

An open Bible lies on a wooden surface, its pages filled with text. The background is a dramatic sunset over a vast, flat landscape, with a bright sun low on the horizon and a sky filled with colorful, golden clouds. A few birds are seen flying in the distance. The overall scene is peaceful and contemplative.

Chronological Bible Study

Week 18:

Solomon's Reign

1 Kings 7-11

Ecclesiastes

Song of Solomon

Opening Prayer

[Video Link](#)



A prayer based
on Ecclesiastes 3

ALL
WE
CAN



Introductions

General Check-in: How have you been doing this past week?

Questions?

Comments?

Summary of This Week's Readings

Building the Solomon's Palace
Temple Furnishings and Dedication
Solomon's Accomplishments
The Book of Ecclesiastes
The Song of Songs

The Books of Solomon

[Video Link](#)



The Palace

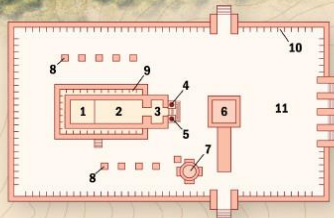
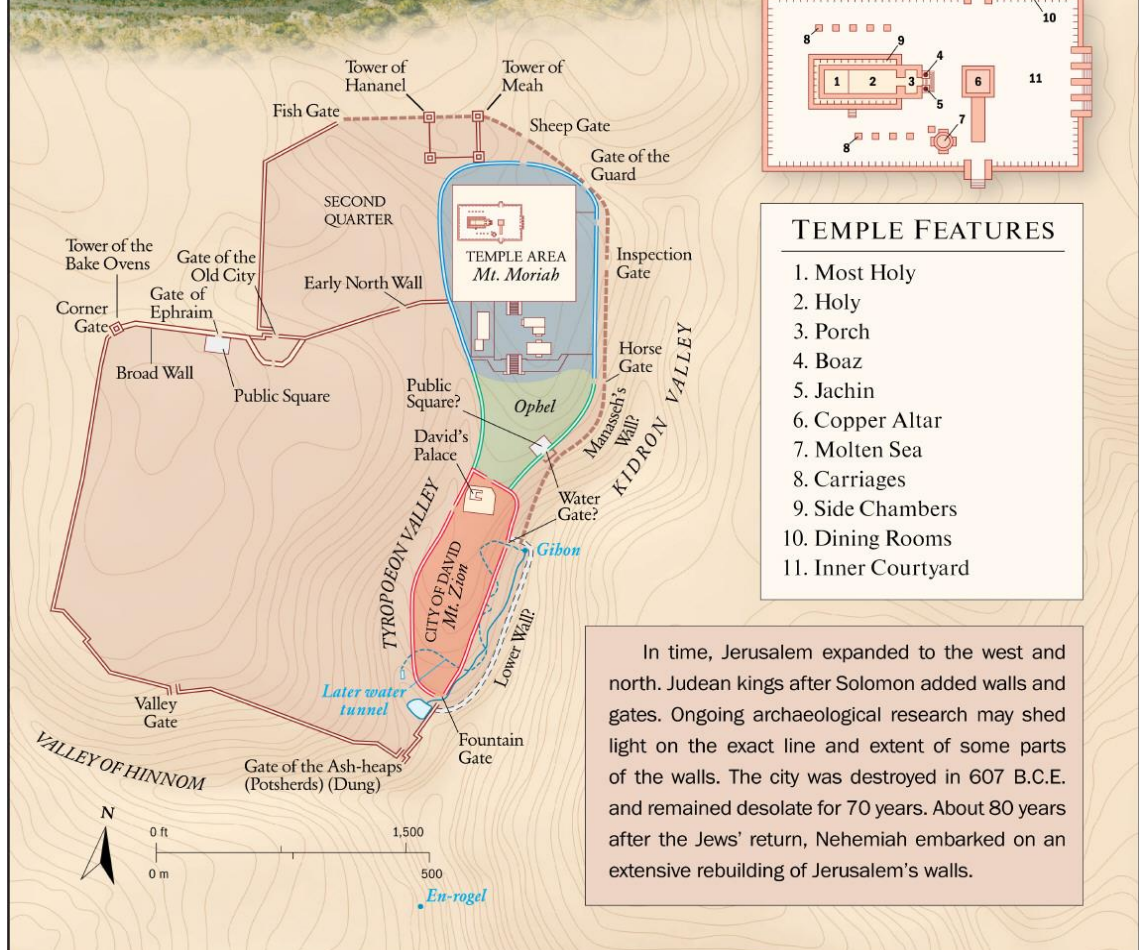
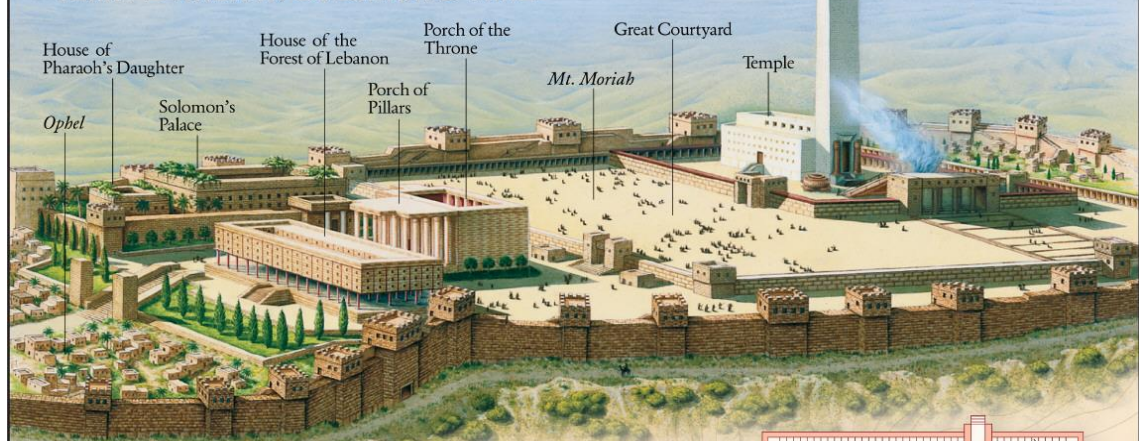
- The Palace is south of the temple
- Includes 3 state buildings and 2 private residences
- Takes 13 years to build.

