

1 Kings 10: 14-11:13 ICB

Every year King Solomon received about 50,000 pounds of gold. Besides that he also received gold from the traders and merchants. And he received gold from the kings of Arabia and governors of the land.

King Solomon made 200 large shields of hammered gold. Each shield contained about seven and one-half pounds of gold. He also made 300 smaller shields of hammered gold. They each contained about three and three-fourths pounds of gold. The king put them in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

Then King Solomon built a large throne of ivory. And he covered it with pure gold. There were six steps leading up to the throne. The back of the throne was round at the top. There were armrests on both sides of the chair. And beside each armrest was a statue of a lion. Twelve lions stood on the six steps. There was one lion at each end of each step. Nothing like this had ever been made for any other kingdom. All of Solomon's drinking cups were made of gold. All of the dishes in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. Nothing was made from silver. In Solomon's time people did not think silver was valuable.

King Solomon also had many trading ships at sea, along with Hiram's ships. Every three years the ships returned. They brought back gold, silver, ivory, apes and baboons.

So Solomon had more riches and wisdom than all the other kings on earth. People everywhere wanted to see King Solomon. They wanted to hear the wisdom God had given him. Every year everyone who came brought a gift. They brought things made of gold and silver, along with clothes, weapons, spices, horses and mules.

So Solomon had many chariots and horses. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 chariot soldiers. He kept some in special cities for the chariots. And he kept some with him in Jerusalem. In Jerusalem silver was as common as stones while Solomon was king. Cedar trees were as common as the fig trees growing on the mountain slopes. Solomon brought in horses from Egypt and Kue. His traders bought them in Kue and brought them to Israel. A chariot from Egypt cost about 15

pounds of silver. And a horse cost about 3¾ pounds of silver. The traders also sold horses and chariots to the kings of the Hittites and the Arameans.

But King Solomon loved many women who were not from Israel. He loved the daughter of the king of Egypt. He also loved women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. The Lord had told the Israelites, "You must not marry people of other nations. If you do, they will cause you to follow their gods." But Solomon fell in love with these women. He had 700 wives who were from royal families. He also had 300 slave women who gave birth to his children. His wives caused him to turn away from God. As Solomon grew old, his wives caused him to follow other gods. He did not follow the Lord completely as his father David had done. Solomon worshiped Ashtoreth, the goddess of the people of Sidon. And he worshiped Molech, the hated god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did what the Lord said was wrong. He did not follow the Lord completely as his father David had done.

On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built two places for worship. He built a place to worship Chemosh, the hated god of the Moabites. And he built a place to worship Molech, the hated god of the Ammonites. Solomon did the same thing for all of his foreign wives. So they burned incense and gave sacrifices to their gods.

The Lord had appeared to Solomon twice. But Solomon turned away from following the Lord, the God of Israel. So the Lord was angry with him. The Lord had commanded Solomon not to follow other gods. But Solomon did not obey the Lord's command. So the Lord said to Solomon, "You have chosen to break your agreement with me. You have not obeyed my commands. So I promise I will tear your kingdom away from you. I will give it to one of your officers. But I will not take it away while you are alive. This is because of my love for your father David. I will tear it away from your son when he becomes king. But I will not tear away all the kingdom from him. I will leave him one tribe to rule. I will do this because of David, my servant. And I will do it because of Jerusalem, the city I have chosen."