

Study Aids

Discussion Questions and Suggested Reading For “What’s the Message?” Lessons

Lesson 57

Questions:

At the beginning of the Teacher’s commentary on “what’s the lesson for us?” the statement is made: “There are many things that could be said here, but I will choose only a couple of points to focus on.” What other thoughts have occurred to you as a result of this study? What other lessons might we have considered?

What about tolerance? This is a very relevant subject today, and there are strong advocates on each side. In the United States it is a basic law that we should be tolerant of other people and allow them the freedom to believe and to do as they choose. There are many who argue that there are no such things as “absolute values” and that I have no right to criticize others for their practices. But early in this course we have laid the claim that there is One and only One who created this universe and that He alone has the right and authority to establish the absolute values that mankind must obey. Where do you stand on this issue?

Solomon began to practice tolerance of other religions as a prudent act of international politics. He had wives who held to the abominable fertility rituals of Baal, and others who followed the sickening practice of offering new born babies to Molech, throwing them alive into the fiery hot furnace that shaped the belly of his idol. What did God say to Solomon about this kind of tolerance?

Suggested reading for further study:

Read chapter two, “A Kingdom Under Judgment” in *The Kingdom of God* by John Bright (previously recommended) for a unifying picture from the time of Solomon to the golden age of King Uzziah (a period of some 200 years that includes the reigns of the first 10 kings of Judah and the first 16 kings of Israel) to see the spiritual challenges the divided kingdom faced and how those same challenges still apply today.