

# LESSON 12

## SOLOMON'S GREATNESS AND DOWNFALL

### OBJECTIVES

1. To learn that Solomon's tragic fall was a result of succumbing to his weaknesses.
2. To understand the importance of recognizing our weaknesses and working on removing them.
3. To learn that the whole duty of man is to fear and obey God wholeheartedly.

### MEMORY VERSE

"Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all."

(Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

### PRAYER

1. Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us Your Holy Spirit and Your precious word.
2. Grant to us wisdom so that we may know ourselves and our weaknesses. Give us strength to overcome them.
3. Help us to obey Your commandments cheerfully and wholeheartedly, for in doing so, we will be blessed.
4. May You guide us through this lesson and help us apply its teachings to our lives.



### Overview

1. **The Requirements of a King**
2. **Solomon's Heart Turns from God**
3. **God's Punishment**
4. **Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs**—The Holy Bible
5. **Life Application**—Identifying Our Weaknesses; Reinforcing Our Weak Links
6. **Activity**—Word Search



### Background Knowledge for Teachers

Ashtoreth was a goddess of the Canaanites who symbolized reproductive power. She was a mistress of the god of Baal as well.

Milcom means "great king." Another name for Milcom was Molech or Moloch. This was the national god of the Ammonites and Phoenicians. Their worship rites included child sacrifice.

Chemosh was the fish-god, the god of the Moabites. The worship of this god was introduced at Jerusalem by King Solomon but was abolished by King Josiah (2 Kgs 23:13).



## Reaching Out to Your Students

It is a given that everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses. At this age, your students may not be fully aware of what they are. However, by helping your students realize their gifts and weaknesses early on, they will have a better understanding of who God has created them to be and of what areas in their lives needs improvement.

In doing this, be specific about their weaknesses or strengths. Generalizations may bring about a negative or defeated attitude ("I'm no good," "I'm not likeable") or a puffed up self image ("Everyone likes me," "I'm pretty good").

Enable students to understand that just because they have weaknesses does not mean they are "bad" or "worthless." Assure them that, through their own efforts and the power of God, they can overcome their weaknesses.



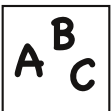
## Opener

5 Minutes

**Preparations:** Find a cookie recipe and bake some cookies, then modify the recipe and bake another batch of cookies. You can choose to substitute sugar with salt, milk with water, or choose to omit certain seasonings or spices. Take the cookies to class with a printout of the two different recipes you used to make the cookies.

Have students taste the first batch of cookies and allow them to absorb the flavors. Then, give them cookies from the second batch to eat. Ask them if there is any difference to the taste of the second batch. Then, explain that God has given us a "recipe" for our lives through the Scriptures. If we follow the recipe, our lives, like the cookies, will come out satisfying and sweet. However, if we don't follow the recipe and substitute our own ingredients, our lives, like the failed cookies, will not be acceptable to God.

In today's lesson, we will learn how the great and wise King Solomon tragically fell due to his disobedience and his weaknesses.



## Vocabulary

**treaty:** a formal agreement between two parties



## Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

### A. The Requirements of a King

As a young king, God asked Solomon to make one request for whatever he wanted. Solomon could have asked for a great army, riches, a long life, or great power and glory, but Solomon realized that what he most needed was wisdom to govern God's people. God was delighted with Solomon's request that He made a promise to give certain things to Solomon:

Read 1 Kings 3:13-14. What did God promise Solomon? (A long life.) What was the condition? (Solomon had to walk in God's ways and obey His commands.) Among the laws, God had given very specific commandments for the ruling king to follow.

Let's look at Deuteronomy 17:14-20 to find out what God wanted a king to do.

#### FOR TEACHERS

Hand out the Bible Discovery Worksheet and go over the following chart in Part 1 with the students.

What was the command governing kings?	Why did God command this?
You shall not set a foreigner over you who is not your brother.	A foreigner did not know the laws and would lead the people to worship foreign gods.
The king was not to multiply horses for himself from Egypt.	The king and his people were to trust that God would protect them. They were never to return to Egypt.
He was not to have lots of wives.	The wives would cause him to stray from God.
He was not to multiply silver and gold for himself.	He should rely on his wealth. The riches were to help the poor and not for the king to enjoy.
He was to write for himself a copy of this law and read it all the days of his life.	By reading this law daily, the king would learn to fear and obey the Lord and govern His people in righteousness.

As Solomon walked with God and obeyed His commands, God blessed him and the people of Israel. Let's look at some examples of God's blessings on Solomon.

