagan religions, rebellions, the Ten Commandments (twice), the demand for and struggles with a human king – Saul – and then the equally trying times of David. Now, at last, the people had the peace and prosperity they longed for.

DISCUSS

Can you imagine the sense of relief as the Lord God consumed the offering and filled the new Temple with His presence?

REFLECT

The temple was a dream come true for the Israelites, as was their standing as the greatest among the nations around them.

SHARE

When have you observed a faith-based organization as it reached a long-sought goal and paused to celebrate and give the Lord all of the glory.

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you of blessings from the Lord God.

ACT

Today I will celebrate with others the blessings the Lord God has brought into my life. I will also prayerfully reflect on how I am using those blessings build-up His presence in my heart, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that I am bringing glory to Him in any way that I can.

Be Specific _____

Monday ([1 Kings 7–8](#))

The Building of the Royal Palace

7:1 Solomon took thirteen years to build his palace. 7:2 He named it “The Palace of the Lebanon Forest”; it was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. It had four rows of cedar pillars and cedar beams above the pillars. 7:3 The roof above the beams supported by the pillars was also made of cedar; there were forty-five beams, fifteen per row. 7:4 There were three rows of windows arranged in sets of three. 7:5 All of the entrances were rectangular in shape and they were arranged

in sets of three. 7:6 He made a colonnade 75 feet long and 45 feet wide. There was a porch in front of this and pillars and a roof in front of the porch. 7:7 He also made a throne room, called "The Hall of Judgment," where he made judicial decisions. It was paneled with cedar from the floor to the rafters. 7:8 The palace where he lived was constructed in a similar way. He also constructed a palace like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married. 7:9 All of these were built with the best stones, chiseled to the right size and cut with a saw on all sides, from the foundation to the edge of the roof and from the outside to the great courtyard. 7:10 The foundation was made of large valuable stones, measuring either 15 feet or 12 feet. 7:11 Above the foundation the best stones, chiseled to the right size, were used along with cedar. 7:12 Around the great courtyard were three rows of chiseled stones and one row of cedar beams, like the inner courtyard of the Lord's temple and the hall of the palace.

Solomon Commissions Hiram to Supply the Temple

7:13 King Solomon sent for Hiram of Tyre. 7:14 He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a craftsman in bronze from Tyre. He had the skill and knowledge to make all kinds of works of bronze. He reported to King Solomon and did all the work he was assigned.

7:15 He fashioned two bronze pillars; each pillar was 27 feet high and 18 feet in circumference. 7:16 He made two bronze tops for the pillars; each was seven-and-a-half feet high. 7:17 The latticework on the tops of the pillars was adorned with ornamental wreaths and chains; the top of each pillar had seven groupings of ornaments. 7:18 When he made the pillars, there were two rows of pomegranate-shaped ornaments around the latticework covering the top of each pillar. 7:19 The tops of the two pillars in the porch were shaped like lilies and were six feet high. 7:20 On the top of each pillar, right above the bulge beside the latticework, there were two hundred pomegranate-shaped ornaments arranged in rows all the way around. 7:21 He set up the pillars on the porch in front of the main hall. He erected one pillar on the right side and called it Jakin; he erected the other pillar on the left side and called it Boaz. 7:22 The tops of the pillars were shaped like lilies. So the construction of the pillars was completed.

7:23 He also made the large bronze basin called "The Sea." It measured 15 feet from rim to rim, was circular in shape, and stood seven-and-a-half feet high. Its circumference was 45 feet. 7:24 Under the rim all the way around it were round ornaments arranged in settings 15 feet long. The ornaments were in two rows and had been cast with "The Sea." 7:25 "The Sea" stood on top of twelve bulls. Three faced northward, three westward, three southward, and three eastward. "The Sea" was placed on top of them, and they all faced outward. 7:26 It was four fingers thick and its rim was like that of a cup shaped like a lily blossom. It could hold about 12,000 gallons.

7:27 He also made ten bronze movable stands. Each stand was six feet long, six feet wide, and four-and-a-half feet high. 7:28 The stands were constructed with frames between the joints. 7:29 On these frames and joints were ornamental lions, bulls, and cherubs. Under the lions and bulls were decorative wreaths. 7:30 Each stand had four bronze wheels with bronze axles and four supports. Under the basin the supports were fashioned on each side with wreaths. 7:31 Inside the stand was a round opening that was a foot-and-a-half deep; it had a support that was two and one-quarter feet long. On the edge of the opening were carvings in square frames. 7:32 The four wheels were under the frames and the crossbars of the axles were connected to the stand. Each wheel was two and one-quarter feet high. 7:33 The wheels were constructed like chariot wheels; their crossbars, rims, spokes, and hubs were made of cast metal. 7:34 Each stand had four supports, one per side projecting out from the stand. 7:35 On top of each stand was a round opening three-quarters of a foot deep; there were also supports and frames on top of the stands. 7:36 He engraved ornamental cherubs, lions, and palm trees on the plates of the supports and frames wherever there was room, with wreaths all around. 7:37 He made the ten stands in this way. All of them were cast in one mold and were identical in measurements and shape.

7:38 He also made ten bronze basins, each of which could hold about 240 gallons. Each basin was six feet in diameter; there was one basin for each stand. 7:39 He put five basins on the south side of the temple and five on the north side. He put "The Sea" on the south side, in the southeast corner.

7:40 Hiram also made basins, shovels, and bowls. He finished all the work on the Lord's temple he had been assigned by King Solomon. 7:41 He made the two pillars, the two bowl-shaped tops of the pillars, the latticework for the bowl-shaped tops of the two pillars, 7:42 the four hundred pomegranate-shaped ornaments for the latticework of the two pillars (each latticework had two rows of these ornaments at the bowl-shaped top of the pillar), 7:43 the ten movable stands with their ten basins, 7:44 the big bronze basin called "The Sea" with its twelve bulls underneath, 7:45 and the pots, shovels, and bowls. All these items King Solomon assigned Hiram to make for the Lord's temple were made from polished bronze. 7:46 The king had them cast in earth foundries in the region of the Jordan between Succoth and Zarethan. 7:47 Solomon left all these items unweighed; there were so many of them they did not weigh the bronze.

7:48 Solomon also made all these items for the Lord's temple: the gold altar, the gold table on which was kept the Bread of the Presence, 7:49 the pure gold lampstands at the entrance to the inner sanctuary (five on the right and five on the left), the gold flower-shaped ornaments, lamps, and tongs, 7:50 the pure gold bowls, trimming shears, basins, pans, and censers, and the gold door sockets for the inner sanctuary (the most holy place) and for the doors of the main hall of the temple. 7:51 When King Solomon finished constructing the Lord's temple, he put the holy items that belonged to his father David (the silver, gold, and other articles) in the treasuries of the Lord's temple.

