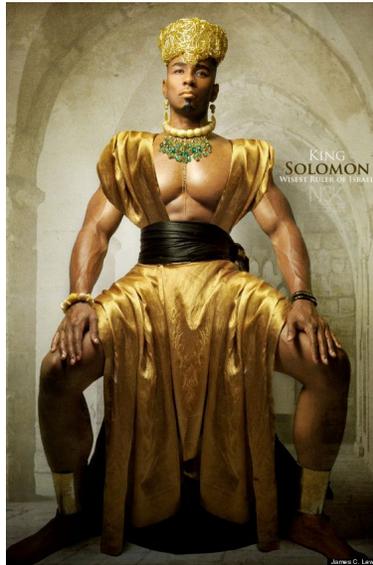


KING SOLOMON

SAGE, PROPHET, POET, DEMON HUNTER

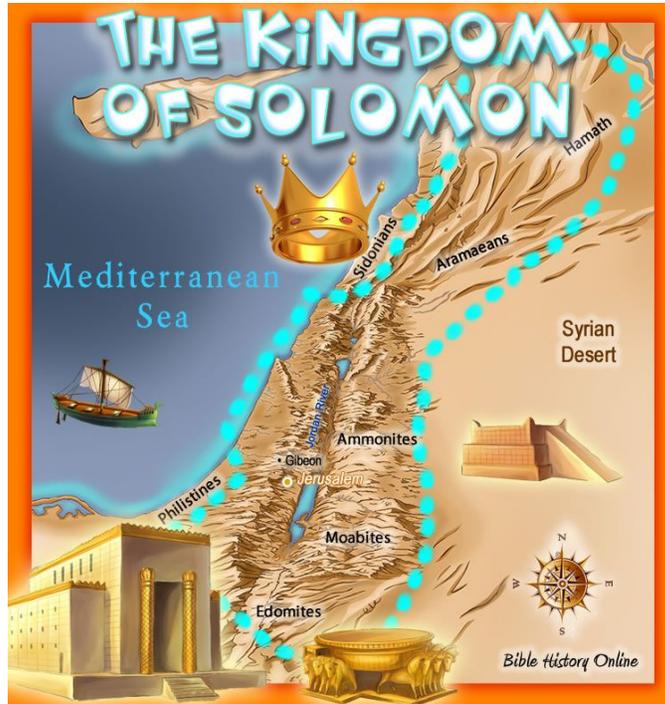


First Book of Kings Chapter 3 - The Wisdom of Solomon

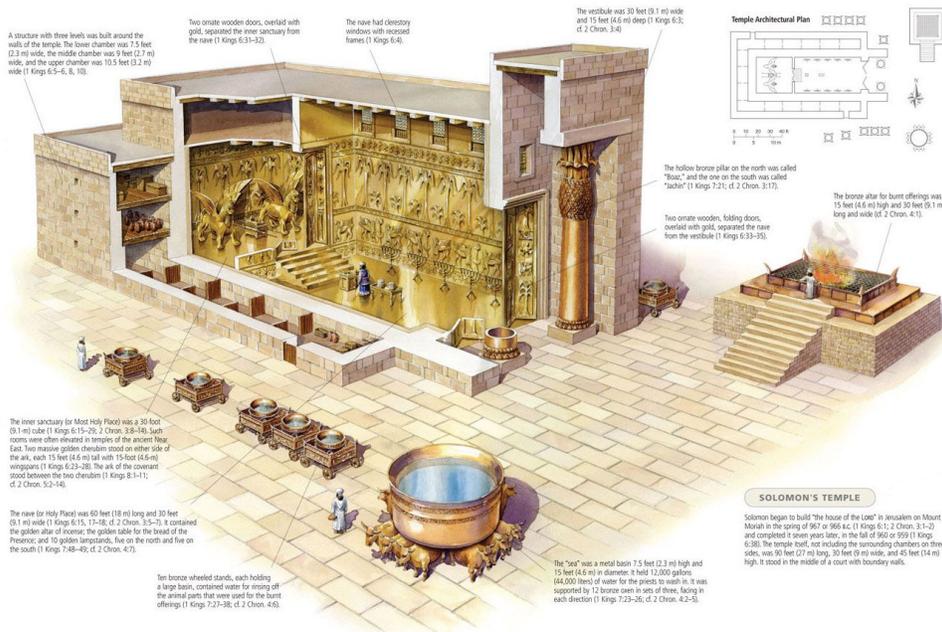
<p>5 In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I shall give you."</p>	<p>הַבְּגֵעוֹן נִרְאָה ה' אֶל שְׁלֹמֹה בַּחֲלוֹם הַלַּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלִים שְׂאֵל מָה אֲתוֹן לָךְ:</p>
<p>9 Give (therefore) Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this Your great people?"</p>	<p>טוֹנְתָת לַעֲבֹדְךָ לֵב שְׁמַע לְשֹׁפֵט אֶת עַמְּךָ לְהַבְיִין בֵּין טוֹב לְרַע כִּי מִי יוּכַל לְשֹׁפֵט אֶת עַמְּךָ הַגָּבֹר הַזֶּה:</p>
<p>10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.</p>	<p>וַיִּישָׁב הַדְּבָר בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנָי כִּי שְׂאֵל שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה:</p>
<p>11 And God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked for yourself long life; neither have you asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked the life of your enemies; but have asked for yourself understanding to discern judgment.</p>	<p>י אוֹיָאמֶר אֵלִים אֵלָיו יְעַן אֲשֶׁר שְׂאֵלְתָ אֶת הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא שְׂאֵלְתָ לָךְ יָמִים רַבִּים וְלֹא שְׂאֵלְתָ לָךְ עֵשֶׂר וְלֹא שְׂאֵלְתָ נַפְשׁ אִיבֵיךָ וְשְׂאֵלְתָ לָךְ הַבִּינ לְשֹׁמֵעַ מִשְׁפָּט:</p>
<p>12 Behold, I have done according to your word; behold, I have given you a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like you before you, nor after you shall any arise like you.</p>	<p>יב הִנֵּה עָשִׂיתִי כַּדְבָרֶיךָ הַנֵּה נָתַתִּי לָךְ לֵב חָכָם וְנִבְוֹן אֲשֶׁר כְּמוֹךָ לֹא הָיָה לְפָנֶיךָ וְאַחֲרֶיךָ לֹא יָקוּם כְּמוֹךָ:</p>
<p>13 And I have also given you that which you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like you all your days.</p>	<p>יג וְגַם אֲשֶׁר לֹא שְׂאֵלְתָ נָתַתִּי לָךְ גַּם עֵשֶׂר גַּם כְּבוֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא הָיָה כְּמוֹךָ אִישׁ בְּמַלְכִים כָּל יְמֵיךָ:</p>
<p>14 And if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David did walk, then I will lengthen your days."</p>	<p>ידוּאָם תֵּלֶךְ בְּדַרְכֵי לְשֹׁמֵר חֻקֵי וּמִצְוֹתַי כַּאֲשֶׁר הֵלַךְ דָּוִד אָבִיךָ וְהֶאֱרַכְתִּי אֶת יְמֵיךָ:</p>

The Life of Solomon¹