Solomon's Temple vs. Palace

1 Kings 6-7
Differences and similarities between Solomon's great building projects

Temple	Palace
7 years to build <i>6:38</i>	13 years to build <i>7:1</i>
Built according to God's specifications <i>6:38; see 1 Chron. 28:11-12</i>	No specifications from God
Dimensions: 90 feet long, 30 wide, 45 high <i>6:2</i>	Dimensions: 150 feet long, 75 wide, 45 high <i>7:2</i>
Constructed with blocks dressed at quarry <i>6:7</i>	Constructed with blocks of high-grade stone <i>7:9</i>
No iron tools used at temple building site <i>6:7</i>	Stone cut and trimmed to size <i>7:9</i>
Narrow windows placed high <i>6:4</i>	Windows placed high, in sets of three <i>7:4</i>
Inner courtyard surrounded by wall of dressed stone and trimmed cedar beams <i>6:36; 7:12</i>	Great courtyard surrounded by wall of dressed stone and trimmed cedar beams <i>7:12</i>
Floors made of juniper, covered in gold; whole interior covered with cedar and overlaid with gold <i>6:15, 18, 22, 30</i>	Throne hall covered from floor to ceiling with cedar <i>7:7</i>

TEMPLE AREA IN SOLOMON'S TIME



- ### TEMPLE FEATURES
1. Most Holy
 2. Holy
 3. Porch
 4. Boaz
 5. Jachin
 6. Copper Altar
 7. Molten Sea
 8. Carriages
 9. Side Chambers
 10. Dining Rooms
 11. Inner Courtyard

In time, Jerusalem expanded to the west and north. Judean kings after Solomon added walls and gates. Ongoing archaeological research may shed light on the exact line and extent of some parts of the walls. The city was destroyed in 607 B.C.E. and remained desolate for 70 years. About 80 years after the Jews' return, Nehemiah embarked on an extensive rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls.





The Temple Furnishings

- King Tyre sent materials and highly skilled craftsmen to help build the temple.
- Just as God was with the artisans who built the tabernacle's furniture and tools, so He was with the craftsmen who did the same for the temple.
- Solomon oversaw the construction of the temple furnishings.
- Items from tabernacle and David's reign stored in the temple treasuries.

DISCUSSION

Some say the time taken to build the temple be seen as a metaphor for spiritual growth? Do you agree?

What aspects of the temple construction inspire you in your spiritual journey?