Solomon Moves the Ark into the Temple

8:1 Then Solomon convened in Jerusalem Israel's elders, all the leaders of the Israelite tribes and families, so they could witness the transferal of the ark of the Lord's covenant from the city of David (that is, Zion). 8:2 All the men of Israel assembled before King Solomon during the festival in the month Ethanim (the seventh month). 8:3 When all Israel's elders had arrived, the priests lifted the ark. 8:4 The priests and Levites carried the ark of the Lord, the tent of meeting, and all the holy items in the tent. 8:5 Now King Solomon and all the Israelites who had assembled with him went on ahead of the ark and sacrificed more sheep and cattle than could be counted or numbered.

8:6 The priests brought the ark of the Lord's covenant to its assigned place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, in the most holy place, under the wings of the cherubs. 8:7 The cherubs' wings extended over the place where the ark sat; the cherubs overshadowed the ark and its poles. 8:8 The poles were so long their ends were visible from the holy place in front of the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen from beyond that point. They have remained there to this very day. 8:9 There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets Moses had placed there in Horeb. It was there that the Lord made an agreement with the Israelites after he brought them out of the land of Egypt. 8:10 Once the priests left the holy place, a cloud filled the Lord's temple. 8:11 The priests could not carry out their duties because of the cloud; the Lord's glory filled his temple.

8:12 Then Solomon said, "The Lord has said that he lives in thick darkness. 8:13 O Lord, truly I have built a lofty temple for you, a place where you can live permanently." 8:14 Then the king turned around and pronounced a blessing over the whole Israelite assembly as they stood there. 8:15 He said, "The Lord God of Israel is worthy of praise because he has fulfilled what he promised my father David. 8:16 He told David, 'Since the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from all the tribes of Israel to build a temple in which to live. But I have chosen David to lead my people Israel.' 8:17 Now my father David had a strong desire to build a temple to honor the Lord God of Israel. 8:18 The Lord told my father David, 'It is right for you to have a strong desire to build a temple to honor me. 8:19 But you will not build the temple; your very own son will build the temple for my honor.' 8:20 The Lord has kept the promise he made. I have taken my father David's place and have occupied the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised. I have built this temple for the honor of the Lord God of Israel 8:21 and set up in it a place for the ark containing the covenant the Lord made with our ancestors when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."

Solomon Prays for Israel

8:22 Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in front of the entire assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward the sky. 8:23 He prayed: "O Lord, God of Israel, there is no god like you in heaven above or on earth below! You maintain covenantal loyalty to your servants who obey you

with sincerity. 8:24 You have kept your word to your servant, my father David; this very day you have fulfilled what you promised. 8:25 Now, O Lord, God of Israel, keep the promise you made to your servant, my father David, when you said, 'You will never fail to have a successor ruling before me on the throne of Israel, provided that your descendants watch their step and serve me as you have done.' 8:26 Now, O God of Israel, may the promise you made to your servant, my father David, be realized.

8:27 "God does not really live on the earth! Look, if the sky and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this temple I have built! 8:28 But respond favorably to your servant's prayer and his request for help, O Lord my God. Answer the desperate prayer your servant is presenting to you today. 8:29 Night and day may you watch over this temple, the place where you promised you would live. May you answer your servant's prayer for this place. 8:30 Respond to the request of your servant and your people Israel for this place. Hear from inside your heavenly dwelling place and respond favorably.

8:31 "When someone is accused of sinning against his neighbor and the latter pronounces a curse on the alleged offender before your altar in this temple, be willing to forgive the accused if the accusation is false. 8:32 Listen from heaven and make a just decision about your servants' claims. Condemn the guilty party, declare the other innocent, and give both of them what they deserve.

8:33 "The time will come when your people Israel are defeated by an enemy because they sinned against you. If they come back to you, renew their allegiance to you, and pray for your help in this temple, 8:34 then listen from heaven, forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them back to the land you gave to their ancestors.

8:35 "The time will come when the skies are shut up tightly and no rain falls because your people sinned against you. When they direct their prayers toward this place, renew their allegiance to you, and turn away from their sin because you punish them, 8:36 then listen from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Certainly you will then teach them the right way to live and send rain on your land that you have given your people to possess.

8:37 "The time will come when the land suffers from a famine, a plague, blight and disease, or a locust invasion, or when their enemy lays siege to the cities of the land, or when some other type of plague or epidemic occurs. 8:38 When all your people Israel pray and ask for help, as they acknowledge their pain and spread out their hands toward this temple, 8:39 then listen from your heavenly dwelling place, forgive their sin, and act favorably toward each one based on your evaluation of his motives. (Indeed you are the only one who can correctly evaluate the motives of all people.) 8:40 Then they will obey you throughout their lifetimes as they live on the land you gave to our ancestors.

8:41 “Foreigners, who do not belong to your people Israel, will come from a distant land because of your reputation. 8:42 When they hear about your great reputation and your ability to accomplish mighty deeds, they will come and direct their prayers toward this temple. 8:43 Then listen from your heavenly dwelling place and answer all the prayers of the foreigners. Then all the nations of the earth will acknowledge your reputation, obey you like your people Israel do, and recognize that this temple I built belongs to you.

8:44 “When you direct your people to march out and fight their enemies, and they direct their prayers to the Lord toward his chosen city and this temple I built for your honor, 8:45 then listen from heaven to their prayers for help and vindicate them.

8:46 “The time will come when your people will sin against you (for there is no one who is sinless!) and you will be angry with them and deliver them over to their enemies, who will take them as prisoners to their own land, whether far away or close by. 8:47 When your people come to their senses in the land where they are held prisoner, they will repent and beg for your mercy in the land of their imprisonment, admitting, ‘We have sinned and gone astray; we have done evil.’ 8:48 When they return to you with all their heart and being in the land where they are held prisoner, and direct their prayers to you toward the land you gave to their ancestors, your chosen city, and the temple I built for your honor, 8:49 then listen from your heavenly dwelling place to their prayers for help and vindicate them. 8:50 Forgive all the rebellious acts of your sinful people and cause their captors to have mercy on them. 8:51 After all, they are your people and your special possession whom you brought out of Egypt, from the middle of the iron-smelting furnace.

8:52 “May you be attentive to your servant’s and your people Israel’s requests for help and may you respond to all their prayers to you. 8:53 After all, you picked them out of all the nations of the earth to be your special possession, just as you, O sovereign Lord, announced through your servant Moses when you brought our ancestors out of Egypt.”

8:54 When Solomon finished presenting all these prayers and requests to the Lord, he got up from before the altar of the Lord where he had kneeled and spread out his hands toward the sky. 8:55 When he stood up, he pronounced a blessing over the entire assembly of Israel, saying in a loud voice: 8:56 “The Lord is worthy of praise because he has made Israel his people secure just as he promised! Not one of all the faithful promises he made through his servant Moses is left unfulfilled! 8:57 May the Lord our God be with us, as he was with our ancestors. May he not abandon us or leave us. 8:58 May he make us submissive, so we can follow all his instructions and obey the commandments, rules, and regulations he commanded our ancestors. 8:59 May the Lord our God be constantly aware of these requests of mine I have presented to him, so that he might vindicate his servant and his people Israel as the need arises. 8:60 Then all the nations of the earth will recognize

that the Lord is the only genuine God. 8:61 May you demonstrate wholehearted devotion to the Lord our God by following his rules and obeying his commandments, as you are presently doing.”

