

Every Day with Jesus
A Tale of Two Solomons
1 Kings 3, 11

The opening line of Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* says, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . ." That story is the story of the French Revolution from the perspective of the people living in two different cities, London and Paris. While the first two clauses are the most famous, the sentence in its entirety is quite long and comprises the whole first paragraph of the novel. The overpowering use of paradox (seemingly impossible contradictions) by Dickens describes much more than just an era. It describes the human condition in general, a condition reflected in the life of Israel's King Solomon.

1. Solomon asked for and was tested in godly wisdom.
2. Solomon ruled well and the nation prospered.
3. Solomon allowed wisdom to drift toward worldliness.

In a world where cemeteries remind us of the futility of life, one grave is empty. There is one Man whom the dust cannot claim because God would not allow the Holy One to see decay. Jesus "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). He was free from the curse of futility, and He graciously offers that freedom to those who will place their trust in Him. Confess to Him that you have tried to find meaning in something or someone other than Him, and then find your meaning and your value and your purpose in Him alone.

"Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee."—Augustine

Reflection

Do you remember ever asking God for wisdom and if so, how were you tested in it? How does wisdom keep us from drifting away from God. How does the worldliness attack that wisdom? What are some activities that you engage in that seem monotonous and unending? What things do you or people you know look to as means of relieving the redundancy of life? How does death render everything we do meaningless? Why do we always think true happiness will be found in something we lack right now? What is Solomon's purpose in exposing the meaninglessness of life under the sun? How does Christ bring significance and meaning to all of our actions, including the ones that seem mundane?