The biblical King Solomon was known for his wisdom, his wealth and his writings. He became ruler in approximately 967 B.C.E. and his kingdom extended from the Euphrates River in the north to Egypt in the south.



His crowning achievement was the building of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.



Almost all knowledge of him is derived from the biblical books of Kings I and Chronicles II.

¹ <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/king-solomon>

Solomon was the son of King David and Bathsheba. Solomon was not the oldest son of David, but David promised Bathsheba that Solomon would be the next king. When David's elder son Adonijah declared himself king, David ordered his servants to bring Solomon to the Gihon spring where the priest anointed him while David was still alive. Solomon inherited a considerable empire from his father.

First King Chapter One - Solomon's Mercy

<p>50 And Adoniah was fearful of Solomon, and he rose and went, and he took hold of the horns of the altar.</p>	<p>ב ואדניהו ירא מפני שלמה ויקם וילך ויתחזק בקרנות המזבח:</p>
<p>51 And it was told to Solomon saying, behold Adoniah fears king Solomon, and behold he has taken hold of the horns of the altar saying, "Let king Solomon swear to me today, that he shall not kill his servant with the sword."</p>	<p>בא ויגד לשלמה לאמר הנה אדניהו ירא את המלך שלמה והנה אחז בקרנות המזבח לאמר ישבע לי כיום המלך שלמה אם ימית את עבדו בחרב:</p>
<p>52 And Solomon said, "If he will be a valiant man, even one hair of his shall not fall to the ground, but if wickedness will be found in him, he shall die."</p>	<p>בב ויאמר שלמה אם יהיה לבן חיל לא יפל משערתו ארצה ואם רעה תמצא בו ומת:</p>

At first Solomon was faced with opposition. Two of David's closest advisors, Joab son of Zeruah and the priest Abiathar, sided with Adonijah. When Adonijah came to Solomon and requested the king's servant as a wife, Solomon saw that this was a veiled threat to take over his kingdom and sent a messenger to kill Adonijah. He banished Abiathar to the city of Anathoth. Solomon then followed his father's last instructions in which David had ordered him to kill both Joab and one of his father's enemies, Shimei son of Gera. Solomon thus overcame the last potential threats to his kingdom. He then appointed his friends to key military, governmental and religious posts.