Solomon Dedicates the Temple

8:62 The king and all Israel with him were presenting sacrifices to the Lord. 8:63 Solomon offered as peace offerings to the Lord 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep. Then the king and all the Israelites dedicated the Lord’s temple. 8:64 That day the king consecrated the middle of the courtyard that is in front of the Lord’s temple. He offered there burnt sacrifices, grain offerings, and the fat from the peace offerings, because the bronze altar that stood before the Lord was too small to hold all these offerings. 8:65 At that time Solomon and all Israel with him celebrated a festival before the Lord our God for two entire weeks. This great assembly included people from all over the land, from Lebo Hamath in the north to the Brook of Egypt in the south. 8:66 On the fifteenth day after the festival started, he dismissed the people. They asked God to empower the king and then went to their homes, happy and content because of all the good the Lord had done for his servant David and his people Israel.

PRAYER

Lord, You flexibly and patiently worked Your greater plan around and through the foolishness and rebellion of Israel, and finally brought the Law to it’s fullest visible splendor. May Your work in my life be equally flexible and patient as You overwhelm my imperfections for Your greater purpose in and through me.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon brought the Ark of God into the temple preceded by massive sacrifices from the plenty that the Lord God had given to Israel.

Solomon then prayed before the Ark, reciting the history of God’s faithfulness, then recognizing the inevitability that Israel would make bad choices in the future implored the Lord God to forgive and restore them after a time of suffering.

Concluding the dedication of the Temple was a massive peace offering to the Lord which helped to feed the mass of people gathered for the 15 day event.

Solomon took thirteen years to build his palace. It was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high (11,250sf) dwarfing the Temple which was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high (2,700sf).

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Solomon followed David's practice the second time he moved the Ark of God and offered many sacrifices, perhaps out of an abundance of caution, perhaps out of a genuine sense of gratitude and honor.

DISCUSS

Given the long history of God's forgiveness and restoration of Israel, following her transgressions, why would Solomon feel it was necessary to appeal to Him for that in the future? The text does not include any instructions from the Lord God for Solomon to build himself a palace, one already existed from David's time. Is there cause to wonder what was to come next when Solomon invested almost twice as many years in building his palace than he did in the temple and that his palace was four times as large as the temple?

REFLECT

The Lord God's continued blessing was, as always, conditional – based on obedience. Solomon appeared to serve, at least momentarily, in dual roles of king and priest.

SHARE

When have you appealed to the Lord God in prayer for mercy as you looked ahead and worried about the quality of your walk and your relationship with Him? When have you observed an individual or organization that was very blessed but who/which seemed to lose sight of the purpose of that blessing and drift into self-focused excess?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to something you can sacrifice to Him.

ACT

Today I will prayerfully discern something in my life that is more about the world than God, something that may be less-than-spiritually-edifying or less-than-physically-healthy, and I will sacrifice that to the Lord God. It may be entertainment that I enjoy but which contains content that appeals to the flesh, food I eat that is not the healthiest, company I keep that draws me away from holiness, etc. I will share the experience with a fellow believer.

Be Specific _____

Tuesday ([1 Kings 9](#), [2 Chronicles 7:11-8](#))

The Lord Gives Solomon a Promise and a Warning

9:1 After Solomon finished building the Lord's temple, the royal palace, and all the other construction projects he had planned, 9:2 the Lord appeared to Solomon a second time, in the same way he had appeared to him at Gibeon. 9:3 The Lord said to him, "I have answered your prayer and your request for help that you made to me. I have consecrated this temple you built by making it my permanent home; I will be constantly present there. 9:4 You must serve me with integrity and sincerity, just as your father David did. Do everything I commanded and obey my rules and regulations. 9:5 Then I will allow your dynasty to rule over Israel permanently, just as I promised your father David, 'You will not fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.'

9:6 "But if you or your sons ever turn away from me, fail to obey the regulations and rules I instructed you to keep, and decide to serve and worship other gods, 9:7 then I will remove Israel from the land I have given them, I will abandon this temple I have consecrated with my presence, and Israel will be mocked and ridiculed among all the nations. 9:8 This temple will become a heap of ruins; everyone who passes by it will be shocked and will hiss out their scorn, saying, 'Why did the Lord do this to this land and this temple?' 9:9 Others will then answer, 'Because they abandoned the Lord their God, who led their ancestors out of Egypt. They embraced other gods whom they worshiped and served. That is why the Lord has brought all this disaster down on them.'"

Foreign Affairs and Building Projects

9:10 After twenty years, during which Solomon built the Lord's temple and the royal palace, 9:11 King Solomon gave King Hiram of Tyre twenty cities in the region of Galilee, because Hiram had supplied Solomon with cedars, evergreens, and all the gold he wanted. 9:12 When Hiram went out from Tyre to inspect the cities Solomon had given him, he was not pleased with them. 9:13 Hiram asked, "Why did you give me these cities, my friend?" He called that area the region of Cabul, a name which it has retained to this day. 9:14 Hiram had sent to the king one hundred twenty talents of gold.

9:15 Here are the details concerning the work crews King Solomon conscripted to build the Lord's temple, his palace, the terrace, the wall of Jerusalem, and the cities of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. 9:16 (Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had attacked and captured Gezer. He burned it and killed the Canaanites who lived in the city. He gave it as a wedding present to his daughter, who had married Solomon.) 9:17 Solomon built up Gezer, lower Beth Horon, 9:18 Baalath, Tadmor in the wilderness, 9:19 all the storage cities that belonged to him, and the cities where chariots and horses were kept. He built whatever he wanted in Jerusalem, Lebanon, and throughout his entire kingdom. 9:20 Now several non-Israelite peoples were left in the land after the conquest of Joshua, including the

Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. 9:21 Their descendants remained in the land (the Israelites were unable to wipe them out completely). Solomon conscripted them for his work crews, and they continue in that role to this very day. 9:22 Solomon did not assign Israelites to these work crews; the Israelites served as his soldiers, attendants, officers, charioteers, and commanders of his chariot forces. 9:23 These men were also in charge of Solomon's work projects; there were a total of 550 men who supervised the workers. 9:24 Solomon built the terrace as soon as Pharaoh's daughter moved up from the city of David to the palace Solomon built for her.

9:25 Three times a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar he had built for the Lord, burning incense along with them before the Lord. He made the temple his official worship place.

9:26 King Solomon also built ships in Ezion Geber, which is located near Elat in the land of Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea. 9:27 Hiram sent his fleet and some of his sailors, who were well acquainted with the sea, to serve with Solomon's men. 9:28 They sailed to Ophir, took from there four hundred twenty talents of gold, and then brought them to King Solomon.