- 1 Kings 4:20 - The people were numerous; they ate, drank and were happy.
- 1 Kings 4:24b-25 - There was peace on all sides.
- 1 Kings 5:4 - They lived in safety.
- 1 Kings 10:1-9, 23-24 - God blessed Solomon with great wisdom, wealth, and riches.

**FOR TEACHERS**

Ask students to look at Part 2 and fill in the blanks as you cover the next two sections. Guide students to read the verses on their own. The answers are underlined.

**B. Solomon's Heart Turns from God**

Despite Solomon's great wisdom and the clear instructions God had given him, Solomon did some foolish things. Of God's commandments, which ones did Solomon violate?

**1. He Accumulated Gold and Silver**

Read 1 Kings 9:26-28, 10:14-23.

- He built a fleet of ships, which sailed to Ophir and brought back gold to King Solomon.
- He made two hundred large shields and three hundred shields out of pure gold and kept them in his palace.
- All of Solomon's cups were made of gold and all the dining ware in the Hall of the Forest of Lebanon was made of pure gold.
- His throne was made of ivory overlaid with pure gold.
- Solomon was so rich and powerful that in his days, silver wasn't used because it was not considered to

be of much value. Solomon accumulated huge amounts of treasure so that he could enjoy an extremely extravagant and rich lifestyle.

**2. He Multiplied Horses**

Read 1 Kings 10:26, 28.

Solomon acquired many horses for his army from the land of Egypt, which was the former enemy of God's people. He built great stables to keep them in.

**3. He Married Many Wives**

Read 1 Kings 11:1-5.

In those days, it was common for members of royal families of different nations to marry because it secured peace and built friendships between the nations. This meant that if a king made a treaty with another country, he would marry the other ruler's daughter to seal the treaty.

But this was not what God wanted for his people. In Deuteronomy 7:1-4, God instructs His people not to make treaties with other nations nor intermarry with them.

Sadly, this was exactly what Solomon did. Very soon after he became king, he made an alliance with Pharaoh and married one of his daughters. Eventually, Solomon married 700 foreign wives and 300 concubines. These women were from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and Hittite—nations that God had commanded His people not to associate with and to eliminate.

1 Kings 11:2 mentions that Solomon clung to these in love. To cling means to hold onto something or someone very tightly. The fact that Solomon clung to these women in love shows that his wives were very important and dear

to him. God was no longer first place in his heart, as he had been in Solomon's earlier years. He now loved his wives more than he loved God. And just as God had foretold, his wives turned his heart away from God.

His wives encouraged him to worship their gods instead of allowing him to trust completely in the Lord. Solomon worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of Sidon, Milcom the god of Ammon, and Chemosh the god of Moab. He also built temples on the Mount of Olives for Chemosh, the god of Moab and another for Molech, the god of the Ammonites, for burning incense and sacrificing to their gods. So, God became extremely angry with Solomon.

### C. God's Punishment

Solomon began his reign following God and obeying His ways. When he obeyed God, God blessed him immensely. Along the way, Solomon allowed his heart to be led away from God and he began to do what was abominable in God's eyes. As a result, instead of giving Solomon blessings, God punished him.

How did God punish King Solomon?

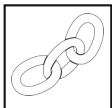
Under God's blessing, Solomon's kingdom was one of peace and prosperity, but now God raised up enemies among the neighboring nations to bring trouble upon Solomon.

1. (1 Kings 11:14) God raised up Hadad the Edomite.
2. (1 Kings 11:23, 25) God raised up Rezon of Syria against Solomon.
3. (1 Kings 11:26-40) God raised up Jeroboam the son of Nebat to tear away Solomon's kingdom.

Discuss 1 Kings 11:26-40.

- Who was Jeroboam? (vv. 26-28)
- What did God tell him through the prophet Ahijah? (vv. 29-33)
- When would God take the kingdom away from Solomon? Why? (vv. 34-35)
- What was Solomon's reaction when he discovered this? (v. 40)

At the end of his life, everything Solomon had worked so hard to achieve fell into ruin. In disobeying God, Solomon himself caused the ruin of his kingdom. The Scriptures do not tell us much about the last years of Solomon's life. We do not know if he repented and returned to God. However, by reading the books of Ecclesiastes and Proverbs written late in Solomon's life, we are given some clues as to how he must have thought and felt. In Proverbs 9:10, Solomon recognized that the whole duty of man is to obey and fear God and that true wisdom is not about being a rich and great king, but about fearing God.



## Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

### The Holy Bible

From our study of King Solomon and his downfall, we are reminded that our thoughts, actions and speech need to be based on the Holy Bible—the word of God—which was inspired by God and given to us as a guide and standard for living.



## Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **What was the weakness that caused Solomon to stray away from God?** He married many foreign wives who eventually led him astray.
2. **Why did Solomon depart from God even though he was the wisest person that ever lived?** He gave into his weaknesses.
3. **What did Solomon do that angered God greatly?** His heart turned away from God to follow false gods, and he built temples for the idols.
4. **How had God blessed Solomon's earlier obedience?** He gave Solomon wisdom, riches, peace, and safety.
5. **Which of God's rules for kings did Solomon disobey?** He accumulated gold and silver; he multiplied horses and bought them from Egypt; and he married many foreign wives.
6. **Which gods did Solomon turn to?** He turned to the gods of the Sidonians, the Ammonites, and the Moabites.
7. **How did God punish Solomon?** He took away his kingdom and raised up enemies against him.
8. **What important lesson did Solomon learn at the end of his life?** In the end, Solomon realized that the most important thing in life for a man to do is to fear God and obey His commands.

**HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY**

1. False; he let his many foreign wives lead him astray over time.
2. False; Solomon worshipped the false gods with his wives.
3. True
4. C
5. B
6. C
7. Solomon accumulated gold and silver, multiplied horses and bought them from Egypt, and married many foreign wives.
8. He gave into his weakness, which was his love for foreign women.
9. Answers may vary.

**Life Application***10 Minutes***A. Identifying Our Weaknesses****Preparations**

1. Prepare sheets of orange and green construction paper.
2. Using a ruler and scissors, measure and cut strips of paper that are 1.5" wide by 11" long. Cut approximately 5 strips of each color for each student in your class. Make more as reserves.
3. Prepare glue, tape, or a stapler to fasten the strips together.

[Hand out the paper strips, five each of orange and green, and the Life Application worksheet to the students.]

King Solomon possessed many good qualities that enabled him to make Israel the most glorious and powerful nation at that time. What good qualities did King Solomon have? [Write students' answers on the board under the heading, "Strengths".] Solomon was very knowledgeable in all kinds of subjects; he was a very insightful writer; and he knew how to manage his people and his country well. Similarly, we too have many strengths. On the orange strips of paper before you, write down your strengths. Write one strength on each strip of paper. For example, if you help with the chores at home, you can write "helpful" on the strip of paper. [Allow students to complete the exercise.]

Let's get back to Solomon. While Solomon was strong in running his kingdom, he also had many weaknesses. What were some of his weaknesses? [Write students' answers on the board under the heading, "Weaknesses".] Although he could discern right and wrong, he did not have the strength to overcome his weakness. In each of us, there are weaknesses as well as strengths. Like Solomon, our weaknesses may cause us to disobey God. Satan knows our weaknesses, and he uses situations or people to tempt us so that we disobey God's commands.

Here is a list of some common weaknesses that we may have. Having weaknesses does not mean that we are bad or worthless people. What is important is that we recognize our weaknesses, admit that we have them, and work on improving ourselves.

[Hand out the Life Application worksheet to the students and ask them to put a check next to each weakness that they believe they have.]

Now, taking the green strips of paper, write down each weakness that you've checked. Choose your five greatest weaknesses and write one weakness on each strip of paper. Once that is done, take your orange paper strips (strengths) and the green strips (weaknesses) to form a paper chain.

**Instructions**

1. To make the paper chain, use glue, tape, or staples to attach the ends of the first strip together to form a loop. If you are using glue, hold the two ends of paper together until the glue properly dries.
2. Next, place the second strip of paper through the newly made link. Again, join the ends of the strip together with glue, tape, or staples.
3. Continue until all the strips have been joined together and make sure to loop the last link to the first link.

What do you notice about your chain? Is it a strong or weak chain? Which areas would most likely cause the chain to break?

This activity tells us that though we may have many good qualities, if we have even just one weak link, our chain has a chance of breaking. That is what happened to Solomon. Solomon gave in to his fleshly desires again and again. He did not deal with his weakness. Consequently, this led not only to his personal downfall, but also to the downfall of his kingdom. It is important, therefore, to work on removing our weaknesses, otherwise, they may become a stumbling block.

### B. Reinforcing Our Weak Links

#### 1. Memorize Bible verses about your weaknesses

God understands our weaknesses. That is why He has given us the most powerful weapon—the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God—to fight our weakness and guard our hearts. Take a look at your list of weaknesses and write down and memorize Bible verses about each weakness you need to change. Place these verses where you can be reminded of them; you can put them on your desk, on the wall, on your mirror, and so on.

[Give students time to look up the Bible verse and write it down on the worksheet.]