Temple Dedication



- Great ceremony held for temple dedication.
- Ark of the covenant solemnly installed in the inner sanctuary by the priests and Levites. The ark held the tablets of the ten commandments
- A cloud filled the temple when the ark was installed.
- Solomon reminds the people of God's promises
- Solomon's prayer articulates behavioral standards by which the people will be judged.
- The dynasty's survival hangs on royal faithfulness.
- Dedicatory sacrifices are made.

Seven Prayer Topics

- When a man wrongs his neighbor
- When Israel has been defeated by enemies
- When there is no rain
- When disaster comes
- Foreigners
- When Israel goes to war
- When the Israelites become captives to their enemies



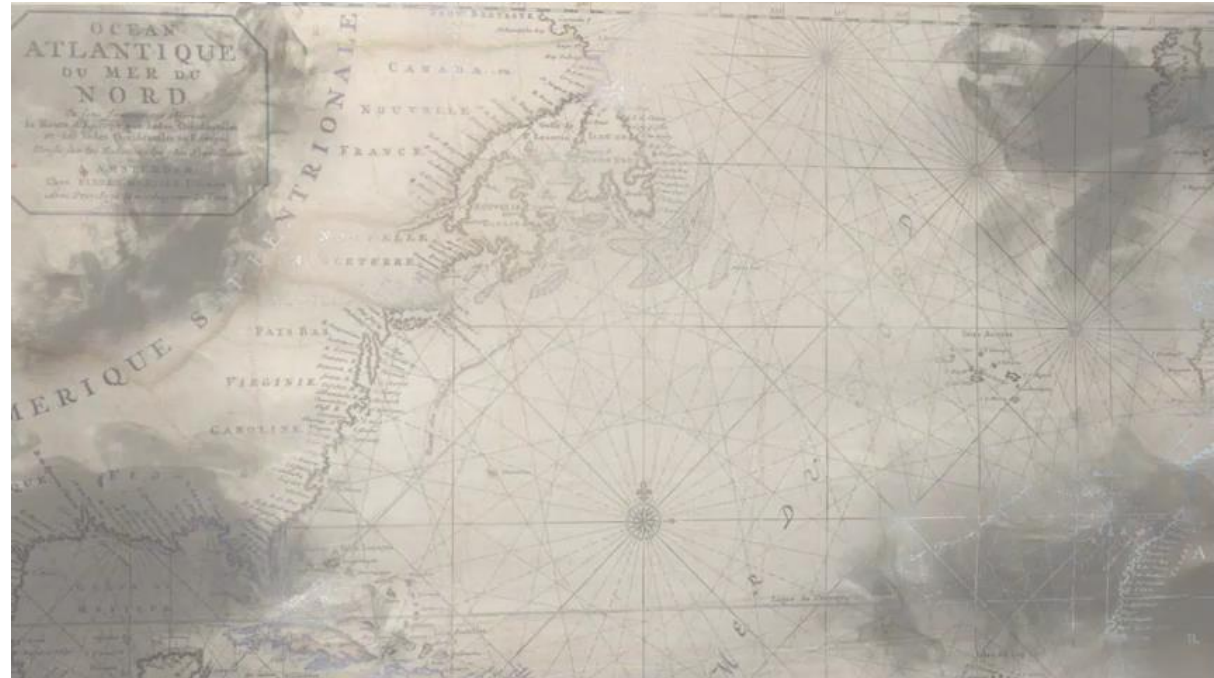


God Appears to Solomon

- God appears to Solomon in a dream
- God answers Solomon's prayer and accepts the temple.
- God demands obedience to the law.
- God is serious about avoiding idolatry.

Solomon

[Video Link](#)



Other Activities

- Solomon's official and personal life portrayed
- Major construction projects described
- Visit by the Queen of Sheba described.



The Visit of the Queen of Sheba

[Video Link](#)



Divine Judgment Looms


- Solomon resides in luxury
- Reigns over an international empire with vast military resources
- There was much international trade
- But divine judgment looms
 - Solomon married foreign women that the law said he should not marry
 - His wives “turned away his heart”
 - Solomon begins practicing idolatry and building temples to idol gods.
 - Solomon was not living up to his covenant with God.