The Lord Gives Solomon a Promise and a Warning

7:11 After Solomon finished building the Lord's temple and the royal palace, and accomplished all his plans for the Lord's temple and his royal palace, 7:12 the Lord appeared to Solomon at night and said to him: "I have answered your prayer and chosen this place to be my temple where sacrifices are to be made. 7:13 When I close up the sky so that it doesn't rain, or command locusts to devour the land's vegetation, or send a plague among my people, 7:14 if my people, who belong to me, humble themselves, pray, seek to please me, and repudiate their sinful practices, then I will respond from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land. 7:15 Now I will be attentive and responsive to the prayers offered in this place. 7:16 Now I have chosen and consecrated this temple by making it my permanent home; I will be constantly present there. 7:17 You must serve me as your father David did. Do everything I commanded and obey my rules and regulations. 7:18 Then I will establish your dynasty, just as I promised your father David, 'You will not fail to have a successor ruling over Israel.'

7:19 "But if you people ever turn away from me, fail to obey the regulations and rules I instructed you to keep, and decide to serve and worship other gods, 7:20 then I will remove you from my land I have given you, I will abandon this temple I have consecrated with my presence, and I will make you an object of mockery and ridicule among all the nations. 7:21 As for this temple, which was once majestic, everyone who passes by it will be shocked and say, 'Why did the Lord do this to this land and this temple?' 7:22 Others will then answer, 'Because they abandoned the Lord God of their

ancestors, who led them out of Egypt. They embraced other gods whom they worshiped and served. That is why he brought all this disaster down on them.”

Building Projects and Commercial Efforts

8:1 After twenty years, during which Solomon built the Lord’s temple and his royal palace, 8:2 Solomon rebuilt the cities that Hiram had given him and settled Israelites there. 8:3 Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and seized it. 8:4 He built up Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage cities he had built in Hamath. 8:5 He made upper Beth Horon and lower Beth Horon fortified cities with walls and barred gates, 8:6 and built up Baalath, all the storage cities that belonged to him, and all the cities where chariots and horses were kept. He built whatever he wanted in Jerusalem, Lebanon, and throughout his entire kingdom.

8:7 Now several non-Israelite peoples were left in the land after the conquest of Joshua, including the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. 8:8 Their descendants remained in the land (the Israelites were unable to wipe them out). Solomon conscripted them for his work crews and they continue in that role to this very day. 8:9 Solomon did not assign Israelites to these work crews; the Israelites served as his soldiers, officers, charioteers, and commanders of his chariot forces. 8:10 These men worked for Solomon as supervisors; there were a total of 250 of them who were in charge of the people.

8:11 Solomon moved Pharaoh’s daughter up from the City of David to the palace he had built for her, for he said, “My wife must not live in the palace of King David of Israel, for the places where the ark of the Lord has entered are holy.”

8:12 Then Solomon offered burnt sacrifices to the Lord on the altar of the Lord which he had built in front of the temple’s porch. 8:13 He observed the daily requirements for sacrifices that Moses had specified for Sabbaths, new moon festivals, and the three annual celebrations – the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Temporary Shelters. 8:14 As his father David had decreed, Solomon appointed the divisions of the priests to do their assigned tasks, the Levitical orders to lead worship and help the priests with their daily tasks, and the divisions of the gatekeepers to serve at their assigned gates. This was what David the man of God had ordered. 8:15 They did not neglect any detail of the king’s orders pertaining to the priests, Levites, and treasuries.

8:16 All the work ordered by Solomon was completed, from the day the foundation of the Lord’s temple was laid until it was finished; the Lord’s temple was completed.

8:17 Then Solomon went to Ezion Geber and to Elat on the coast in the land of Edom. 8:18 Hiram sent him ships and some of his sailors, men who were well acquainted with the sea. They sailed

with Solomon's men to Ophir, and took from there 450 talents of gold, which they brought back to King Solomon.

PRAYER

Lord, in the midst of all of Your blessings you brought Solomon back to Your purpose, faithfulness to You. May I remember in the good times, as well as the bad, that You are the source of all blessings and that I belong to You.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

The Lord God warned Solomon to not commit the error of Saul but to follow David, who though he sinned morally, never violated His sacred laws or turned to false gods. He promised blessings to Solomon and his descendants for faithfulness and misery for rebellion.

In return for his assistance and generosity Solomon gave to King Hiram of Tyre the Galilee region of twenty cities. When Hiram inspected them he found them disagreeable and attached the derisive term "Cabul" to them. The text is unclear as to what, specifically, troubled him about them and what was the precise meaning of his pejorative. It may be that the King of a somewhat sophisticated island and seacoast region found the more primitive agriculture-based cities of Galilee unfamiliar. It is worth recalling that Tyre traded with Solomon - lumber for food.

Solomon conscripted the remaining non-Jews, who had never been driven out of the Promised Land, to do the heaviest and least desirable labor – placing 550 Jews in supervision over them – as he continued his perpetual Pharaoh-like construction projects. He also build ships and Hiram of Tyre sent experienced sailors to train the Jews.

Solomon faithfully offered burnt and peace offerings to the Lord three times each year.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Solomon seemed obsessed with bigger and more, perhaps it was a way to give purpose to the people in the midst of God's outpouring of blessing, and perhaps it was an expression of his own sense of need to express creativity and power. The Lord God's priority was faithfulness.

DISCUSS

With his gift of wisdom why would Solomon give to King Hiram of Tyre a region of cities that he should have known would not be well-received? Might it have occurred to Solomon that there may

be a future problem when one of his wives could not live in David's palace because holy objects had been there?

REFLECT

Just as the Egyptians forced the foreigners to do their heavy-lifting so the Jews now did to foreigners in the Promised Land, did Solomon pause to wonder if he might be creating future conflict?

SHARE

When have you given a gift and been surprised that the recipient did not like it?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you one area where you have been faithful and one where you need to improve.

ACT

Today I will celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit in leading me to faithfulness and prayerfully consider how I might improve where I am weak.

Be Specific _____

Wednesday (Psalms, 138, 134, 146-150)

[Psalm 138](#)

138:1 By David.

I will give you thanks with all my heart; before the heavenly assembly I will sing praises to you.

138:2 I will bow down toward your holy temple, and give thanks to your name, because of your loyal love and faithfulness, for you have exalted your promise above the entire sky.

138:3 When I cried out for help, you answered me. You made me bold and energized me.

138:4 Let all the kings of the earth give thanks to you, O Lord, when they hear the words you speak.

138:5 Let them sing about the Lord's deeds, for the Lord's splendor is magnificent.

138:6 Though the Lord is exalted, he takes note of the lowly, and recognizes the proud from far away.

138:7 Even when I must walk in the midst of danger, you revive me. You oppose my angry enemies, and your right hand delivers me.

138:8 The Lord avenges me. O Lord, your loyal love endures.

Do not abandon those whom you have made!

[Psalm 134](#)

134:1 A song of ascents.

Attention! Praise the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who serve in the Lord's temple during the night.

