



The Richest Man Who Ever Lived: King Solomon's Secrets to Success, Wealth, and Happiness

By Steven K. Scott

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In this short, powerful book, multimillionaire and bestselling author Steven K. Scott reveals King Solomon's breakthrough strategies to achieve a life of financial success and personal fulfillment.

Steve Scott flunked out of every job he held in his first six years after college. He couldn't succeed no matter how hard he tried. Then Dr. Gary Smalley challenged him to study the book of Proverbs, promising that in doing so he would achieve greater success and happiness than he had ever known. That promise came true, making Scott a millionaire many times over.

In *The Richest Man Who Ever Lived*, Scott reveals Solomon's key for *winning* every race, explains how to resolve conflicts and turn enemies into allies, and discloses the five qualities essential to becoming a valued and admired person at work and in your personal life. Scott illustrates each of Solomon's insights and strategies with anecdotes about his personal successes and failures, as well as those of such extraordinary people as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates, and Steven Spielberg.

At once inspiring and instructive, THE RICHEST MAN WHO EVER LIVED weaves the timeless truths of one of our greatest works of literature into a detailed roadmap for successful living today.

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Editorial Review

Review

*Acclaim for *The Richest Man Who Ever Lived**

“Truly amazing! Solomon gives us the master keys to success, wealth, and happiness. In this book, Steve Scott puts those keys in our hands, and shows us how to use them. Whether you’re just getting started in business, or the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, I believe these breakthrough strategies could propel you to levels of success and happiness you haven’t yet imagined. No wonder the wisest man who ever lived, also became the richest!”

—David Neelman, Founder and CEO, Jet Blue

“The insights, advice, solutions, and specific steps provided in this book are truly life changing. Whether they are applied to your job, career, marriage, or parenting, it’s quickly obvious that they have the power to change everything!”

—Joan Lunden (former host, *Good Morning America*)

“This book is the result of an astonishing idea developed by Steven Scott from interpreting the book Book of Proverbs, in which he says (and demonstrates) that there are solutions to every problem in life.... *“The Richest Man Who Ever Lived”* bears out his contention.”

—Hugh Downs, ABC News

About the Author

STEVEN K. SCOTT, a writer, producer, director, and marketing entrepreneur, is the cofounder of American Telecast Corporation. Along with his partners, he has created more than a dozen businesses that have achieved billions of dollars in sales. He has authored five international bestsellers and is a popular national speaker on the subject of personal and professional achievement.

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CHAPTER 1

How the Richest Man Who Ever Lived Can Make You Happier, More Successful, and Wealthier

Imagine going from a below-average wage to a personal income of more than \$600,000 per *month!* Imagine losing nine jobs in your first six years after college, and then, on your tenth job, building more than a dozen multimillion-dollar businesses from scratch, achieving sales of billions of dollars. Imagine doing all of this by following specific steps taught by Solomon in the Old Testament Book of Proverbs. In a nutshell, that is my personal story. Now think about it:

Before: Earned less than half of the income of the average American wage earner.

After: Income rose from \$18,000 per year to more than \$7 million.

Before: Diagnosed a hopeless corporate failure with a success rate of 0 percent.

After: A twenty-nine-year career success rate of over 60 percent in an industry where the average success rate is under 1 percent.

And just as convincing to me is what happened when I acted *contrary* to Solomon's advice. On three occasions, I violated three of his warnings and lost millions of dollars through bad investment decisions. Had I followed Solomon's advice, I would not have lost a penny. I ignored his advice on relationships and watched one of the happiest marriages in America fall apart. Then, following Solomon's advice on relationships, my marriage was restored and today is happier than ever!

If following Solomon's advice had worked only a few times in the course of my life, we could call it coincidence. If ignoring his advice and warnings had resulted in a few minor setbacks, we could call it chance. But when following his advice has created such significant personal, business, and financial success year after year for me and for countless others, and failing to heed his warnings has caused heartbreaking personal and financial disasters, even the heartiest skeptic must admit what wise men and kings and queens the world over once acknowledged—that Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived.

Just as there are physical laws that govern the physical universe, Solomon reveals “laws of living” that invisibly govern all aspects of life.

Every time you step on board an airliner, the physical laws of gravity and aerodynamics govern your ultimate destiny. If your pilot and the airplane operate in accordance with those laws, you will safely arrive at your destination. If for any reason whatsoever they do not operate in accordance with those laws, you will return to the ground, one way or another. It doesn't matter how you feel about these laws, whether you love them or hate them, whether you choose to ignore them or not; they *still* exist and they *will* govern your flight. Fortunately, pilots, aeronautical engineers, and aircraft designers fully understand these laws, and thus they are able to use them to great advantage. They are able to build and fly aircraft that move us quickly, safely, and comfortably to our destinations. If they were ignorant of these laws, no airplanes would be able to fly.

