

Ron J. Bigalke, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 244, Rincon, GA 31326-0244
(912) 659-4212
ron.bigalke@capitolcom.org

All Glistering Is Not Gold

CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY 153rd General Assembly

- **TUESDAY @ 9:00 AM** in 417 CAP
- **TUESDAY @ 12 NOON** in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission Bible Studies are held every week on Tuesdays. *Two times are available for Bible study:* (1) a legislative Bible study from 9:00-9:30am in 417 CAP; and, (2) an open-to-all Bible study from 12:00-12:45pm in 123 CAP (*where we have ministry donors provide lunch*). The *weekly* Bible study is nonpartisan and non-denominational. The study for the 2016 General Assembly is the book of First Kings.

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. My sole intent is to serve you, and to be a resource to you for pastoral care, counsel, and prayer. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission Bible Studies

are

Tuesday, 8 March 2016

I Kings 10 – “All Glistering Is Not Gold”

Enron Corporation, which was founded in 1985 and declared bankrupt in 2001, was once named by *Fortune* as “America’s Most Innovative Company,” “No. 1 In Quality of Management,” and “No. 2 in Employee Talent.” The collapse of Enron provides ample opportunity for reflection. The general consensus is that the corporation’s lamentable history and shareholder’s worst nightmare was due to the loss of integrity.

Enron failed to prevent and recognize persistent and widespread corporate deceitfulness, fraud, and information manipulation. The corporation is a blueprint for what occurs when insufficient attention is given to changes in culture and leadership, which involve a company that looked much better “on paper” than it was in reality.

The collapse of the Enron Corporation demonstrates the danger of living based upon having a limited extent of success as opposed to long-term significance. Enron’s disintegration can occur with anyone, including corporative executives and powerful lawmakers. A life of significance may not be as impressive to others as the Enron Complex once was; yet it is most certainly far more enduring.

GLISTERING TOWARD THE DRIFT

Ignoring the Word of God will always result in horrible consequences. Why should we read and study God’s Word? The answer is that the outcome is eternal for ignoring or neglecting the Lord’s Word. “And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment” (Heb 9:28). We must listen to God and heed his Word.

Hebrews 2:1-3a – For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation. . . ?

All humanity needs to “pay much closer attention” to this Word of salvation that came through Jesus Christ, and certainly not to neglect “so great a salvation.” God verified this revelation with “signs and wonders and by various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit.” Drifting from the truth of God’s Word is foolhardy.

God has spoken! He has not resigned us to grope in darkness for spiritual direction. God spoke in many different ways through the Old Testament prophets. God spoke gloriously and completely through Jesus Christ. *God is not silent!* We must diligently study the Lord God’s message as those people who seek direction, divine treasures, and wisdom for now and ever.

The reasons why Solomon drifted from God are presented unmistakably in 1 Kings 10–11. Solomon did not obey God’s requirements for king, which the Lord specified in Deuteronomy 17. The instructions indicate that God intended for Israel to have a king. The nation’s initial request for a king would eventually have been in God’s will; however, it was not in accordance with the Lord’s timing (cf. 1 Sam 8ff.). The king was to be an individual whom the Lord God chooses and not a “foreigner” (Deut 17:15). The king was not to “multiply horses,” nor “multiply wives,” and neither was he to “greatly increase silver and gold for himself” (vv. 16-17).

God warned Solomon regarding specific things that he was not to accumulate, yet the king disobeyed as evident in his greatness “in riches” (1 Kgs 10:23), “chariots and horsemen” (v. 26), and loving “many foreign wives” (11:1). Consequently, “the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing . . . but he did not observe what the LORD had commanded” (vv. 9-10), and “then the LORD raised up an adversary to Solomon” (v. 14). God’s sentence was accomplished subsequent to Solomon’s death, as recorded in 1 Kings 12.



Capitol Commission Bible Studies

Tuesday (8th of March) @ 9:00am – 9:30am, 417 CAP

Tuesday (8th of March) @ 12 Noon – 12:45pm, 123 CAP

lunch provided from sponsorship by First Baptist Atlanta



Enhancing Trust

GLISTERING ALL BY MYSELF

(1 Kgs 10:1-13) First Kings 9 concluded with the account of “four hundred and twenty talents of gold” being added to King Solomon’s coffers. Hiram appears to be an unfortunate vassal as he continues to provide assistance, with his servants sailing to Ophir in Arabia. Not only did gold arrive in Solomon’s court, but also “the queen of Sheba” (cf. Gen 10:28) came to test the king “with difficult questions.” *Jesus contrasted the great effort of the queen in journeying 1,500 miles “to hear the wisdom of Solomon” with the unwillingness of certain religious leaders (who already lived in Galilee and Judea) to recognize that someone “greater than Solomon” was in their midst, and thus to listen with readiness to God’s Word (Matt 12:42).*

[WERE] THE KING’S WORDS AND DEMONSTRATION OF HIS WISDOM . . . MERELY AMUSING AND LIGHTEARTED EXCHANGES WITH A VISITING DIGNITARY AS OPPOSED TO DISPLAYING WISE ACTIONS ON BEHALF OF HIS PEOPLE [?].