134:2 Lift your hands toward the sanctuary and praise the Lord!

134:3 May the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion!

[Psalm 146](#)

146:1 Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

146:2 I will praise the Lord as long as I live!

I will sing praises to my God as long as I exist!

146:3 Do not trust in princes, or in human beings, who cannot deliver!

146:4 Their life's breath departs, they return to the ground; on that day their plans die.

146:5 How blessed is the one whose helper is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God,

146:6 the one who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who remains forever faithful,

146:7 vindicates the oppressed, and gives food to the hungry. The Lord releases the imprisoned.

146:8 The Lord gives sight to the blind. The Lord lifts up all who are bent over. The Lord loves the godly.

146:9 The Lord protects those residing outside their native land; he lifts up the fatherless and the widow, but he opposes the wicked.

146:10 The Lord rules forever, your God, O Zion, throughout the generations to come!

Praise the Lord!

[Psalm 147](#)

147:1 Praise the Lord, for it is good to sing praises to our God!

Yes, praise is pleasant and appropriate!

147:2 The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem, and gathers the exiles of Israel.

147:3 He heals the brokenhearted, and bandages their wounds.

147:4 He counts the number of the stars; he names all of them.

147:5 Our Lord is great and has awesome power; there is no limit to his wisdom.

147:6 The Lord lifts up the oppressed, but knocks the wicked to the ground.

147:7 Offer to the Lord a song of thanks!

Sing praises to our God to the accompaniment of a harp!

147:8 He covers the sky with clouds, provides the earth with rain, and causes grass to grow on the hillsides.

147:9 He gives food to the animals, and to the young ravens when they chirp.

147:10 He is not enamored with the strength of a horse, nor is he impressed by the warrior's strong legs.

147:11 The Lord takes delight in his faithful followers, and in those who wait for his loyal love.

147:12 Extol the Lord, O Jerusalem!

Praise your God, O Zion!

147:13 For he makes the bars of your gates strong. He blesses your children within you.

147:14 He brings peace to your territory. He abundantly provides for you the best grain.

147:15 He sends his command through the earth; swiftly his order reaches its destination.

147:16 He sends the snow that is white like wool; he spreads the frost that is white like ashes.

147:17 He throws his hailstones like crumbs.

Who can withstand the cold wind he sends?

147:18 He then orders it all to melt; he breathes on it, and the water flows.

147:19 He proclaims his word to Jacob, his statutes and regulations to Israel.

147:20 He has not done so with any other nation; they are not aware of his regulations.

Praise the Lord!

[Psalm 148](#)

148:1 Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the sky!

Praise him in the heavens!

148:2 Praise him, all his angels!

Praise him, all his heavenly assembly!

148:3 Praise him, O sun and moon!

Praise him, all you shiny stars!

148:4 Praise him, O highest heaven, and you waters above the sky!

148:5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he gave the command and they came into existence.

148:6 He established them so they would endure; he issued a decree that will not be revoked.

148:7 Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea creatures and all you ocean depths,

148:8 O fire and hail, snow and clouds, O stormy wind that carries out his orders,

148:9 you mountains and all you hills, you fruit trees and all you cedars,

148:10 you animals and all you cattle, you creeping things and birds,

148:11 you kings of the earth and all you nations, you princes and all you leaders on the earth,

148:12 you young men and young women, you elderly, along with you children!

148:13 Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty extends over the earth and sky.

148:14 He has made his people victorious, and given all his loyal followers reason to praise – the Israelites, the people who are close to him.

Praise the Lord!

[Psalm 149](#)

149:1 Praise the Lord!

Sing to the Lord a new song!

Praise him in the assembly of the godly!

149:2 Let Israel rejoice in their Creator!

Let the people of Zion delight in their king!

149:3 Let them praise his name with dancing!

Let them sing praises to him to the accompaniment of the tambourine and harp!

149:4 For the Lord takes delight in his people; he exalts the oppressed by delivering them.

149:5 Let the godly rejoice because of their vindication!

Let them shout for joy upon their beds!

149:6 May they praise God while they hold a two-edged sword in their hand,

149:7 in order to take revenge on the nations, and punish foreigners.

149:8 They bind their kings in chains, and their nobles in iron shackles,

149:9 and execute the judgment to which their enemies have been sentenced. All his loyal followers will be vindicated.

Praise the Lord!

[Psalm 150](#)

150:1 Praise the Lord!

Praise God in his sanctuary!

Praise him in the sky, which testifies to his strength!

150:2 Praise him for his mighty acts!

Praise him for his surpassing greatness!

150:3 Praise him with the blast of the horn!

Praise him with the lyre and the harp!

150:4 Praise him with the tambourine and with dancing!

Praise him with stringed instruments and the flute!

150:5 Praise him with loud cymbals!

Praise him with clanging cymbals!

150:6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord!

PRAYER

Lord, You are unique, powerful, and omni-present. May I never imagine that I may keep anything from You, may I rather be mindful that You know and see all things, and be more intentional every

day to live rightly before You. Lord, when we praise You we draw nearer to Your perfection. May I praise you ceaselessly.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

[Psalm 138](#) began as a praise and concluded with a petition “When I cried out for help, you answered me. You made me bold and energized me ... Do not abandon those whom you have made!” The author was David.

[Psalm 134](#) “Attention! Praise the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who serve in the Lord’s temple during the night. Lift your hands toward the sanctuary and praise the Lord! May the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion!”

[Psalm 146](#) by David was praise “I will praise the Lord as long as I live! I will sing praises to my God as long as I exist!” with wisdom “Do not trust in princes, or in human beings, who cannot deliver!”

[Psalm 147](#) was praise with wisdom “Our Lord is great and has awesome power; there is no limit to his wisdom. The Lord lifts up the oppressed, but knocks the wicked to the ground ... The Lord takes delight in his faithful followers, and in those who wait for his loyal love.” The author was not identified in the text.

[Psalm 148](#) was praise “Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty extends over the earth and sky.” The author was not identified in the text.

[Psalm 149](#) was praise “Let them sing praises to him to the accompaniment of the tambourine and harp!” with wisdom “For the Lord takes delight in his people; he exalts the oppressed by delivering them. May they praise God while they hold a two-edged sword in their hand ...”

[Psalm 150](#) was praise “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The Lord is to be praised because He keeps every promise, He acts perfectly at all times, and He is all-powerful.

DISCUSS

Would it be because of the pattern of Israel making idols of mere men that David wrote “Do not trust in princes, or in human beings, who cannot deliver!”?

REFLECT

“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!” - all of Creation testifies to the Creator and therefore gives Him praise – despite the Fall. He Created perfection, we broke it, and He will cleanse and restore in the end.

SHARE

When have you experienced or observed the idolatry of mere man?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to encourage you to invite Him to examine you for any tendencies to idolatry and to purge it from your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a way that you could become more sincere in your communication with the Lord God.

