

Salt vs. Worldly Values

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Some weeks ago, I went to a new place in Hanover called "Electric Fizz". They have soda and power drinks that can be mixed with different flavors of syrup. For an example, they have a soft drink called "Neon Cloud". This drink contains Sprite, cotton candy, blue raspberry, and vanilla cream. I like drinking Sprite during the summer. I think it's a good soda to drink when it's hot out. However, the taste of the Sprite disappeared in this drink. In fact, all I could taste was the vanilla cream, which I'm not too crazy about. So, the Sprite soda is no longer really Sprite soda anymore because of all the different syrups that went into it. I will say that the "Blue Current" is excellent (1/2 Sprite, 1/2 lemonade, blue raspberry, and cream). Their Peach Powerline is another good one. It has Coke, peach, coconut, and cream mixed into it. With these mixtures, you could no longer taste the Coke soda. They have a long list of different flavors that can be added to different sodas and power drinks. However, more favors you add, the more the original flavor of the soda or power drink go away. The same can be said about our salt and daylight to this world. If we allow another flavor into our salt, we may lose some of our salty flavor. The same can be said about our daylight to the world. Something can be added to our light that makes it less bright or dimmer. Our salt and light can become like those sodas I was talking about earlier. The more things that are added to salt and light will distort or taint the salt and light. We have an example of this from a character that is in Scripture and today we'll take a look into their life.

Let's turn to 2 Chronicles 1: 7-12 where we read this, ⁷ "In that night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask what I shall give you." ⁸ And Solomon said to God, "You have dealt with my father David with great faithfulness, and have made me king in his place. ⁹ Now, LORD God, Your ^[a] promise to my father David is fulfilled, for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. ¹⁰ Now give me wisdom and knowledge, so that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of

Yours?" ¹¹ Then God said to Solomon, "Because this was ^[b]in your heart, and you did not ask for riches, wealth, or honor, or the life of those who hate you, nor did you even ask for long life, but you asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge so that you may rule My people over whom I have made you king, ¹² wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. I will also give you riches, wealth, and honor, ^[c]such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed, nor *will* those who will ^[d]come after you." (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)

King David had died and Solomon became king of Israel. We didn't read verse 1 of this chapter, but the writer of this book, could be Ezra, made it a point say that God was with Solomon and made him very powerful. God was with King David and David loved God and Solomon saw this in real time. Now, we come to the place where God visits Solomon at the beginning of his leadership for the Kingdom of Israel. God asks a very interesting question to Solomon in verse 7. God tells Solomon that he can ask for anything from God. Solomon has been given a blank check here. Do you remember the story about the genie and the magic lamp as a kid? Someone finds an old lamp and rubs the side of the lamp and a genie comes out of the lamp giving the person who rubbed the lamp three wishes. They can wish for anything. How many times have we imagined us finding a lamp and a genie comes out and gives us three wishes. What would you wish for? Would it be money, good health, world power, or maybe a small island in the Pacific away from people? The list can go on and on. Solomon had to make a decision here. God was Solomon's Genie here at this moment in history. We read that Solomon spends time thanking God for what He had done to his own father and now what God was about to do with him. So, Solomon knows the great task that is ahead of him in leading a large nation of people. For those who have been coming to Wednesday night Bible study, we've learned that the people of Israel were not an easy people to lead. All they did was complain and rebel against God. Solomon knew what his own dad had to go through. This was not an easy task to be king over a nation. So, Solomon asks for wisdom and knowledge so that he may lead the people for God. We see here that some of David's salt and light did rub off onto Solomon. Not all of David's children allowed their dad's salt and light to rub off on them. However, Solomon benefited in David's salt and

light because David was salt and light to his family and to the nation of Israel during his rule. We then see in verse 11 that God is well pleased with Solomon. Solomon didn't ask for wealth like a lot of people would have done. Solomon wanted wisdom and knowledge to lead the people and God would grant this wish. Not only that, but God tells Solomon that He will give him wealth and honor besides what Solomon had asked for. God was well pleased with Solomon and to us, Solomon looks like he is on the right path with God. Solomon will build a large army, build the Temple for God, and build great buildings in and around Jerusalem. His wisdom and knowledge will spread worldwide for that time period. Kings from other nations would come to hear him speak and be at all of the wisdom and knowledge God had given to this Israelite king. We read this in 1 Kings 4: 29-34, "²⁹ Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of ^[a]mind, like the sand that is on the seashore. ³⁰ Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the ^[b]people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹ For he was wiser than all *other* people, *more* than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Calcol, and ^[c]Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his ^[d]fame was *known* in all the surrounding nations. ³² He also told three thousand proverbs, and his songs *numbered* 1,005. ³³ He told of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even to the hyssop that grows on the wall; he told also of animals, birds, crawling things, and fish. ³⁴ *People* came from all the ^[e]nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom. (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)