Solomon's Vast Wealth


1 Kings

Solomon owns a large palace as well as huge quantities of food and livestock; he also owns the following:


12,000 horses 4:26


4,000 stalls for chariot horses 4:26


666 talents of gold received per year
(about 25 tons) 10:14


540 talents of gold from Ophir and Sheba
(about 20 1/2 tons) 9:28; 10:10


500 gold shields 10:16–17



Ivory and gold throne 10:18

Fleet of trading ships that bring him gold, silver, ivory, apes and baboons 10:22



Gold goblets; all household articles pure gold 10:21



Revenues from merchants, traders, governors, Arabian kings 10:15



Precious stones 10:10



Large quantities of spices 10:10



Solomon is so wealthy that he makes silver as common as stones! 10:27

DISCUSSION

How do you understand the role of discernment in our interaction with others, as exemplified by Queen Sheba?

Can you see any lessons related to Solomon's wisdom and wealth that can be incorporated into our lives today?



Opening Reflection

[Video Link](#)



Major Theme of Ecclesiastes

- How to go about knowing and finding truth in a world that is perplexing.
- If we make ourselves the center of truth, then truth will continually evade us and we will find ourselves in despair.
- Apart from God there can be no life. Man in himself cannot find meaning in life.

Big Ideas in ECCLESIASTES

Wisdom and pleasure alone
have no lasting significance

Earthly
achievements
are ultimately
futile

Enjoy the life God
has given you

The wicked may
seem to thrive
while good
people suffer,
but God will
balance the
scales one day

God's wisdom is beyond
human understanding

Life is meaningless
without God; fear
God and keep his
commandments



Key Themes: Life Without God Lacks Meaning



- Hevel: vapor, breath, mist
- Vanity is something temporal and passing – unfulfilling
- The fundamental problem with man is man!
- We must remember God to find meaning in life

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Key Themes: Human Mortality



- Because of the Fall, death is a judgment from God.
- Death was decreed by God and is universal and inevitable.
- In death we are forgotten.
- But death is neither an original nor permanent feature of human life. Mortality was conquered at the cross.

Key Themes: Humanity's Purpose

- We were originally created for joy in fellowship with God and for the ability to work under and for God in a meaningful and fulfilling way.
- Work (labor and toil) is a central theme of the book.
- We live out our life under the sun, looking forward with hope to a day when we will live fully in the joy of fellowship with God and others and will participate in cultivating the new creation.



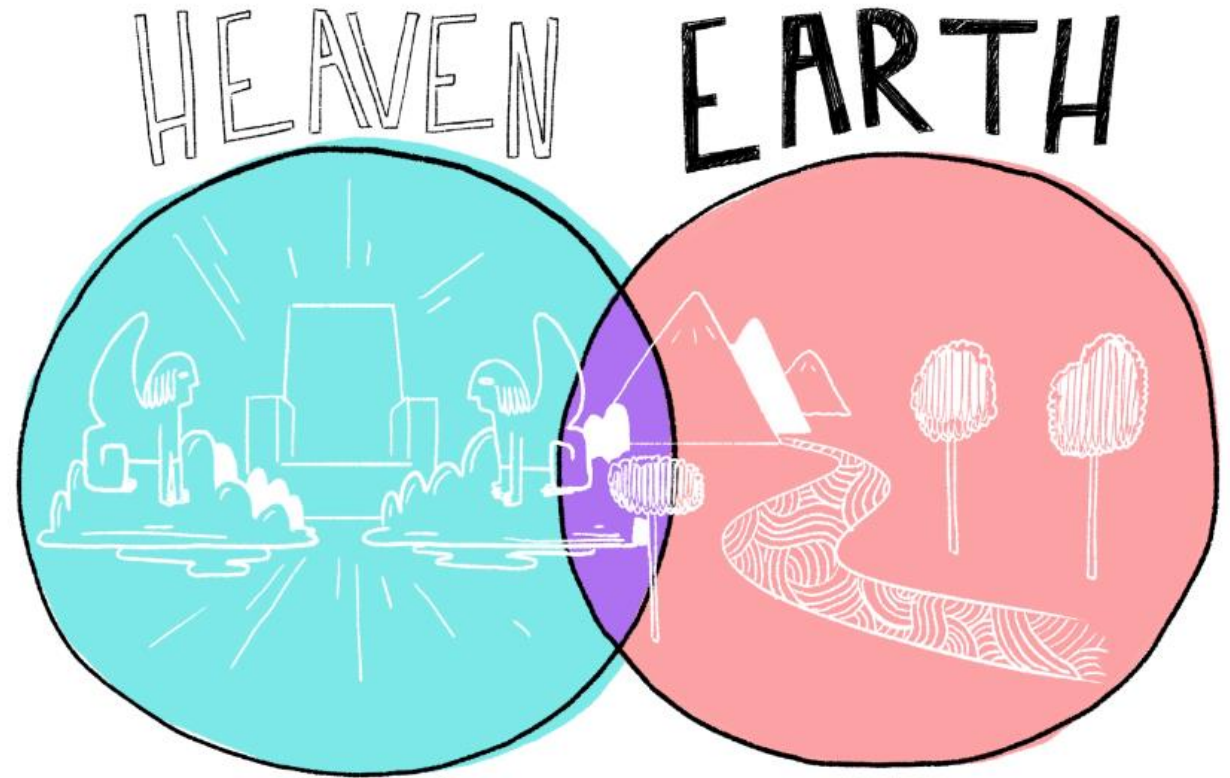
Key Themes: Regularities of God's Providence

