



Metro Calvary – Roseville CA
Richard Cimino
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1 Kings 9

Related Topics: Solomon; Misplaced Desire; Empty Cisterns; God's Second Appearance to Solomon; Davidic Covenant; Consequences of Disobedience

1As soon as Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord and the king's house and all that Solomon desired to build,

TIME STAMP — This is some 24 years after Solomon came to the throne.

The temple and the palace work at Jerusalem were finished. Now Solomon had to deal with life after completing his greatest accomplishment. This is a challenge for those who are not just dreamers — but also doers; those who have vision — can see something as if it were already completed before it was ever begun; and then have the dedication to start the work and complete it. The hard bit is not having vision or dedication to bring a project to completion — the real hard bit is dealing with life after that.

QUOTE: G. Campbell-Morgan — *"It was the hour when the accomplishment of work means the relaxation of effort. That is always a perilous hour, and the greater the work done the graver the peril. A life which has been full of activity, when that activity ceases, demands some new interest, and will find it, either high or low, noble or ignoble."*

How does one deal with this moment? Where will your next interest lie? How can you keep yourself from pouring into something less than noble? The answer lies in the question — what is your master passion? If your master passion is Jesus — then dreaming big and working hard to make the vision a reality does not result in a letdown — it results in the lifting up of Jesus. There is true satisfaction in that because we were made for His pleasure and His glory. Because that is your great vision for life it doesn't matter if you have the big idea or someone else does. It doesn't matter if you're the project manager or the guy putting the bricks in the building — Jesus is exalted and you are truly fulfilled in His glory and exaltation. By contrast — if having the next great idea and working hard to pull it off is your master passion — you are left empty!

You are going to NEED another big idea and another big accomplishment. THAT is always a DOWNWARD VORTEX.

QUOTE: John Trapp — *on the words, all Solomon's desire: "The word signifieth such a desire as a young man hath after his mistress, or a bridegroom toward his bride; which showeth that Solomon took too much content in his buildings and furniture, passed over his affections too much unto them, and here began his fall."*

For all of Solomon's desire to dream and build for God — there was somewhere in his heart a love for the doing and the building. The proof is found in how he spent his energies following the completion of the Temple and his own palace. He had to find something new to pour himself into. Listen to the words of Solomon recorded in the Book of Ecclesiastes

Eccl. 1:1-3 ¹The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. ² Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity. ³ What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?

Eccl. 1:12-13; 17 ¹²I the Preacher have been king over Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. . . . ¹⁶I said in my heart, "I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me, and my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge." ¹⁷And I applied my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a striving after wind.

Eccl. 2:9-11 ⁹So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. ¹⁰And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. ¹¹Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

Dreaming big things — laboring hard to make them reality — is not bad in and of itself. Those things can be an act of genuine worship. Let's remember our definition of worship — "All that I am; all that I do; all that I might ever become; poured out to Jesus and for Jesus.

But if vision and projects are your master passion — you will be found pouring yourself out for those things — thus making them your idols. They will always leave you empty.

The words of God by Jeremiah to Jerusalem describe so clearly what happens when you make something other than God the master passion of your life.

Jeremiah 2:12-13 Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the Lord,¹³ for my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

A FAMILIAR PICTURE: Middle East does not have abundant sources of water. Even today, Israel has to pump much of natural water supply up hill! No such technology existed in Israel in Biblical times. Living water was a running source of water. Water from a river or spring was always preferable to standing water. Since the land did not have abundant sources of living water — they would depend primarily upon rain fall that would be collected in cisterns. A cistern was carved out of solid rock to collect rain. Imagine a man saying — I don't want to walk the mile or two to get fresh spring water from the well. Forget the living water — I'm going to carve me out a cistern to hold rain water. I know that after a while it will start to grow stuff because it isn't moving — but I'll settle for that over the effort it takes to get living water. A man could spend years carving out a large cistern (Herod the Great — cisterns on Masada). Imagine this man finally completing his cistern — as he lies in bed that night he hears the rain begin to fall and he thinks — *"Tomorrow I can walk outside and drop my bucket into my cistern and draw water for myself."* Morning comes and he walks out — drops his bucket into the cistern he had labored so long and hard to build. Instead of hearing a splash he hears a thud! The cistern he had carved out would at best never be as good as living water — but this was the worst — it was broken — it couldn't hold water.

The man poured himself into the making of his cistern only to find all his efforts were in vain!

That is what happens when you make anything other than Jesus the master passion of your life. You pour in and are left empty. But when Jesus is the master passion of your life you pour out and get filled!

We spent a good amount of time on a Sunday morning talking about the false dichotomy of Secular and Sacred. If you were the person who had the big idea for the iPod — and you worked hard to turn that vision into a piece of hardware — and if all of that was poured out to Jesus and for Jesus — you made that entire environment sacred — a place of worship.