Solomon had become true salt and daylight for all to see and witness, not just from outside the nation of Israel, but also of all the Jews to see and witness. However, things start to change. Solomon, with all this wisdom and knowledge, started to change. His character started to change. He started to see things differently than his father, David, did. Scripture tells us this in 1 Kings 11: 1-6 and 9-13, "**11** Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, *and* Hittite women, ² from the nations of which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not ^[a]associate with them, nor shall they ^[b]associate with you; they will certainly turn your heart away ^[c]to follow their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. ³ He

had seven hundred wives, *who were* ^[d]princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned his heart away. ⁴ For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away ^[e]to follow other gods; and his heart was not ^[f]wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of his father David *had been*. ⁵ For Solomon became a follower of Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and of ^[g]Milcom the abhorrent idol of the Ammonites. ⁶ So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as his father David *had done*.

⁹ Now the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, ¹⁰ and had commanded him regarding this thing, that he was not to follow other gods; but he did not comply with what the LORD had commanded. ¹¹ So the LORD said to Solomon, "Since ^[a]you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will certainly tear the kingdom away from you, and will give it to your servant. ¹² However, I will not do it in your days, *only* for the sake of your father David; *but* I will tear it away from the hand of your son. ¹³ Yet I will not tear away all the kingdom, *but* I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen." (NASB – www.biblegateway.com)

Solomon had forgotten something. God had told Israel that they were to be a holy people (Deuteronomy 7:6), plus, in that same chapter, God tells Israel not to intermarry with the nations they were to destroy. Some of these nations they didn't destroy and Solomon ends up marrying some of them. In fact, Scripture tells us that Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines. These women were from different nations that were bringing in different idols and different customs from what Israel was used to. The idol part was the big issue. As Solomon grew old, his heart turned to other gods because of these idols from other nations. He even follows the god of Molek, which contained child sacrifice. Do you see what was happening to Solomon? At the beginning, Solomon was good salt and daylight to the people. Then, all these pagan wives started to mix into Solomon's salt and light. All of this mixture made Solomon's salt flavor go away and his light

to be blocked. Solomon's attitude toward God had changed and even with all his wisdom and knowledge, he became blind to what was happening to him.

Solomon had a woman issue. Maybe this goes back to what David did with Bathsheba when David sinned. David was not good salt at that time and maybe that bad salt even reached out to Solomon when he was king. Just a thought. Solomon forgets that he is to be holy, which means to be set apart, if you remember what we talked about last week on holy living. Solomon had allowed these foreign wives to dilute his salt and block his light and he did what was evil in the eyes of the Lord. So, God punishes Solomon and will tear the kingdom away from him. Since His dad, David was good; God does show some mercy by waiting till Solomon dies to do this.

Solomon had allowed worldly values to mix into his holy salt and light, and he changed because of that. Plus, even with all his wisdom and knowledge God had given him, over time, Solomon drifted away. We have to do a better job today in keeping an eye on the condition of our salt and light because if Solomon can fall away, so can we. Solomon had 1000 women that messed up his salt and light. We are living in a world where we have 1000 things around us that can dim our light and water down our salt. We too must ask for wisdom and knowledge all the time because our culture changes at a faster pace than it did during Solomon's times. We have our smart phones, books, magazines, internet, TV's, XM radio, and the list can go on and on. Worldliness has a seductive appeal to the heart. Our human nature sides with the worldliness, but yet we are to be set apart in holiness which means we don't allow our human nature to guide our thinking like Solomon did. Remember what we read last week from Peter in 2 Peter 1: 3-4, "As we know Jesus better, his divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life. He has called us to receive his own glory and goodness! And by that same mighty power, he has given us all of his rich and wonderful promises. He has promised that you will escape the decay all around you caused by evil desires and that you will share in His divine nature. (NLT)" Solomon did that opposite of what Peter is telling us here. Jesus' divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life. We all have our weak moments, but we don't have to buckle under the pressure of them. Last week, I was having an issue and I was

complaining to God about it. I was not happy. Jesus had the Holy Spirit put some Scripture into my mind. When I was able to, I looked up that Scripture and found the answer I was looking for. If I didn't ask Jesus about it, I would have found the answer through the world and it would have been the wrong guidance. We can escape all the decay around us through Jesus, which keeps our salt fresh and our light bright. I wish I could stress more plainly how important it is to cling to Jesus every single day because the devil wants to destroy us. Look how the devil got Solomon to turn away from God. He's going to do the same to us. If we stay plugged into Jesus' divine nature, His Holiness will flow through us daily and we'll be able to stay away from all the sin decay around us. I encourage you to study 2 Peter 1 this week. This is just a great piece of Scripture. We need to get back to studying God's Word and daily prayers and asking Jesus for the Holy Spirit to make us holy. We need holy wisdom and knowledge to be able to handle this fast pace world we are living in.

NLT Life Application Study Bible. Tyndale House Publishers, Inc: Wheaton, 1996.