ACT

Today I will prayerfully and reflectively make a list of things in my life that distract me from the Lord God. I will surrender all of them to the Lord and ask Him to only return those things that will not function as idols, even in the smallest way, and to remove my desire for anything that will. Today I will prayerfully reflect upon my communications with the Lord God, carefully listening for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as to how I might better prepare my heart for special time along with Him (perhaps fasting, music, and/or reading the Word).

Be Specific _____

Thursday ([Proverbs 25](#))

Proverbs of Solomon Collected by Hezekiah

25:1 These also are proverbs of Solomon, which the men of King Hezekiah of Judah copied:

25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, and it is the glory of a king to search out a matter.

25:3 As the heaven is high and the earth is deep so the hearts of kings are unsearchable.

25:4 Remove the dross from the silver, and material for the silversmith will emerge;

25:5 remove the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.

25:6 Do not honor yourself before the king, and do not stand in the place of great men;

25:7 for it is better for him to say to you, "Come up here," than to put you lower before a prince, whom your eyes have seen.

25:8 Do not go out hastily to litigation, or what will you do afterward when your neighbor puts you to shame?

25:9 When you argue a case with your neighbor, do not reveal the secret of another person,

25:10 lest the one who hears it put you to shame and your infamy will never go away.

25:11 Like apples of gold in settings of silver, so is a word skillfully spoken.

25:12 Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover to the ear of the one who listens.

25:13 Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to those who send him, for he refreshes the heart of his masters.

25:14 Like cloudy skies and wind that produce no rain, so is the one who boasts of a gift not given.

25:15 Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a soft tongue can break a bone.

25:16 When you find honey, eat only what is sufficient for you, lest you become stuffed with it and vomit it up.

25:17 Don't set foot too frequently in your neighbor's house, lest he become weary of you and hate you.

25:18 Like a club or a sword or a sharp arrow, so is the one who testifies against his neighbor as a false witness.

25:19 Like a bad tooth or a foot out of joint, so is confidence in an unfaithful person at the time of trouble.

25:20 Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar poured on soda, so is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.

25:21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,

25:22 for you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward you.

25:23 The north wind brings forth rain, and a gossiping tongue brings forth an angry look.

25:24 It is better to live on a corner of the housetop than in a house in company with a quarrelsome wife.

25:25 Like cold water to a weary person, so is good news from a distant land.

25:26 Like a muddied spring and a polluted well, so is a righteous person who gives way before the wicked.

25:27 It is not good to eat too much honey, nor is it honorable for people to seek their own glory.

25:28 Like a city that is broken down and without a wall, so is a person who cannot control his temper.

PRAYER

Lord, a life walked with You (in accord with Your wisdom) looks different than that of a person without You (or that of a believer who does not pursue and apply Your wisdom). May my life be useful to You because I am willing, teachable, and obedient.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

As noted in the Chapter heading, these are “Proverbs of Solomon Collected by Hezekiah”, and so there is some considerable overlap with the message/text of other Proverbs.

Solomon remarked that the Lord God did not choose to make all things obvious because He knows that some matters are only valued and understood after one has worked-through the full context of them. For one whom He calls to leadership “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, and it is the glory of a king to search out a matter ...” This is why “As the heaven is high and the earth is deep so the hearts of kings are unsearchable ...” because their hearts (on the occasions that they are obedient) belong to Him. It is in this process that the Lord does “Remove the dross from the silver, and material for the silversmith will emerge; remove the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.”

He warned “Do not go out hastily to litigation, or what will you do afterward when your neighbor puts you to shame? When you argue a case with your neighbor, do not reveal the secret of another person, lest the one who hears it put you to shame and your infamy will never go away.”

He encouraged “Like apples of gold in settings of silver, so is a word skillfully spoken. Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover to the ear of the one who listens.” Once again he called attention to the prerequisite that a wise person must be teachable.

Solomon counseled that choosing those whom we trust is important “Like a bad tooth or a foot out of joint, so is confidence in an unfaithful person at the time of trouble.”

He also shared this wisdom with those who would counsel and encourage the hurting “Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar poured on soda, so is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.”

Solomon combined two images in one verse “If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, for you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward you.”, the first is that in showing your right-heart in contrast to the evil-heart of your enemy you shine light into their darkness, then he referenced the practice of giving hot coals to a guest to warm them on the way home and with which they’d then start their fire at home (the head-part referenced the head gear which held the coals without burning the wearer yet still passed some heat to the head).

He warned that it was a terrible thing when a righteous person allowed themselves to be drawn into the value-system of a wicked person “Like a muddied spring and a polluted well, so is a righteous person who gives way before the wicked.”

Solomon warned against gluttony, of food or of fame “It is not good to eat too much honey, nor is it honorable for people to seek their own glory.”

He returned to his counsel that choices have consequences, in this case one who is out of control becomes vulnerable and weak “Like a city that is broken down and without a wall, so is a person who cannot control his temper.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

[Proverbs 25:26](#) Solomon warned that it was a terrible thing when a righteous person allowed him/her-self to be drawn into the value-system of a wicked person “Like a muddied spring and a polluted well, so is a righteous person who gives way before the wicked.” Think of all of the excuses we hear for selling-out to the world!

DISCUSS

How does a person who fails to control his/her anger become more vulnerable?

REFLECT

Choosing those whom we trust is very important, whether it is a spouse (if the Lord God calls us out of undistracted single-service to Him), a business associate, a leadership adviser, or in any other venue.

SHARE

When have you observed someone bringing an accusation against another, and they even dragged third-parties into the debate, only to be shown a fool – losing both friendships and honor?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your life where you are allowing yourself to be drawn into the value-system of an unrighteous person, or that of a group of people, or a worldly philosophy.

ACT

Today I will repent of the error which the Holy Spirit has revealed to me and I will act intentionally to break the unrighteous influence in my life. I will refuse to sell-out to anything that is not of-God and which does not draw me nearer to righteousness rather than nearer to the fire of sin.

Be Specific _____

Friday ([Proverbs 26-27](#))

26:1 Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool.

26:2 Like a fluttering bird or like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause does not come to rest.

26:3 A whip for the horse and a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the backs of fools!

26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you yourself also be like him.

26:5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own estimation.

26:6 Like cutting off the feet or drinking violence, so is sending a message by the hand of a fool.

26:7 Like legs that hang limp from the lame, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

26:8 Like tying a stone in a sling, so is giving honor to a fool.

26:9 Like a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard, so is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

26:10 Like an archer who wounds at random, so is the one who hires a fool or hires any passer-by.

26:11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.

26:12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

26:13 The sluggard says, "There is a lion in the road! A lion in the streets!"

26:14 Like a door that turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed.

26:15 The sluggard plunges his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth.

26:16 The sluggard is wiser in his own estimation than seven people who respond with good sense.

26:17 Like one who grabs a wild dog by the ears, so is the person passing by who becomes furious over a quarrel not his own.

26:18 Like a madman who shoots firebrands and deadly arrows,

26:19 so is a person who deceives his neighbor, and says, "Was I not only joking?"