The same is true of a jazz club or concert stage or a class room or a surgical theater.

But there are those places that are openly dedicated to the worship and exaltation of Jesus — a place like this. The vision and labor involved in a place like this is directly associated with Jesus and His glory. Yet a place like this — stuff we call "ministry" can be "Empty Cisterns" in disguise. "I'm **doing** this **for** Jesus!" It starts out like that — but pretty soon you love the thing you are doing for Jesus more than you love Jesus. It is no less an empty cistern than the one some actor or athlete or musician has carved out as a substitute for the LIVING WATER found in JESUS!

DON'T MISS IT — Solomon's empty cistern was all "God stuff"!

the Lord appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. (1 Kings 3:5-9)

WHAT A GRACIOUS GOD we serve!

Somehow — some way — somewhere in the heart of Solomon — the things he has done for God have become cisterns under construction — that will in time lead to Solomon's spiritual decline. God knows that. He knows what is in the heart of every man and woman. And knowing that, God graciously appears to Solomon as second time — to restate His covenant with king David — and the terms of that covenant — and the consequences of ignoring those conditions

QUOTE: Spurgeon —

"Brethren, we want renewed appearances, fresh manifestations, new visitations from on high; and I commend to those of you who are getting on in life, that while you thank God for the past, and look back with joy to his visits to you in your early days, you now seek and ask for a second visitation of the Most High."

"We do not need to be converted again; yet we do want that again over our heads the windows of heaven should be opened, that again a Pentecost should be given, and that we should renew our youth like the eagles, to run without weariness, and walk without fainting. The Lord fulfill to everyone of his people to-night his blessing upon Solomon!"

And the Lord said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me.

This in answer to the lengthy prayer of Solomon in [1 Kings 8:22-53](#). That lengthy meant nothing unless God **heard** the prayer.

The true measure of our prayer is **not** in the length of our prayers.

***Matthew 6:7-10** "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. "Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. "Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

The true measure of prayer is that it is birthed out of the heart — the plans — the purposes of God — and because they are wrapped up in the will of God being done on earth — He hears and *answers* the prayer.

QUOTE: Spurgeon — *"Have you never known what it is to leave off prayer when you are in the middle of it, and say, "I am heard: I am heard"? Have you not felt that you needed not to cry any longer, for you had gained your suit, and must rather begin to praise than continue to pray? When a man goes to a bank with a cheque, and he gets the money, he does not stand loafing about the counter: he goes off about his business.*

³ ...I have consecrated this house that you have built,

What a great object lesson for us. Solomon could build a building, but only God could make it truly holy.

***QUOTE: F.B. Meyer** — "Man builds; God hallows. This co-operation between man and God pervades all life. Man performs the outward and mechanical; God the inward and spiritual . . . We must be careful to do our part with reverence and godly fear, remembering that God must work in realms we cannot touch, and to issues we cannot reach, before our poor exertions can avail."*

by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time.

What a tragedy that many present day Christian leaders think that that city and that that part of that city can be negotiated into the hands of pagan Islam!

⁴And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, ⁵then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

God was not demanding perfect obedience from Solomon because David certainly did not walk perfectly before the Lord. What the Lord wanted was a heart loyal to the One, True and Living God. David never forsook the God of Israel for idols. This was not out of reach for Solomon.

This is specifically in reference to the Davidic Covenant.

CRUCIAL — In our CREDO series one of the studies was titled, COVENANT: God Pursues. In that study we learned that from the beginning God created man for fellowship. God wants to know and enjoy man. God wants men and women to know and enjoy Him. Despite the utter and absolute betrayal by man in the Garden — God has pursued relationship with man. He has pursued relationship with man and established relationship with man by way of covenant. In the Old Testament we find

- the Adamic Covenant
- the Noahic Covenant
- the Abrahamic Covenant
- The Mosaic Covenant
- The Davidic Covenant

Each of these Old Testament Covenants point towards and build up to the new covenant established in the person and work of Jesus. There are six consistent elements found in each of covenant. Two of those elements are blessings and then Conditions and Consequences

God says — *this is right — this is wrong — I will discipline you if you sin — I will also continue to pursue you so that you can learn to be obedient.*

The promise of **blessing** is in **Verses 4-5**

Verses 6-9 deal with **conditions** and the **consequences** of disobedience!

⁶But if you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, ⁷then I will cut off Israel from the land that I have given them, and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight, and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

The Living Bible reads **Verse 7** — *"Israel will become a joke to the nations and an example and proverb of sudden disaster."*

⁸And this house will become a heap of ruins. Everyone passing by it will be astonished and will hiss, and they will say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' ⁹Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned the Lord their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore the Lord has brought all this disaster on them.'"