Just as there are physical laws that govern the universe, there are laws of living that are just as sure and true. It doesn't matter if you love them or hate them, they *still* exist, and they *will* govern your life. Solomon reveals these laws in the biblical Book of Proverbs, and more important, shows us how to use them to our advantage. The laws of gravity and aerodynamics have always existed, but until they were learned and understood, they kept the entire human race on the ground; once they were discovered, they became the very basis for achieving human flight.

The laws of living are as old as human life itself. Being ignorant of them only restricts your ability to achieve genuine happiness, fulfillment, purpose, and success. Many people act in accordance with some of these laws coincidentally, without knowing or understanding them, and they gain a level of success or happiness by doing so. But more often than not, ignorance of these laws creates insurmountable barriers to sustained success and fulfillment. On the other hand, those who learn these laws and how to use them in their flight through life will achieve a level of purpose, success, and happiness that others can only dream of. The purpose-driven life will become the purpose-*accomplished* life.

The Prayer of Solomon

Solomon was born around 974 B.C. and was installed as King of Israel by his father, David, shortly before David died. Solomon was twelve years old. Solomon was terrified of ruling Israel, afraid that he didn't have the wisdom to do so. According to the Old Testament, God appeared to Solomon and asked him what he wanted. Solomon answered, asking only for wisdom and knowledge so that he could rightly judge the great people of Israel (I Kings 3:9; II Chronicles 1:10). God then told Solomon that because he had not asked for riches, wealth, honor, the life of his enemies, nor a longer life for himself, He would give Solomon more wisdom, knowledge, riches, wealth, and honor than any king before him or any king that would come after him. What was promised was delivered. Solomon's wisdom, success, and wealth increased beyond imagination. In terms of wealth, some have suggested that in today's dollars, he may well have been a "trillionaire." In addition to his gold reserves worth hundreds of billions of dollars in today's market, he owned 4,000 stalls for his horses and chariots, and kept 12,000 horsemen on his payroll. Rulers of nations throughout the world sought his advice, and paid dearly for it. However, by the middle of his life, he began to violate the laws of living, its principles and strategies that he so wisely articulated in the Book of Proverbs; as he did, his success and happiness vaporized. Fortunately for us, he recorded many of his laws for living in the Book of Proverbs.

Cracking the Solomon Code

Although each Proverb provides an obvious insight, often the real treasure of a Proverb is buried deep beneath its surface. Solomon implores us in chapter 2, verse 4, to search for wisdom and knowledge as we would search for silver or buried treasure. To do this, we must often look deeper beneath the surface, at the background of the Proverb, its context, and even nuances of the Hebrew words that make up the original text of Proverbs. In many cases, we can find added treasure by looking at the converse meaning of a Proverb. And last, but not least, we must look at the broader spirit of the Proverb and not just the narrow meaning of the literal statement. As we do this, we not only discover Solomon's laws for living, we find the silver and buried treasure he talked about—treasure that will last beyond our lifetime.

I'm not the only person who has achieved his impossible dreams by following Solomon's strategies. I love reading biographies of those who have achieved extraordinary accomplishments, both in modern times and throughout history. As I have studied their lives, I have discovered that their successes, too, were realized by actions and attitudes that reflected Solomon's teachings, even though some may have never read his writings. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ford, and Thomas Edison were all readers of Proverbs in their youth. But even in looking at the lives of modern icons such as Bill Gates, Sam Walton, Helen Keller, Steven Spielberg, and Oprah Winfrey, we see that they have achieved their impossible dreams by doing the very things that Solomon advises each of us to do. I've also seen disasters befall men, companies, and nations when they acted contrary to Solomon's admonitions. Adolf Hitler was able to bewitch an entire nation because they ignored Solomon's warnings. America was caught off guard at Pearl Harbor. Recently, the executives of America's seventh-largest corporation drove it into the largest corporate bankruptcy in American history. All of these events were brought about by violating a handful of Solomon's admonitions.

What Can Solomon's Wisdom Do for You?

So what can Solomon's insights and teachings do for your career, your relationships, and your personal life? No matter what you think they can do, they can do infinitely more. Here are just a few of the rewards Solomon says you can look forward to when you follow his advice.

