

Weekly Word

June 30, 2008

By Mary Ruth Stone

Devotion

Son of Excellence

David was an excellent king. He ruled Israel for 40 years. His life and his reign were summed up in 1 King 15:5. He obeyed God and kept His commandments "... except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." Only his sin with Delilah brought reproach on his record. Few men have such a history.

David's son and successor, Solomon, also was a man of excellence. He was the wisest and the richest. He completed the building of the temple using materials his father had acquired for him. His fame spread throughout the known world. The Queen of Sheba paid him a visit to see if what she had heard was true. She found reality outstripped notoriety in Solomon's case.

There are many ways to measure excellence, and Solomon exceeded most people in most of them. In fact, he explored ways to guarantee satisfaction. He tried wisdom, riches, hard work, novel experiences, pleasure, homes, gardens, servants, etcetera. He concluded that all of these were "... vanity and vexation. . . ."

Though Solomon achieved excellence in many ways, he had one fatal flaw. He allowed his heart to be turned from the Lord by his love for many women. Yet part of him always remembered the God of his father David; he wrote many beautiful words of wisdom and faith. He wrote quotable maxims (Proverbs), beautiful poetry (Ecclesiastes), unequalled words of love (Song of Songs), reverent prayers (1 Kings 3, 1 Kings 8) and other wonderful words.

As excellent as Solomon was, there is another descendent of David, Jesus Christ the Son of David, the Son of God, who rose in the temple in Luke 11:31 and declared: "... indeed a greater than Solomon is here." Jesus offered an entirely different approach to life. He taught us to begin where Solomon concluded. Solomon tried materialism first and concluded that fearing and obeying God was all that mattered in the end. Jesus began by telling us to seek God first and that material things would follow.

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33).

Scripture

"... David did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite"

1 Kings 15:5).

This 'n That

"So the Lord exalted Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed on him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel"

(1 Chronicles 29:25).

Prayer

Lord,

Help me do my very best to fulfill Your calling in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Striving,
Mary Ruth