- The dependable nature of the created order gives a rational basis to the world.
- Man does not learn from the past. Remembrance (or lack of remembrance) is a central motif of the book.
- While Ecclesiastes describes these regularities as an example of the vanity of existence, they are also examples of God's grace even amid his judgment.



Key Themes: This Age and the Age to Come

- The first 11 verses of Ecclesiastes provides a picture of what life is like in the present age.
- Ecclesiastes points forward to the coming of Jesus (from the line of David)
- With the incarnation of Jesus, the age to come has broken into the present age





Two Central Metaphors: The Wind and the Sun

These metaphors are used throughout the Book of Ecclesiastes to emphasize:

- The lasting significance of the earth
- Humanity's ephemeral nature by comparison

Anything other than dependence on and trust in God is an attempt to grasp the unattainable (the wind and the sun).



Discussion

- What do we hang our hopes on that leave us disappointed or disillusioned? Why do we continue to hang our hopes on the things of this world?
- Have you wondered why God, being a good God, could allow pain and suffering in the world? How does this affect your relationship with God?

Opening Reflection

[Video Link](#)



Song of Songs/Song of Solomon

- Love poetry
- Several interpretations
- Highly metaphoric

Big Ideas in SONG OF SONGS

The love a person
feels for someone
else is powerful

Sex within marriage is a
divine gift to value and enjoy

There is no shame in
erotic love between
husband and wife

Love is precious
and spontaneous
and should be
celebrated

DISCUSSION

How do the themes of Song of Solomon resonate with your current understanding of love?

How can the portrayal of love in this chapter influence the way we approach relationships in contemporary society?





Readings:

The Divided Kingdom:

1 Kings 11:9 – 19:21

2 Chronicles 5:1-16:14

Cavalry Chapel Oceanside Tabernacle Alive

March 1-24, 2024

\$18/person Reservations required No children under 7

Live size interactive self-guided audio tour of the tabernacle

<https://www.calvaryoceanside.org/tabernacle> (for hours and tickets)

Closing Song

[Video Link](#)



Solomon's Reign

30 JAN – 5 FEB 2024

1 KI 7-11; ECC; SS

Week 18

Solomon continues his building project, completing his palace, and furnishing and consecrating the temple. The Ark of the Covenant is placed in the temple, a cloud of God's glory covers the temple, and Solomon gives glory to God and praises the people for accomplishing God's will. Solomon gains world renown as a wise king and becomes very wealthy. Enjoying his worldly success, Solomon is unfaithful to God. In response, God pits many adversaries against him. Solomon dies and his son Rehoboam succeeds him. Ecclesiastes ponders the question, what does our life mean apart from God? The Song of Solomon celebrates the power and intensity of love and the human longing to know and be known. Love is a gift from God.

Weekly Reading Plan

(Pages 487-512)

Day 1: 1 KI 7:1-9:14

Day 2: 1 KI 9:15-10:29

Day 3: ECC 1:1 – 3:22

Day 4: ECC 4:1-7:29

Day 5: ECC 8:1-12:14

Day 6: 1 KI 11:1-8

Day 7: SS 1:1- 8:14

Outline

Building the King's Palace [Day 1]

Solomon's Other Accomplishments [Day 2]

All is Vanity [Day 3-5]

Solomon's Wives [Day 6]

Song of Solomon [Day 7]