The renowned fame of Solomon, which attracted foreigners to his court, was a theme mentioned earlier in the narrative of 1 Kings 4:29-34. The ease in which Solomon was able to answer all the queen’s questions – combined with her observation of his wealth – resulted in her becoming speechless (“there was no more spirit in her”). The queen’s words essentially confirm what has already been revealed in the prior narratives of 1 Kings; however, her emphasis is somewhat different from those previous accounts.

The practical benefits of Solomon’s wisdom were already mentioned (1 Kgs 4:1-6, esp. v. 4), which extended blessings to all his subjects (vv. 20, 25). The queen of Sheba, however, was much more specific in regards to Solomon’s wisdom toward his “servants,” who stood before him continually to benefit from his wisdom (10:8). The mention is consistent with the entirety of 1 Kings 10, wherein particular emphasis is upon the benefit that the king’s wisdom is producing within the royal court and more principally to Solomon himself rather than accentuating the advantage of wisdom being expended to the populace.

The influx of food provisions described in chapters 4—5 seems to be exchanged by the inundation of luxury goods (cf. 10:2, 10-12, 22, 25). Moreover, the king’s handling of all the wealth is entirely self-indulgent (vv. 14-29). Mention of the king’s affluence is wholly reminiscent of Samuel’s warnings to the people when they demanded a king, and thus rejected God “from being king over them” (1 Sam 8:7, 10-18).

A curious silence pervades 1 Kings 10 in regards to occurrences somewhere else in the land, and thus one ponders whether the king was living in opulence at the expense of his subjects (cf. 1 Sam 8:13). Does the queen of Sheba’s exceptional words with regard to the king’s “doing justice and righteousness” (1 Kgs 10:9) have any relation to social reality beyond the royal court? Solomon “answered all her questions” (v. 3), but is he still asking the just and upright queries? One speculates whether the king’s words and demonstration of his wisdom were merely amusing and lighthearted

exchanges with a visiting dignitary as opposed to displaying wise actions on behalf of his people.

GLISTERINGLY FOOLISH

(1 Kgs 10:14-29) The concluding verses of 1 Kings 10 seem to indeed demonstrate that wise actions for the benefit of the people were disregarded, which is evident in the copious accumulation of gold (it is mentioned ten times in verses 14-29). As wealth is a component of God’s creation, it is rightly considered “good” even though humanity may abuse the creation for evil purposes. Jesus surely condemned neurotic “devotion to the pursuit of wealth,” but never did He condemn wealth *per se*.

Material riches may be the blessing of God, and are certainly to be used for the Lord’s glory. The acquisition of wealth as the sole purpose of life is the snare that Scripture warns. Those rich who are condemned by Jesus misused their wealth (Luke 16:9, 13; cf. Ps 24:1-2). God alone is the Creator and rightful Owner of all creation (Job 38:1—41:34), and thus the Lord’s people are stewards of God’s possessions. Whatever private property, money, or wealth that human beings possess is temporary. As a steward of God’s wealth, there is great responsibility to use the gifts of God properly.

Solomon, however, used the abundance of gold to make shields that were purely ceremonial (1 Kgs 10:16). He also overlaid what is likely the finest throne ever made “with refined gold” (vv. 18-20), in addition to making household items with it (v. 21). The only reason that he did not also “greatly increase silver” (Deut 17:17) is “it was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon” (1 Kgs 10:21), yet the king did accumulate the element anyway (vv. 22, 27), in addition to gathering “chariots and horsemen” (v. 26; cf. Deut 17:16). Surely, even the wisest of individuals is now making foolish choices.

. . . THERE IS GREAT RESPONSIBILITY TO USE THE GIFTS OF GOD PROPERLY.

As powerful, wealthy, and wise as he was, Solomon needed to recognize that he was to be obedient to a power even greater than himself (viz. the Lord God).

Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the nobility to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastors-missionaries who teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for the entire Capitol community. With the Bible as our foundation and authority, the mission of Capitol Commission is obedience to the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) within the Capitol communities of the world. In the Bible, we see God’s great love for the world, especially for those who have been placed in authority. This is the foundation for our ministry to you.

Capitol Commission’s mission, in partnership with the church, is to make disciples of Jesus Christ and promote the biblical mandate to pray for those in authority in the Capitol communities throughout the United States and around the world. Every election cycle brings us hundreds of newly elected legislators into the twenty-four state capitols where we presently have a State Minister. We intend to be there to provide pastoral care for these men and women. *Please join us in this ministry!*

this week’s Bible study sponsored by:



Bible study copies printed by:



NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDIES:
Tuesday, 15th of March @ 9:00am in 417 CAP
and again (with lunch) @ 12 NOON in 123 CAP