Solomon accumulated enormous wealth. He controlled the entire region west of the Euphrates and had peace on his borders. Kings I states that he owned 12,000 horses with horsemen and 1,400 chariots. Remains of stalls for 450 horses have in fact been found in Megiddo. Solomon strengthened his kingdom through marital alliances. Kings I records that he had 700 wives and 300 concubines, although some regard this number as an exaggeration. He had a large share in the trade between northern and southern countries. He established Israelite colonies around his province to look after military, administrative and commercial matters. The empire was divided into twelve districts, with Judah constituting its own political unit and enjoying certain privileges.

Although Solomon was young, he soon became known for his wisdom. The first and most famous incident of his cleverness as a judge was when two women came to his court with a baby whom both women claimed as their own. Solomon threatened to split the baby in half. One woman was prepared to accept the decision, but the other begged the King to give the live baby to the other woman. Solomon then knew the second woman was the mother.

Josephus Atiquities 8:42-9 – Original Exorcist

God also enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return; and this method of cure is of great force unto this day; for I have seen a certain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian...

People from surrounding nations also came to hear Solomon’s wisdom. He composed 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs. He wrote the Song of Songs, the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. One of the most celebrated visits to Solomon was that of the Queen of Sheba, who came from southern Arabia. Historically, Arabia was a country rich in gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Solomon needed Sheba’s products and trade routes; the queen of Sheba needed Solomon’s cooperation in marketing her country’s goods. The queen came to Solomon with camels carrying spices, gold and precious stones. She asked him questions and riddles and was amazed at his wisdom.

Rabbi Yosef Kara (11th c. France) on I Kings 10:1 - Riddles

“And she came to test him with hard questions” - She took young maidens and men with her, and dressed them all in men's clothing, and she brought them before Solomon, to test him regarding which of them are male and which are female. And he acted with wisdom, and commanded his servants to bring nuts and scatter them on the ground. The males gathered the nuts from a standing position, whereas the females crouched on their knees and gathered, and thus Solomon knew.

Once Solomon’s empire was tranquil, he began to build the Holy Temple. He received wood from King Hiram of Tyre and imposed a compulsory labor service on both the Israelites and the foreign nations that were under his control. His workers built the structure of the Temple, its decorations and its vessels. The Temple took seven years to complete. It was built of stone and cedar, carved within and overlaid with pure gold. When it was done, Solomon dedicated the Temple in a public ceremony of prayers and sacrifices.

First Book of Kings Chapter 9 - God’s Warning

<p>1 And it was when Solomon had finished building the Temple of the Lord and the King's palace and all Solomon's desire that he wished to make.</p>	<p>א ויהי ככלות שלמה לבנות את בית ה' ואת בית המלך ואת כל חֶשֶׁק שְׁלֹמֹה אֲשֶׁר חִפְּזוֹ לַעֲשׂוֹת:</p>
<p>2 The Lord appeared to Solomon a second time as He had appeared to him in Gibeon.</p>	<p>ב וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל שְׁלֹמֹה שְׁנִית פְּאֶשֶׁר נִרְאָה אֵלָיו בְּגִבְעוֹן:</p>
<p>3 And the Lord spoke to him: "I have heard your prayer and your petition, which you have petitioned before Me. I have consecrated this</p>	<p>ג וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֵלָיו שְׁמַעְתִּי אֶת תְּפִלְתְּךָ וְאֵת תַּחֲנֻנְתְּךָ אֲשֶׁר הִתְחַנַּנְתָּה לְפָנַי הַקְדִּשְׁתִּי אֶת</p>