Key Characters

Solomon

Huram

Hiram

Queen of Sheba

Jeroboam

Rehoboam

Key Locations

Jerusalem

Israel

Key Terms

Temple

Covenant

Apostasy

Divided Kingdom

Wisdom

Love

Key Verses

“As for you, if you will walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, just as I promised to your father David, saying, “You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.” But if you or your sons indeed turn away from following Me, and do not keep my commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and the house which I have consecrated for My name, I will cast out of My sight (1 KI 9:4-7)

What advantage does man have in all his work which he does under the sun [ECC 1:3]

I am my love's and my love is mine; he feeds among the lilies [SS 6:3]

“Many waters cannot quench love, nor will rivers overflow it; If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, it would be utterly despised [SS 8:7]

EPOCH 4
(1200 – 930 BC)

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

1Ki7: Solomon built his own house. Hiram made pillars, the sea and utensils for the temple of bronze. Solomon made the furniture of gold.

1Ki8: The priests brought the ark into the temple. Solomon said, "O LORD, if anyone prays toward this place then hear from heaven and act."

1Ki9: The LORD said to Solomon, "If you walk in my ways I will establish your throne." Solomon did not make slaves of the sons of Israel.

1Ki10: The queen of Sheba came to test Solomon. She gave him gold, spices and precious stones. Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth.

Ecc1: Everything is meaningless! There is nothing new under the sun. I applied my heart to know wisdom, but much wisdom brings much sorrow.

Ecc2: I built houses, gathered possessions and sought pleasure. It was meaningless! The wise die like the foolish. I despaired of my toil.

Ecc3: There is a time for everything: to live, to die, to mourn, to dance. It is the gift of God that man should find pleasure in his work.

Ecc4: I saw the tears of the oppressed. Two have a good reward for their toil. I saw everyone follow a new king. This too is meaningless!

Ecc5: Do not make rash vows before God. The lover of money never has enough. What is gained by toil? It is good to find enjoyment in life.

Ecc6: Here is an evil: to have wealth and honour but not to enjoy them. What do the wise gain over fools? The more words, the less meaning.

Ecc7: The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning. Do not be too righteous, or too wicked. Men have gone in search of many schemes.

Ecc8: Obey the king's command. Though sinners do evil, it will be well for those who fear God. No one can know what goes on under the sun.

Ecc9: The same fate comes to all. A living dog is better than a dead lion. Enjoy the days of your vain life. Wisdom is better than strength.

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Ecc10: A little folly spoils wisdom. Whoever digs a pit will fall into it. The lips of a fool consume him. Through laziness the roof leaks.

Ecc11: Whoever watches the clouds will never reap. You do not know what will prosper. Enjoy your youth, but know that God will judge you.

Ecc12: Remember your Creator in your youth, before the days of trouble come. Everything is meaningless! Fear God and keep his commandments.

1Ki11: Solomon had many wives and turned to other gods. Ahijah told Jeroboam that the LORD would give him ten of the tribes. Solomon died.

Ss1: Let him kiss me! I am dark and lovely. Tell me, where do you pasture your flock? Follow the tracks, my love. Behold, you are beautiful.

Ss2: She is a lily among thorns. He is an apple tree in the wood. Here he comes, leaping on the mountains. My beloved is mine and I am his.

Ss3: By night I sought the one whom I love. I brought him into my mother's house. Behold, O daughters of Zion, the carriage of King Solomon!

Ss4: You are beautiful, my love! Your eyes are doves, your breasts are like fawns. My bride is a garden. Let my beloved come to his garden.

Ss5: My beloved is knocking! I opened to him but he had gone. The guards found me and wounded me. My beloved is ruddy, his body is ivory.

Ss6: Where has your beloved gone? He has gone to his garden. You are beautiful, my love. Fair as the moon, awesome as an army with banners.

Ss7: Your thighs are like jewels, your breasts like the fruit of a palm. May your kisses be like wine! Beloved, let us go into the fields.

Ss8: Do not awaken love until it pleases. Love is as strong as death. Solomon had a vineyard, but mine is my own. Make haste, my beloved!

Teachings About God

- Fellowship with God requires the judgment of your sins. Believers are not exempt from judgment. They have merely accepted Jesus' offer to take their judgment upon Himself.
- Fellowship with God includes grateful service to Him, constant cleansing of sin, prayer, and submission to Him.
- God's glory filled the temple. God was with his people.
- God is faithful in delivering his people even when his people are not.
- Worship should praise God for the joy that comes from him.
- God will use our weakness for his glory.
- Right relationship with God is critical for understanding the meaning of life.
- If the love of a husband for his wife can be as rich and satisfying as described in the Song of Solomon, how much greater is the love of God for his beloved people.