26:20 Where there is no wood, a fire goes out, and where there is no gossip, contention ceases.

26:21 Like charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious person to kindle strife.

26:22 The words of a gossip are like delicious morsels; they go down into a person's innermost being.

26:23 Like a coating of glaze over earthenware are fervent lips with an evil heart.

26:24 The one who hates others disguises it with his lips, but he stores up deceit within him.

26:25 When he speaks graciously, do not believe him, for there are seven abominations within him.

26:26 Though his hatred may be concealed by deceit, his evil will be uncovered in the assembly.

26:27 The one who digs a pit will fall into it; the one who rolls a stone – it will come back on him.

26:28 A lying tongue hates those crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

27:1 Do not boast about tomorrow; for you do not know what a day may bring forth.

27:2 Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.

27:3 A stone is heavy and sand is weighty, but vexation by a fool is more burdensome than the two of them.

27:4 Wrath is cruel and anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?

27:5 Better is open rebuke than hidden love.

27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are excessive.

27:7 The one whose appetite is satisfied loathes honey, but to the hungry mouth every bitter thing is sweet.

27:8 Like a bird that wanders from its nest, so is a person who wanders from his home.

27:9 Ointment and incense make the heart rejoice, likewise the sweetness of one's friend from sincere counsel.

27:10 Do not forsake your friend and your father's friend, and do not enter your brother's house in the day of your disaster; a neighbor nearby is better than a brother far away.

27:11 Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad, so that I may answer anyone who taunts me.

27:12 A shrewd person sees danger and hides himself, but the naive keep right on going and suffer for it.

27:13 Take a man's garment when he has given security for a stranger, and when he gives surety for a stranger, hold him in pledge.

27:14 If someone blesses his neighbor with a loud voice early in the morning, it will be counted as a curse to him.

27:15 A continual dripping on a rainy day and a contentious wife are alike.

27:16 Whoever hides her hides the wind or grasps oil with his right hand.

27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so a person sharpens his friend.

27:18 The one who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and whoever takes care of his master will be honored.

27:19 As in water the face is reflected as a face, so a person's heart reflects the person.

27:20 As Death and Destruction are never satisfied, so the eyes of a person are never satisfied.

27:21 As the crucible is for silver and the furnace is for gold, so a person is proved by the praise he receives.

27:22 If you should pound the fool in the mortar among the grain with the pestle, his foolishness would not depart from him.

27:23 Pay careful attention to the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds,

27:24 for riches do not last forever, nor does a crown last from generation to generation.

27:25 When the hay is removed and new grass appears, and the grass from the hills is gathered in,

27:26 the lambs will be for your clothing, and the goats will be for the price of a field.

27:27 And there will be enough goat's milk for your food, for the food of your household, and for the sustenance of your servant girls.

PRAYER

Lord, the world is filled with fools, those who choose to live without You – or those who belong to You but who choose to frequently ignore Your wisdom. May I study Your Word, learn about Your wisdom, and choose not to be counted among the fools.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

This collection of Solomon's proverbs began with several specific to fools "Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool."

He observed that a curse uttered by a fool was without the Lord God's approval because it lacked a cause, was meaningless "Like a fluttering bird or like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause does not come to rest."

Solomon juxtaposed two cases where a fool said something and the wise person had to choose if and how they would respond. [The NET Translator's notes postulate that in the first case one is

dealing with something not even worthy of a reply, and in the second a matter demanding a correcting-reply so that in something important the fool is not left believing himself to be correct “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you yourself also be like him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own estimation.”]

He observed that a fool does not learn from his/her mistakes “Like a dog that returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.”

He taught that an arrogant and prideful man who gives no credit for wisdom to the Lord God is less teachable than a fool “Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”

Solomon often warned against gossip “Where there is no wood, a fire goes out, and where there is no gossip, contention ceases.”

He warned against presuming upon the circumstances of a day not yet lived “Do not boast about tomorrow; for you do not know what a day may bring forth.”

Solomon warned against boasting “Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.”

He observed that jealousy poisoned relationships whereas wrath and anger tended to be events with consequences, but also with clear beginnings and endings “Wrath is cruel and anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?”

Solomon contrasted the hurt that may come from a friend’s words and the false praise of an enemy “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are excessive.”

He presented a three-part wisdom; first that one needs to stay close to friends, second that one should not either bring trouble into their brother’s home or only go to him when in trouble, and third that one should develop nearby friends for support when existing family and friends are at a distance “Do not forsake your friend and your father’s friend, and do not enter your brother’s house in the day of your disaster; a neighbor nearby is better than a brother far away.”

Solomon observed that bellowing blessings at someone early in the morning is unlikely to be received well “If someone blesses his neighbor with a loud voice early in the morning, it will be counted as a curse to him.”

He repeats his warning to choose a spouse wisely “A continual dripping on a rainy day and a contentious wife are alike ... and he warned that trying to keep such a woman from being an

embarrassment is like trying to hide the wind or to hold wind in your bare hand “Whoever hides her hides the wind or grasps oil with his right hand.”

Solomon encouraged believers to discuss important matters with an eye toward wisdom “As iron sharpens iron, so a person sharpens his friend.”

He noted that ones heart drives ones attitude and behavior and thereby displays the essence of a person “As in water the face is reflected as a face, so a person’s heart reflects the person.”

Solomon concluded that the lust of the eyes are an endless source of worldly desire “As Death and Destruction are never satisfied, so the eyes of a person are never satisfied.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

One does not always have to respond to every foolish thing that people say, but wisdom helps one to know when a wrong statement made about serious matter requires a correction.

DISCUSS

Why might Solomon place such a high value on friendship?

REFLECT

Jealousy is toxic to relationships, among co-workers, neighbors, associates of other types, and romantic relationships.

SHARE

When have you experienced the frustration of dealing with a fool?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you an opportunity in a relationship with a fellow believer where an “iron sharpening iron” discussion of important matters would lead to more maturity through shared wisdom.

ACT

Today I will prayerfully begin seeking a Christian person, and a time and a plan, for an “iron sharpening iron” peer-discipleship fellowship.

Be Specific _____

Saturday ([Proverbs 28-29](#))

28:1 The wicked person flees when there is no one pursuing, but the righteous person is as confident as a lion.

28:2 When a country is rebellious it has many princes, but by someone who is discerning and knowledgeable order is maintained.

28:3 A poor person who oppresses the weak is like a driving rain without food.

28:4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law contend with them.

28:5 Evil people do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it all.

28:6 A poor person who walks in his integrity is better than one who is perverse in his ways even though he is rich.

28:7 The one who keeps the law is a discerning child, but a companion of gluttons brings shame to his parents.

28:8 The one who increases his wealth by increasing interest gathers it for someone who is gracious to the needy.

28:9 The one who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.

28:10 The one who leads the upright astray in an evil way will himself fall into his own pit, but the blameless will inherit what is good.

28:11 A rich person is wise in his own eyes, but a discerning poor person can evaluate him properly.

28:12 When the righteous rejoice, great is the glory, but when the wicked rise to power, people are sought out.