I think of Jeremiah in 587 b.c. — sitting in a cave describing the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by Babylon

I think of Jesus in 32 a.d. sobbing convulsively over Jerusalem

***Luke 19:41-44** And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴²saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side ⁴⁴and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."*

I think of the hatred of the Jews and the holocaust

I think of anti-Israeli sentiment in the United Nations

I think of modern day anti-Semitism.

¹⁰At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the Lord and the king's house, ¹¹and Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold, as much as he desired, King Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.

Hiram was a friend to both David and Solomon — But that does not make this a right course of action. The land of Israel was given to Israel by divine decree. It was not Solomon's to trade.

Trading Israel's land for a glorious temple and palace was not a good deal.

¹²But when Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, they did not please him. ¹³Therefore he said, "What kind of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?" So they are called the land of Cabul to this day. ¹⁴Hiram had sent to the king 120 talents of gold.

Hiram considered the cities to be worthless. Hiram nicknamed the cities *Kabul*, which literally means "good-for-nothing."

¹⁵And this is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon drafted

The **KJV** reads this as ¹⁵*And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised;*

Levy — properly a *burden* (as causing to *faint*), that is, a *tax* in the form of forced *labor*:

QUOTE: Adam Clarke — *That is, in order to pay Hiram the sixscore talents of gold which he had borrowed from him (Hiram not being willing to take the Galilean cities mentioned above; or, having taken them, soon restored them again) he was obliged to lay a tax upon the people; and that this was a grievous and oppressive tax we learn from [1 Kings 12:1-4](#), where the elders of Israel came to Rehoboam, complaining of their heavy state of taxation, and entreating that their yoke might be made lighter.*

¹⁵And this is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon drafted to build the house of the Lord and his own house and the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem

Two possibilities concerning this thing called the *millo* —

- 1) A prominent fortress near the temple and the palace.
- 2) Refers to the architectural terracing and buttressing along the northeastern slope of the east hill of Jerusalem, the city of David.

and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer ¹⁶(Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it with fire, and had killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife;



Hazor was three miles north of the Sea of Galilee — situated at the juncture of the two major highways approaching from the north. It became Israel's chief bulwark against northern invaders until it was destroyed in the eighth century by Tiglath-pileser III. (Patterson and Austel)

Megiddo was the great fortress that controlled on the major passes from the Plain of Sharon on the coast into the Valley of Jezreel through the Carmel range. We know of this Valley as the staging area for the last great battle (Armageddon) in which Christ will defeat the forces of the Antichrist. (Patterson and Austel)

Gezer is on the road from Joppa (on the Mediterranean) to Jerusalem. It was at one time a powerful Canaanite city. It belonged to the tribe of territory of Ephraim but it

was never really occupied by the Israelites until the time of Solomon. It was given to Solomon as a wedding gift by Pharaoh to his daughter. (Patterson and Austel)

¹⁷so Solomon rebuilt Gezer) and Lower Beth-horon ¹⁸and Baalath and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land of Judah, ¹⁹and all the store cities that Solomon had, and the cities for his chariots, and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. ²⁰All the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel— ²¹their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel were unable to devote to destruction —these Solomon drafted to be slaves, and so they are to this day. ²²But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves. They were the soldiers, they were his officials, his commanders, his captains, his chariot commanders and his horsemen.

²³These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work: 550 who had charge of the people who carried on the work.

²⁴But Pharaoh's daughter went up from the city of David to her own house that Solomon had built for her. Then he built the Millo.

²⁵Three times a year Solomon used to offer up burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar that he built to the Lord, making offerings with it before the Lord. So he finished the house.

²⁶King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. ²⁷And Hiram sent with the fleet his servants, seamen who were familiar with the sea, together with the servants of Solomon. ²⁸And they went to Ophir and brought from there gold, 420 talents, and they brought it to King Solomon.

QUOTE: Adam Clarke — *"No man knows certainly, to this day, where this Ophir was situated. There were two places of this name; one somewhere in India, beyond the Ganges, and another in Arabia, near the country of the Sabaeans, mentioned by Job 22:24."*

It is frightening to think that Solomon allowed the material blessings of God upon his life to become the things that turned his heart away from the Lord. He turned the good from God into gods!

THESE THINGS WERE WRITTEN FOR US

Romans 15:4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

1 Cor 10:11-12 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹²Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

Here at the close of the chapter we see Solomon still maintaining the externals of worship — but his heart is on the decline.

May God help us to guard our hearts — especially in those times of great blessing May we never find ourselves taking the blessings of service — creativity — and labor — and letting them become our master passions.

May God help us to never allow the good things we receive from Him to become gods.