Read a brother's experience of how he overcame one of his weaknesses.

#### *"How I Quit Video Games"*

I started playing video games when I was in elementary school. As time passed, video games slowly became the center of my life. I liked to barter with my parents about how long I could play video games. Whenever my parents left the house, I would stop whatever I was doing and go straight to my computer or Xbox. The days where I could play video games for many hours were good days; the days without video games were considered bad days.

The desire for video games was so strong that they were on my mind all the time. I thought about them when I was asleep, when I was taking a test, and even when I prayed for the Holy Spirit.

Later on, in ninth grade, I got baptized and received the Holy Spirit, but I didn't think that video games were a problem and I continued to play them. But after attending SSC and NYTS, I knew I had to give up playing games.

During NYTS, as I was repenting in my prayer, I felt God touch me so much and hold me so close; I even saw Him give me a new heart. I felt weightless and without burden. I felt completely free, that video games had no control over me anymore.

But that night, I had a nightmare. I saw myself falling downwards. On my way down, I saw the devil falling down ahead of me. The devil had a body similar to an octopus, but with a lot more legs. Its face was so hideous. There were many computer monitors around the devil, falling down with it. Below us was a huge fire pit full of lava. The devil and the monitors fell into the pit and they were no more. When I was to fall in the fire pit, I suddenly woke up with a verse on my mind. I went to the Bible to find it. It was from Matthew 12:45.

From this experience, I knew I must fill up my life quickly with God's words and other meaningful things, or else I was going to end up falling into other temptations.

#### 2. Think of a plan of action

Let's continue to read the second part of *"How I Quit Video Games"*.

It was difficult to adjust at first. I found I had a lot of free time and I didn't know what to do with it. Gradually, I discovered a lot of joy working in the garden. I helped in the kitchen, I read more books, I spent more time with my family, and I had more time to read the Bible and pray.

When I went back to college, I spent time with other brothers and sisters, I studied more, I volunteered at a recycling club, and I joined the church choir.

During the Winter SSC, I discovered that I no longer felt empty after prayers like before. Also, I had found a new direction in my life, and I became determined to put God first in my life.

(Adapted from Manna, Issue 54, Jan – Mar 2008, pp. 2-5)

### Discuss

1. What things did the brother do instead of play games?
2. How did the brother's faith improve?

Most of the time, we give into our weaknesses because we did not think of an alternative game plan. So, when we get tempted to play games, we automatically go to our video games. When we get angry, we shout or slam the door. When our friends do something bad, we do the same. To change our weakness, we need to stop behaving like we used to and think of a better plan of action. We must act in ways that God wants us to behave.

Briefly describe a time when you gave in to your weakness.

*Example:* One time I was very angry and shouted at my brother for taking my comic books without asking.

What better way could I have dealt with this? Work with a partner to brainstorm ideas.

*Example:* I could have let him know that I was very upset and that he needed to ask for permission first before taking anything. I could have returned to my room and waited until I was calmer before speaking to him.

### 3. Pray about your weakness each day

In the same way a sculptor chisels away tirelessly until he has created his work of art, we need to chisel away our weakness each day in prayer. We need to tell God exactly what our problem is, and we ought to pray especially at the moment when we face temptation. Romans 8:13 and Colossians 3:5 tell us that only through the power of the Spirit of God can we put to death the deeds of the flesh. We should also ask our parents, teachers, and friends to pray for us, too.

Lord, I have a weakness for \_\_\_\_\_

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### Fill In the Blank

- a. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live (Rom 8:13).
- b. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry (Col 3:5).

Testimony: Put to death the fleshly nature

A brother had lustful thoughts and hatred in his heart. He knew that they were not pleasing to God, and they bothered him a lot, but try as he might, he could not get rid of them. When the brother later received the Holy Spirit, he discovered a miraculous happening. He found that when he prayed, the Holy Spirit helped him suppress those feelings. The more he prayed, the more strength he had to resist the bad thoughts. He spent a lot of time praying each day until he was free of his weaknesses. He realized that our fleshly nature is very powerful and will find every chance to take us captive. We need to rely on God's power every day to put to death the deeds of the flesh.



## Activity

## Word Search

10-15 Minutes

Find the following words in the word search below.