The Benefits of Solomon's Strategies

- Knowledge

- Discretion
- Good judgment
- Preservation and protection
- Success
- Better health
- Longer life
- Honor
- Financial abundance
- Favor of those in authority
- Commendation and promotions
- Financial independence
- Confidence
- Strength of character
- Courage
- Extraordinary achievement
- Personal fulfillment
- Great relationships
- A truly meaningful life
- Love and admiration of others
- Understanding
- True wisdom

Solomon gives us powerful strategies and life-changing tactics for achieving extraordinary outcomes.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that what you're about to read is simply a collection of general principles and poetic platitudes. Solomon was far too wise to waste his time and yours with such meaningless generalities. His writings provide precise steps that can be taken in your personal and professional life to produce astounding results. In this book, I focus on the strategies and steps articulated in the biblical Book of Proverbs that I have applied to the business, personal, and financial areas of my own life. After we examine Solomon's advice in each chapter, I will then offer some simple techniques that I have used to implement his advice in my daily life.

At the conclusion of each chapter, I've added a section called "Knowledge to Wisdom," with specific exercises to enable you to apply Solomon's advice in a practical and powerful way. Do this, and you will begin to experience a greater level of success and personal fulfillment than you have ever imagined. No matter how successful you may be right now, your future is about to get a whole lot better. Let the adventure begin!

CHAPTER 2 The Key to Winning Every Race

Do you see a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings.

—Proverbs 22:29

Become the One in a Thousand Who Achieves Incredible Outcomes

In any endeavor we undertake, or any goal we pursue, we can experience outcomes that are incredible, great, good, okay, poor, terrible, or catastrophic. In my fifty-plus years, I have experienced all of these outcomes personally, professionally, and financially. Studying the lives of many of history's most successful people, I discovered that they, too, have experienced the gamut of these outcomes in one or more areas of their lives. But in the areas of their greatest achievements, without exception, they have achieved *incredible* outcomes.

And every one of them achieved their incredible outcomes because they learned and utilized one simple, yet incredibly powerful, skill. This skill was their key to achieving their impossible dreams. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, Clara Barton, John D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford, Sam Walton, Walt Disney, Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, and Steven Spielberg are just a few of the people who have used it. The fact is, whenever it is used, it ultimately produces incredible outcomes. Moreover, incredible outcomes are almost never achieved without it.

Unfortunately, less than one in a thousand people fully utilize it. The good news is that it is a skill that can be easily learned. And it can be used by anyone, regardless of their background, education, or IQ.

I'm talking about the skill of *diligence*. Most people think they understand what diligence means, but nothing could be further from the truth. When Solomon talks about diligence, he's talking about a trait that is as rare as a ten-carat diamond. The reason it's so rare is that true diligence runs contrary to human nature.

We all have traits that are part of the human condition. These traits produce our natural drives, inclinations, strengths, and weaknesses. Diligence, however, is not one of them. In fact, the trait common to all humans is our desire or drive for instant gratification. We want as much as we can get, as fast as we can get it, with as little effort as possible. *That* is our nature. We all have a natural inclination to follow the path of least resistance. Fortunately, despite our natural inclination, we can *choose* to follow a path of greater resistance and become diligent in the pursuit of any endeavor, project, or goal. And if you develop the kind of diligence that Solomon refers to, you can achieve incredible outcomes in any important area of your life.

Solomon's Concept of Diligence (It's Not What You Think)

My computer dictionary describes diligence as "a persistent and hard-working effort in doing something." I love the word "persistent"; persistence is certainly a part of diligence. "Hard-working," on the other hand, is not the most accurate term to use when trying to understand Solomon's meaning. I'd prefer to use the phrase "smart-working." If I need to cut down a tree and try to cut it down with a hammer, that would be hard-working, but it certainly would not be diligent. It could take me hours, even days, to chop down a tree with a hammer. On the other hand, if I use a chain saw I might cut that same tree down in minutes. I would not be working nearly as hard, but I'd be working a lot smarter. My computer software lists the following words as synonyms of diligence: meticulousness, conscientiousness, thoroughness, and carefulness. Although all of these qualities are important aspects of diligence, they do not fully convey Solomon's meaning.

To fully understand what Solomon meant by the word "diligent," we need to add those qualities to Solomon's words found in Proverbs 20:11: "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be *pure and whether it be right*." The key words here are "pure" and "right." Solomon uses the word "pure" not just in the sense of a moral or ethical value, but rather about work in its purest form. It's more akin to a mining term than an ethical term. Solomon's mines represented a tremendous portion of his wealth; he often used mining terms in his writings. And if you're mining for gold, what do you do? You dig a lot of dirt, you find a big rock, and you take that big rock and subject it to a tremendous amount of heat. This melts all of the impurities. What's left behind is pure gold. That is the "pure" side of diligence. It's getting down to investing one's days, hours, and minutes in that which brings a pure return on the time and effort invested.

The other side of diligence is the "right" side. It's not just about working at something with persistence and by working smart. It's about doing it *right*—expeditiously, efficiently, and effectively. In other words, doing it on time to the highest standards possible, regardless of what is demanded or expected. It means bringing creativity, persistence, and even other people and outside resources into the effort to achieve an extraordinary outcome.

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