

#39 THE BEAST 666—AN INVESTIGATION

INTRODUCTION: We will take a critical look at Solomon's life and notice his repeated trespass of natural as well as revealed law. We will seek to discern if first century Jewish believers, who possessed understanding, would have seen Solomon as the destroyer of Israel and consequently the prototype of the Beast of Revelation, melding them together with the number, 666.

FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURES:

- A. "The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents of gold." 1 Kg 10:14
- B. "The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold..." 2 Chr. 9:13
- C. "Here is wisdom. He who has understanding, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is six hundred sixty-six." Rev. 13:18.

2. ISRAEL WANTED AN EARTHLY KING

A. Israel was free and protected under Yahweh, their God-King.

"I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God; and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." Ex. 6:7

"Yahweh is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King." Jer. 10:10

B. Israel clamored for a king like other nations, thus rejecting Yahweh as its king.

Yahweh said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they tell you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them." 1 Sam 8:7

C. God warned that a king would take their children, their property, and put them in bondage.

"You shall be his [the king's] servants. You shall cry out in that day because of your king whom you shall have chosen." 1 Sam 8:17 (See full text 1 Sam. 8:10-20)

D. If Israel insisted on an earthly king, Yahweh required the king to not multiply horses, not send Israelites back to Egypt for trade deals, not take multiple wives, and not gather great riches to himself.

"He shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he may multiply horses; because Yahweh has said to you, 'You shall not go back that way again.' Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart not turn away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." Deut. 17:16-17

3. SOLOMON WAS CARNAL, DISREGARDING GOD'S LAWS.

A. Solomon not only multiplied horses from Egypt, but went much further to become a major military builder and arms dealer.

Arms and fortress cities: "Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, that he bestowed in the chariot cities, and... Jerusalem." 1 Kings 10:26

Horses from Egypt, arms dealing: "The horses which Solomon had were brought out of Egypt; and the king's merchants received them in droves, each drove at a price. 29 A chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred [shekels] of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty; and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means." 1 Kings 10:28-29

Acquisitions, Fortress cities: "Solomon went to Hamath Zobah, and prevailed against it. He built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the storage cities, which he built in Hamath. Also he built...fortified cities, with walls, gates, and bars; ...and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the cities for his chariots, and the cities for his horsemen, and all that Solomon desired to build for his pleasure in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion." 2 Chr. 8:3-6

B. Solomon not only multiplied wives, but multiplied foreign wives, gathering a huge haram. He went even further in building places of worship to their gods and even further to worship their idols.

Foreign wife: "Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David." 1 Kg 3:1

Many foreign wives: "Now king Solomon loved many foreign women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites; 2 of the nations concerning which Yahweh said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.' Solomon joined to these in love." 1 Kg 11:1-2

Heart turned from Yahweh: "He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. 4 For it happened, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods..." 1 Kg. 11:3-4

Built altars/temples for other gods and worshipped them: "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites....Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the mountain that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon. So did he for all his foreign wives, who burnt incense and sacrificed to their gods." 1 Kg 11:5-8

C. Solomon not only amassed riches to himself, but amassed exorbitant quantities of riches.

Ventures to Tarshish [Spain]: "The king had... a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram: once every three years came the navy of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks..." 1 Kg 10:22

Ventures to Ophir [India]: “King Solomon made a fleet of ships in Ezion Geber...on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. **27** Hiram sent in the fleet his servants, sailors who had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. **28** They came to Ophir [India], and fetched from there gold, four hundred and twenty talents, [a] and brought it to king Solomon.” I Kg 9:26-28

Massive military fortresses: (presumably protection for lucrative trade routes: see 2 Chr. 8:3-6)

666 talents of gold in a year: “Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents of gold besides [that which] the traders [brought], and the traffic of the merchants, and of all the kings of the mixed people, and of the governors of the country.” I Kg 10:14-15.

Excessive: “So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches....” I Kg 10:23

4. SOLOMON DID NOT FEAR GOD OR HAVE REGARD FOR HIS FELLOW MAN.

The King of Israel was to be a devoted student of God’s Word and fear God, understanding he was not “better than” his fellow man.

“It shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of [that which is] before the priests the Levites: 19 and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear Yahweh his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them; 20 that his heart not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he not turn aside from the commandment...” Deut, 17: 18-20

Solomon believed he was superior, could subjugate others and was entitled to lavish luxury.

A. Taxation to supply food for the king’s court which included the slaughter of 130 large animals every day: Israel “provided food for king Solomon, and for all who came to king Solomon’s table, every man in his month; they let nothing be lacking.” I Kg 4:27 (see I Kg 4:7-19 for full text)

B. Subjected Israel to forced labor: “King Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men...and Adoniram was over the men subject to forced labor.” I Kings 5:13-14

C. Enslaved indigenous people: “All the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, ...of them did Solomon make a forced levy of slaves...” I Kgs 9:20 ff

D. Devoted to his own grandeur: His palace complex was extensive taking twice as long to build as the temple. I Kg 6:38, 1 Kg 7:1-12

E. Did whatever pleased him: “...all that Solomon desired to build for his pleasure in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.” 2 Chr 8:6

F. Lavish living: “The king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the finest gold...All king Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold...” I Kg 10:18

5. OTHER WITNESSES TO SOLOMON’S WICKEDNESS:

A. The people: “Thy father [Solomon] made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee [Solomon’s son Rehoboam].” I Kg 12:4

B. Rehoboam, son of Solomon: “My father made your yoke heavy... My father chastised you [Israelites] with whips...” I Kg 12:14

C. Writer of the book of Kings: “Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.” I Kg 11:6

D. Yahweh: “Yahweh was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from Yahweh, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he didn’t keep that which Yahweh commanded.” I Kg. 11:9

6. WHAT DID JESUS SAY?

It’s either/or: No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You aren’t able to serve God and mammon.” Lk 16:13

CONCLUSION: To all appearances, Solomon was like a polytheistic Pharaoh, concentrating almost exclusively on the material world, indulging in a beastly reign of idolatry, immorality, avarice, egotism, and cruelty i.e. an apt prototype of the Beast of Revelation. Figuratively and literally, he caused the people to return to Egypt, that is, bondage. He, like Israel’s first century rulers and zealot leaders, destroyed Israel from within.

(Video/paper #40, discusses Solomon’s wisdom.)