Wealth

Horses

Weakness

Wives

Ashteroth

Egypt

Strengths

Milcom

Commandments

Unfaithful

Fear

Chemosh

Obey

Wisdom

Q	D	M	W	K	Y	G	S	V	M	C	Q
H	K	O	E	H	I	U	T	I	E	O	N
O	L	D	A	I	Y	N	R	W	G	M	R
R	G	S	L	S	E	F	E	E	Y	M	A
S	Y	I	T	V	B	A	N	A	P	A	E
E	C	W	H	O	O	I	G	K	T	N	F
S	W	I	V	E	S	T	T	N	K	D	T
C	H	E	M	O	S	H	H	E	Z	M	N
J	C	U	T	F	K	F	S	S	O	E	G
V	P	B	B	U	T	U	Y	S	N	N	X
Z	F	Z	M	O	C	L	I	M	I	T	D
H	T	O	R	E	T	H	S	A	J	S	Q



# THE Requirements OF A KING

Read Deuteronomy 17:14-20 to find out what God wanted a king to do.



What did God want the king to do?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Why did God command this?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

1. He \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Write down two examples:

- 
- 

2. He \_\_\_\_\_.

3. He \_\_\_\_\_ wives and concubines.

4. He went after \_\_\_\_\_ the goddess of Sidon, \_\_\_\_\_ the god of Ammon and \_\_\_\_\_ the god of Moab.



How did God  
punish  
King Solomon?

1. God \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_.

2. God \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

3. God \_\_\_\_\_ the son of

\_\_\_\_\_ to tear away Solomon's kingdom.



**Instructions:** Place a check beside the weaknesses that you have:

Bad temper (Jas 1:19; Eph 4:26)



Easily influenced by friends (Prov 13:20; Prov 12:26)

Jealous of others (1 Tim 6:6; 1 Cor 13:4)



Lazy (Prov 12:27; Prov 20:4; Eph 5:15-16)

Impatient (Prov 14:29; 1 Cor 13:1)



Poor listener (Jas 1:19; Mk 4:9)

Proud (Prov 16:18; Ps 115:1)



Greedy (1 Tim 6:6; Heb 13:5)

Selfish (Phil 2:3-4)



Complaining (Phil 2:14; 1 Cor 10:10)



Unforgiving (Mt 6:14-15; Col 3:13)

Aggressive (Mt 11:29; Tit 3:2)

Worry (1 Pet 5:7; Mt 6:31-33; Phil 4:6)



Fearful of things (1 Jn 4:4; 2 Tim 1:7; Psalm 56:3-4)

Other weakness not listed that I also have: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. REINFORCING OUR WEAK LINKS**

*Memorize*  
**BIBLE VERSES**  
 about your weakness

**1. Memorize Bible verses about your weakness**

Choose one Bible verse listed next to your weakness. Write the verse down here and store it in your heart.

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**2. Think of a Plan of Action**

a. Briefly describe a time when you gave in to your weakness.

**Example:** One time I was very angry and shouted at my brother for taking my comic books without asking.



b. What better way could I have dealt with this? Work with a partner to brainstorm ideas.

**Example:** I could have let him know that I was very upset and that he needed to ask for permission first before taking anything. I could have returned to my room and waited until I was calmer before speaking to him.

**3. Pray about your weakness each day**

Lord, I have a weakness for

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Fill in the blanks.

a. For if you \_\_\_\_\_ according to the \_\_\_\_\_ you will \_\_\_\_\_; but if by the \_\_\_\_\_ you put to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_, you will \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom 8:13).

b. Therefore \_\_\_\_\_ your members which are on the earth: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_, which is idolatry (Col 3:5).

E2 Year 2 Book 4 Lesson 12—Solomon's Greatness and Downfall

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Weekly Bible Reading:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Reading:** Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

**Prayer:** Check each box after you pray to God that day.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (Ephesians 5:19-20)

\_\_\_\_\_

### True or False

1. Solomon began to worship idols all at once. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Solomon still remained faithful to God; he only built the temples for his wives' use. \_\_\_\_\_
3. In the early days of Solomon's reign, God blessed Solomon's obedience by granting him wisdom, riches, peace, and safety.  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Multiple Choice

4. \_\_\_\_\_ : What was the main reason for Solomon's disobedience?
  - a. He was rich.
  - b. He loved horses.
  - c. He loved and married women of foreign nations.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ : How did God punish Solomon?
  - a. Solomon was robbed of all his wealth and riches.
  - b. God raised up enemies against him and took away his kingdom.
  - c. Solomon's wives all left him.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ : At the end of Solomon's life, the most important lesson he learned was \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Not to get married
  - b. To marry someone from your own country
  - c. Fear God and obey His commandments

### Short Answer

7. Which of God's rules for kings did Solomon disobey?
8. Why did Solomon depart from God even though he was the wisest person ever to live?
9. Name a weakness that you have. What actions do you plan to take to overcome this weakness?