Teachings About Humanity

- Although Solomon initially had a heart devoted solely to God, covetousness eventually grew within him.
- Although God granted Solomon great wisdom, Solomon lacked the moral purity to administer God's law.
- While Solomon completed the temple, he built an even larger house for himself, showing he valued his earthly kingdom more than God's eternal kingdom.
- Sin can pollute our ability to judge sin.
- A spirit-led leader is obedient to God.
- True happiness comes from centering our lives on God not ourselves.
- The duty of man is to have a right relationship with God.
- View life through the lens of eternity.
- Ecclesiastes answers the question: What is the meaning of life? It is only revealed through God.
- Romantic love is blissful.

Teachings About Salvation

- The plans for the Temple called for two large bronze pillars in front. The path to redemption ran through these two pillars. Fellowship with God requires that you follow His path for redemption.
- The meaning of human life is displayed when redeemed people magnify the glory of God.

Reflections of Christ/Holy Spirit

- Today our body is the Holy Temple where the Holy Spirit dwells.
- Solomon's hall of judgment foreshadowed Jesus sitting on the judgment throne.
- Jesus is the wisdom of God.
- Love between husband and wife is taken by Paul as a picture of the love Christ had for his bride, the church.

Literary Genres/Techniques

- Ecclesiastes is wisdom literature, which gives advice on life, written in a poetic style. There is also much prose.
- The genre of Song of Solomon is poetry and wisdom literature. It's lyricism, metaphors, and imagery are poetic. It is written in chiasm meaning it builds up to its central theme and then mirrors back to the first theme.
- No one knows to whom the Song of Solomon was written. One theory is that it is an allegory describing the love God has for his people.

Author/Date of Writing

- Solomon has traditionally been defined as the writer of Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.
- Song of Solomon was thought to be written early in his reign and Ecclesiastes written late in his reign.
- The romantic love in Song of Solomon and the wisdom of Ecclesiastes is authentic for all times and places.

What did I learn about God?

- In 1 Kings 8 Yahweh takes possession of His temple, with the cloud being a visible manifestation of His presence. Why does God appear as a cloud (1 KI 8:10-11)? In 1 KI 8:15-20 and 1 KI 8: 27-30, does Solomon say that God lives in the temple? How does he speak about God's presence there?
- Read ECC 3:1-12. What parts of life is God concerned with? Do some parts please Him while others don't? Is He more impressed with a person making a lot of money before they turn 30 than a mother washing some dishes? Do things of importance and routine things both form our lives? What is God pleased with? Why will man never find happiness or meaning apart from God?
- Solomon and all of Israel offered an enormous amount of sacrifice at the dedication of the temple. What sacrifices does God require today and why?

What did I learn about human nature?

- When Solomon brought the ark to the temple (1 KI 8) there was much ceremony in placing the ark in the temple. How do the Israelites approach God? How should we today approach the presence of God in worship and gatherings?
- Was Solomon a successful ruler?
- Is it possible to be overly righteous and/or overly wise? What does it mean to be overly righteous or overly wise? Does someone who Fears God want to be overly righteous or overly wise?
- Ecclesiastes 5 talks about the meaninglessness of riches. What causes people to love money? How can the love of money ruin a person's relationship with God? What is the right attitude for people to have with regard to money from a Biblical standpoint?
- The primary purpose of The Song of Solomon is to put before God's people an example of love and intimacy as it was designed by the Creator. Is God's view of sex more satisfying and pleasurable than the view of the world? Should we value intimacy more highly? Do we, as a culture, put it in its proper context?

What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- Solomon reminds the people of God's faithfulness as he blesses the people and prepares to dedicate the temple (1 KI 8:14-21). Review how God has been faithful to Israel (according to Solomon's praise). How often do we look back and remember the faithfulness of God in our lives and in the lives of our community of faith? What are some examples of God's faithfulness demonstrated in our lives, the lives of our community of faith, in the lives of our friends?
- What is your "ark" – something you must have in your life to feel close to God?
- In Ecclesiastes, Solomon speaks about the meaninglessness of man's life and work. Do you find this true at all? If so, in what situations? Have you ever felt this way about your studies, work or life in general? What is the meaning of life? Where does it come from? What is our purpose for existing?