

Introduction

God has blessed our family with a lovely home and garden. Through the years I have battled the pernicious omnipresence of weeds; it matters not how hard I try to eradicate them, they always seem to return. In my never-ending battle, I use a systemic weed killer called "Round-Up." Once applied, the weeds appear normal, even though they are in the process of dying; they may reproduce, but they are dead.

I suggest that this is analogous to life. All people are like weeds in God's beautiful garden of life. They live and they die, but they always reproduce after their kind. Weeds reproduce weeds and sinners reproduce sinners. What the sinner does not realize, however, is that **God judges sin with a systemic poison that always kills the sinner.**

Solomon, king of Israel, illustrates this truth. By God's grace, He took the son of an adulterous relationship and made him the object of His favor. Realizing his inadequacies, Solomon asked God for the wisdom necessary to lead His people. God not only answered Solomon's prayer by making him the wisest of men, but also made him rich and powerful. As you know, these are the three measures of worldly success: wisdom, wealth, and power. Applying God's wisdom, Solomon wrote three of the Old Testament books.

Applying God's wisdom, he also thought he could compromise the clear teachings of God. **God said, do not marry foreign wives;** Solomon had many pagan wives. **God said, do not accrue many wives;** Solomon had 1000 wives and concubines. **God said, do not accumulate horses;** Solomon violated this clear command. These were "wise" decisions on Solomon's part. After all, does not wisdom dictate that it is better to marry the daughter of your enemy than to go to war with him at the expense of your son's life? And besides, Solomon was smarter and more powerful than his wives; he had no doubt that he would be head of his home.

I can find no reference to Solomon breaking himself before God in utter dependence upon Him, asking God

to keep him from sinning; no reference to God saying that Solomon was a good king, or that he hated sin. He even had the audacity to worship pagan gods with his wives. **He took God's endowments and used them for his own ends, and in the process it killed both him and his nation.** The children produced by Solomon's pagan marriages spread idolatry throughout the land. God took ten of the twelve tribes from Solomon's son, who became the next king, and gave those tribes to another.

Solomon became secure in his relationship with God, resulting in his **presuming** on that relationship, which in turn destroyed him and his nation. **The premise of this little meditation is that today's generation of Christians has emulated Solomon.** People do not realize that God has created life in such a way that their sin will destroy them. Holding tenaciously to the promise that "the gift of God is eternal life," **they ignore God's warning that "the wages of sin is death."**

Possibly no author of the Bible lived a more flawed life than Solomon. We are aware that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."¹ God faulted Moses and David; they repented, and God forgave them. Solomon sinned, but there is no indication that he repented or that God forgave him.

Did God use Solomon to write three books of the Bible and then send him to hell? What biblical indication do we have that he is in heaven? These are terrifying thoughts. Rarely do I commune with God in the Scriptures without His bringing terror to my soul. **"And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"²**

May God grant us both the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the "broken and contrite spirit"³ he seemed to lack that is essential for a relationship with God.

If you elect to work your way through the material in this devotional, you will note a great deal of repetition as well as a somber undertone. The reason? It is my perception that in the Bible, **from Genesis to Revelation, these two characteristics, repetition and sobriety, permeate every page.** These characteristics are so ubiquitous that you have to search for words of affirmation and encouragement. Virtually every page in

the Bible contains some form of **warning from God** to His people.⁴

Scripture seems to give three themes in this order: **first**, to call attention to why God made the world and the role He has for us in it. **Second**, to warn us of the consequences of resisting God's will and refusing to live in accordance with His purpose for our lives. **Third**, to give hope to those He delights in saving from their sins, and to set forth the expectations He has for His people.

¹Romans 3:23 ²Peter 4:18 ³Isaiah 57:15

⁴The Song of Solomon may be an exception.