28:13 The one who covers his transgressions will not prosper, but whoever confesses them and forsakes them will find mercy.

28:14 Blessed is the one who is always cautious, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into evil.

28:15 Like a roaring lion or a roving bear, so is a wicked ruler over a poor people.

28:16 The prince who is a great oppressor lacks wisdom, but the one who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.

28:17 The one who is tormented by the murder of another will flee to the pit; let no one support him.

28:18 The one who walks blamelessly will be delivered, but whoever is perverse in his ways will fall at once.

28:19 The one who works his land will be satisfied with food, but whoever chases daydreams will have his fill of poverty.

28:20 A faithful person will have an abundance of blessings, but the one who hastens to gain riches will not go unpunished.

28:21 To show partiality is terrible, for a person will transgress over the smallest piece of bread.

28:22 The stingy person hastens after riches and does not know that poverty will overtake him.

28:23 The one who reproves another will in the end find more favor than the one who flatters with the tongue.

28:24 The one who robs his father and mother and says, "There is no transgression," is a companion to the one who destroys.

28:25 The greedy person stirs up dissension, but the one who trusts in the Lord will prosper.

28:26 The one who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but the one who walks in wisdom will escape.

28:27 The one who gives to the poor will not lack, but whoever shuts his eyes to them will receive many curses.

28:28 When the wicked gain control, people hide themselves, but when they perish, the righteous increase.

29:1 The one who stiffens his neck after numerous rebukes will suddenly be destroyed without remedy.

29:2 When the righteous become numerous, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan.

29:3 The man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father, but whoever associates with prostitutes wastes his wealth.

29:4 A king brings stability to a land by justice, but one who exacts tribute tears it down.

29:5 The one who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his steps.

29:6 In the transgression of an evil person there is a snare, but a righteous person can sing and rejoice.

29:7 The righteous person cares for the legal rights of the poor; the wicked does not understand such knowledge.

29:8 Scornful people inflame a city, but those who are wise turn away wrath.

29:9 If a wise person goes to court with a foolish person, there is no peace whether he is angry or laughs.

29:10 Bloodthirsty people hate someone with integrity; as for the upright, they seek his life.

29:11 A fool lets fly with all his temper, but a wise person keeps it back.

29:12 If a ruler listens to lies, all his ministers will be wicked.

29:13 The poor person and the oppressor have this in common: the Lord gives light to the eyes of them both.

29:14 If a king judges the poor in truth, his throne will be established forever.

29:15 A rod and reproof impart wisdom, but a child who is unrestrained brings shame to his mother.

29:16 When the wicked increase, transgression increases, but the righteous will see their downfall.

29:17 Discipline your child, and he will give you rest; he will bring you happiness.

29:18 When there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but the one who keeps the law, blessed is he!

29:19 A servant cannot be corrected by words, for although he understands, there is no answer.

29:20 Do you see someone who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

29:21 If someone pampers his servant from youth, he will be a weakling in the end.

29:22 An angry person stirs up dissension, and a wrathful person is abounding in transgression.

29:23 A person's pride will bring him low, but one who has a lowly spirit will gain honor.

29:24 Whoever shares with a thief is his own enemy; he hears the oath to testify, but does not talk.

PRAYER

Lord, You teach us about choices and consequences and how the condition of our hearts – and those of our leaders – has a major impact upon the way we think and act. May I take the time to assess what is my heart-condition before I speak and before I act.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon challenged leaders to be wise and warned of the consequences of the wrong people in power “When a country is rebellious it has many princes, but by someone who is discerning and knowledgeable order is maintained ... When the righteous rejoice, great is the glory, but when the wicked rise to power, people are sought out ... When the wicked gain control, people hide themselves, but when they perish, the righteous increase ... When the righteous become numerous, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan ... Like a roaring lion or a roving bear, so is a wicked ruler over a poor people ... The prince who is a great oppressor lacks wisdom, but the one who hates unjust gain will prolong his days ... If a ruler listens to lies, all his ministers will be wicked.”

He explained that those with few resources who abuse those with little power are foolish “A poor person who oppresses the weak is like a driving rain without food.”

Solomon repeated his teaching that “The one who gives to the poor will not lack, but whoever shuts his eyes to them will receive many curses. And that how one treats matters of justice involving the poor speaks of the condition of their heart “The righteous person cares for the legal rights of the poor; the wicked does not understand such knowledge ... Evil people do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it all.”

He returned to his theme of choices and consequences “A poor person who walks in his integrity is better than one who is perverse in his ways even though he is rich ... The one who keeps the law is a

discerning child, but a companion of gluttons brings shame to his parents ... The one who leads the upright astray in an evil way will himself fall into his own pit, but the blameless will inherit what is good ... The one who covers his transgressions will not prosper, but whoever confesses them and forsakes them will find mercy ... Blessed is the one who is always cautious, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into evil ... The one who works his land will be satisfied with food, but whoever chases daydreams will have his fill of poverty ... The one who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but the one who walks in wisdom will escape ... A person's pride will bring him low, but one who has a lowly spirit will gain honor."

Solomon described the prison of nitpicking and sin that comes from one who lacks a sense of wisdom-informed justice "To show partiality is terrible, for a person will transgress over the smallest piece of bread."

He called upon the wise to refuse to get involved with those who cause trouble "Scornful people inflame a city, but those who are wise turn away wrath."

Solomon explained why true Christians are often targets in the secular world "Bloodthirsty people hate someone with integrity; as for the upright, they seek his life." [Bloodthirsty might be taken to refer to those who serve the enemy.]

He challenged leaders of the faithful to proclaim the Word of God "When there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but the one who keeps the law, blessed is he!"

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

"When a country is rebellious it has many princes, but by someone who is discerning and knowledgeable order is maintained." [Proverbs 28:2](#)

The Lord God allows nations to be fragmented, though that is not His preference, He rarely/selectively micromanages, for if He did there would be no free will, and absent free will there is no true relationship. What the Lord seeks is a restoration of relationship with His Creation, one heart at a time.

DISCUSS

Why do true Christians always become targets of sinners?

REFLECT

The failure of leaders of believers to teach the Word is one reason that so many Christians are so weak and confused.

SHARE

When have you observed the Lord God blessing someone who cares for the poor?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to identify a leader, or a leadership selection process, that requires your prayer – because the nature of a leader will be reflected in the way he treats the people.

ACT

Today I will pray in earnest for the leader or leadership selection process which the Holy Spirit has pointed out to me. I will invite others to pray in-agreement with me.

Be Specific _____

All Bible text is from the NET unless otherwise indicated - <http://bible.org>

Note 1: These Studies often rely upon the guidance of the NET Translators from their associated notes. Careful attention has been given to cite that source where it has been quoted directly or closely paraphrased. Feedback is encouraged where credit has not been sufficiently assigned.

Note 2: When NET text is quoted in commentary and discussion all pronouns referring to God are capitalized, though they are lower-case in the original NET text.

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