<p>Temple which you have built to place My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart shall be there at all times.</p>	<p>הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בָּנִיתָ לְשׁוֹם שְׁמִי שָׁם עַד עוֹלָם וְהָיוּ עֵינָי וְלִבִּי שָׁם כָּל הַיָּמִים:</p>
<p>4 As for You, if you go before Me, as David your father went wholeheartedly and with uprightness to do in accordance with all that I have commanded you [and] you will keep My statutes and laws.</p>	<p>ד וְאַתָּה אִם תֵּלֵךְ לִפְנֵי פֶּאֶשֶׁר הַלֵּךְ דָּוִד אָבִיךָ בְּתָם לִבָּב וּבְיִשְׁרָר לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ חֻקֵי וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי תִשְׁמֹר:</p>
<p>5 I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever as I have spoken to David your father, saying: A man will not fail you upon the throne of Israel.</p>	<p>ה הִקְמַתִּי אֶת כִּסֵּא מַמְלַכְתְּךָ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַלְמָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי עַל דָּוִד אָבִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מֵעַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל:</p>
<p>6 But if you and your children turn away from following Me, and you will not adhere to My commandments and My statutes, which I have placed before you, but go and worship other gods and bow before them.</p>	<p>ו אִם שׁוּב תִּשְׁכַּחוּ אֹתָם וּבְנֵיכֶם מֵאַחֲרַי וְלֹא תִשְׁמְרוּ מִצְוֹתַי חֻקֹּתַי אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לִפְנֵיכֶם וְהִלַּכְתֶּם וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתֶם לָהֶם:</p>
<p>7 Then I will cut Israel off, from the land which I have given to them, and this house which I have made sacrosanct for My Name will I dismiss from My presence, and Israel shall be for a proverb and a byword among all nations.</p>	<p>ז וְהִכַּרְתִּי אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָהֶם וְאֵת הַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי לְשְׁמִי אֲשַׁלַּח מֵעַל פְּנֵי הַהָרָה יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמִשְׁלַל וּלְשִׁנְיָנָה בְּכֹל הָעַמִּים:</p>
<p>8 And this Temple [which] is exalted, [shall become forlorn] and every passerby shall be astounded and will hiss, and they will say: "Why has the Lord done this to this country and to this Temple?"</p>	<p>ח וְהַבַּיִת הַזֶּה יִהְיֶה עֲלִיוֹן כָּל עֹבֵר עָלָיו יִשְׁמַק וְיִשְׁרָק וְיֹאמְרוּ עַל מָה עָשָׂה ה' כִּכָּה לְאַרְצֵי הַזֹּאת וְלַבַּיִת הַזֶּה:</p>
<p>9 They will be told, "Because they abandoned the Lord, their God, Who delivered their forefathers out of the Land of Egypt; and took hold of other gods and bowed to them and served them. Therefore, has the Lord brought all this retribution upon them. "</p>	<p>ט וְיֹאמְרוּ עַל אֲשֶׁר עֲזָבוּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצִיא אֶת אֲבוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיַּחֲזִקוּ בְּאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ (כְּתִיב וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ) לָהֶם וַיַּעֲבָדוּם עַל כֵּן הֵבִיא יְהוָה עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת כָּל הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת:</p>
<p>10 And it was at the end of twenty years during which Solomon had built the two houses, the Temple of the Lord and the King's house.</p>	<p>י וַיְהִי מִקְצֵה עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה שְׁלֹמֹה אֶת שְׁנֵי הַבָּתִּים אֶת בַּיִת ה' וְאֶת בַּיִת הַמֶּלֶךְ:</p>

Solomon was also renowned for his other building projects in which he used slave labor from the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. He spent 13 years building his own palace, and also built a city wall, a citadel called the Millo, a palace for the daughter of Pharaoh (who was one of his wives) and facilities for foreign traders. He erected cities for chariots and horsemen and created storage cities. He extended Jerusalem to the north and fortified cities near the mountains of Judah and Jerusalem. Solomon's downfall came in his old age. He had taken many foreign wives, whom he allowed to worship other gods. He even built shrines for the sacrifices of his foreign wives.

Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 21b - Above the Law

Rabbi Isaac also said: Why were the reasons of [some] Biblical laws not revealed? — Because in two verses reasons were revealed, and they caused the greatest in the world [Solomon] to stumble. Thus it is written: He shall not multiply wives to himself, whereon Solomon said, 'I will multiply wives yet not let my heart be perverted.' Yet we read, When Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart. Again it is written: He shall not multiply to himself horses; concerning which Solomon said, 'I will multiply them, but will not cause [Israel] to return [to Egypt].' Yet we read: And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six [hundred *shekels* of silver].

ואמר ר' יצחק מפני מה לא נתגלו טעמי תורה שהרי שתי מקראות נתגלו טעמן נכשל בהן גדול העולם כתיב (דברים יז, יז) לא ירבה לו נשים אמר שלמה אני ארבה ולא אסור וכתיב (מלכים א יא, ד) ויהי לעת זקנת שלמה נשיו השו את לבבו וכתיב (דברים יז, טז) לא ירבה לו סוסים ואמר שלמה אני ארבה ולא אשיב וכתיב (מלכים א י, כט) ותצא מרכבה ממצרים בשש וגו'

Within Solomon's kingdom, he placed heavy taxation on the people, who became bitter. He also had the people work as soldiers, chief officers and commanders of his chariots and cavalry. He granted special privileges to the tribes of Judah and this alienated the northern tribes. The prophet Ahijah of Shiloh prophesied that Jeroboam son of Nebat would become king over ten of the 12 tribes, instead of one of Solomon's sons.

Outside Solomon's kingdom, Hadad, of the royal family of Edom, rose up as an adversary of Israel. Rezon son of Eliada, ruler of Aram also fought Solomon, and created tension between the two kingdoms that was to last even after Solomon's reign ended.

Solomon died in Jerusalem after 40 years as ruler of Israel. He was buried in the City of David. His son, Rehoboam succeeded him as king. Under Rehoboam's rule, Solomon's empire was lost and his kingdom was divided into two parts.