

**Character Study: Solomon**  
**Part 3 – Solomon’s Wisdom Turns Worldly**  
**I Kings 9-11**

**What’s happening?**

- God appeared to Solomon following the completion of the temple. He promised that if Solomon and the people remained obedient, God’s hand of blessing would continually be upon them. (9:1-9)
- Solomon’s wealth and popularity continued to grow. He built a large wall around Jerusalem and built up the other cities in his kingdom. He was able to obtain an abundance of gold, horses and chariots. The Queen of Sheba visited King Solomon and said the stories she had heard did not come close to describing how truly amazing his kingdom was. (9:10-10:29)
- Solomon loved many foreign women, women whom the Israelites were to avoid. He had 700 wives, and as he grew old, they turned his heart away from following the Lord (A king having many wives was a symbol of power at that time, but it was never blessed by God. For more on the issue of polygamy see “Jacob – Part 2”). Solomon’s wives lured him into following false gods. He even built a place for pagan worship. (11:1-8)

**What’s God doing?**

> In the law (Deut. 17:16-17), God had stated three things that kings over Israel should not do: (1) obtain great numbers of horses, (2) take many wives, and (3) gather large amounts of silver and gold.

> Too many horses and too much gold would cause a king not to rely on God, and wives could pull a king’s heart away from the Lord. Notice that Solomon had failed on each point (note: horses - 10:26, 28-29; wives – 11:1-3; silver and gold - 10:14-15, 23, 27). God had given Solomon great wisdom, but he began using it for fleshly purposes.

**What’s to learn?**

→ God had blessed Solomon more than any other king, but Solomon still wanted more. If your heart is set on getting material things, you will never be satisfied with what you have.

→ “Things” can distract us and get our focus off of how God desires to use us. Is your life’s goal to gain “stuff” or to live for God’s glory? This is a big question we each must answer as we think about the purpose for our existence. Are you living for yourself or are you living for God?