**A Horrific Fall!**

**I Kings 11 (Lesson #10)**

***1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. 3 He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. 4 For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6 So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done. 7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. 8 And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.***

**Vs 1-2 -** This is a dramatic change in tone, not just a change from all the pomp and grandeur of the first ten chapters, but a complete change in how Solomon is being presented to us.

Up until now there were only hints of problems, nothing for sure, **shadows of a divided heart**. Now the writer of Kings tells us outright.

In I Kings 3:3, we were told that **“Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David,…”**

Now we are told, instead that Solomon loved: ***many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh***

God has been clear about this:

*“****3*** *You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons,* ***4*** *for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly.” (De 7:3-4 ESV)*

God have even explained why they were not to do this. His command was enough, but God even pointed out the disaster that would follow intermarrying with the surrounding pagan nations:

**Vs 2b –** ***“for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods."***

**APPLICATION:** *“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?” (2Co 6:14 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** Neutral is not a gear, we are either actively working to draw towards God, or the stream of this world, is causing us to drift away from God. On the other hand, disobedience is an active walk away from God!

**Vs 2c -** Is a shock to the senses…. We cannot be sure from the context if the writer is **that Solomon clung to these foreign women in love or that he clung to their gods?**

Here is a man whose passions have taken him in a totally different direction, and he is clinging to pagan women and to their false gods. **This is tragic!!!!**

**Vs 3 –** When we read verse 3, it is a shock to our senses. How is it possible that a man could have 700 wives and 300 concubines?

No doubt, many if not most of these were given as gifts in various forms of political alliances. But this was not God’s design, in fact God had warned against this vary thing. We see in verse three that what Yahweh had warned would happen. Has happened!

**APPLICATION:** Satan’s activities are often slow and subtle. That is why Paul warned: *“and give no opportunity to the devil.” (Eph 4:27 ESV)* The word translated opportunity means, a place, or room. Satan is a squatter and once he has a small place in our heart, he will work to expand from there.

**Vs 3b -** These foreign women had ***turned Solomon’s heart away from His God.***

**This is a tragic statement.** Who under heaven would want this as their **epitaph**? Yet here it is. Solomon’s summation of his life.

**APPLICATION:** God is principally concerned with our hearts! *“****21*** *For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,* ***22*** *coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.* ***23*** *All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."” (Mr 7:21-23 ESV)*

**We should follow not what Solomon did as an old man, but what he advised as a younger man:** *“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.” (Pr 4:23 ESV)*

**Vs 4a** – **is devastating…** ***For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods,***

Solomon’s sins, caught up with him. God’s warnings proved true in Solomon’s life. Solomon would not be the man who would beat the odds, the man who would make God a liar. Just the opposite, Solomon choices would ultimately verify God’s word as absolutely true.

**APPLICATION:** The same is true for you and me. We are not going to beat the odds and dabble in sin and not be chastened for that behavior.

*“Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?” (Pr 6:27 ESV)*

**Vs 4b –** A summary statement: ***“his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.”***

**We must guard our hearts. This is disastrous**, God has been crystal clear with Solomon:

*“****4*** *And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules,* ***5*** *then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’” (1Ki 9:4-5 ESV)*

**Vs 5 –** This was a not a passive thing, but Solomon **(went after)** other Gods!

**Ashtoreth** was a sex and fertility goddess of the Canaanites.

Many modern Hebrew scholars believe that Ashtoreth’s name shows God’s contempt for Israel’s flirtations with false gods. Ashtoreth’s name seems to combine the goddess’s real name Asherah with the Hebrew word for shame, ***[boshet](https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/kjv/bosheth.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)***.

Then there is also **Milcom**, the abomination of the Ammonites. **Milcom** was the national deity of the Ammonites. Many scholars believe this is the same God as **Molech**.

With many peoples in the surrounding area, including a woman we will meet in a couple of weeks (Jezebel) the worship of **Molech,** involved **human sacrifice.**

As God is laying out his charges against the nation of Israel through Jeremiah and he says referring to Israel’s sins: *“They built the high places of Baal in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.” (Jer 32:35 ESV)*

**Vs 6 - Here is the tragic summation.** I do not even need to comment. We all know what this says and what it means.

For all the advantages, all the wealth, all the fame, and all the wisdom to rule. **Solomon turned** and ***“did what was evil in the sight of the LORD”***

**Solomon’s obedience could have secured the blessing for the next generation.** Solomon’s disobedience has secured something much different.

**APPLICATION & MESSIAH:** Jesus’s perfect obedience has secured all blessings for you and I. *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,” (Eph 1:3 ESV)*

**Vs 7 -** We see that Solomon actually constructed a **“high place**” for **Chemosh**, who was the false God of the Moabites. And a high place for Molech.

Solomon built a high place for Molech, on the mountain “east of Jerusalem.” Picture this, just outside the city, where many Hebrews could easily see and travel to the sight. Just east of Mount Moriah, **in the face of the living God**, Solomon built and altar to Molech.

This is revolting! **Again, Molech was one of the false gods who some groups sacrificed children to.**

**APPLICATION:** My sins, like Solomons, have been right in the face of God! Is this not a reminder of the grace and mercy we find in Jesus Christ!

**MESSIAH:** *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1Jo 1:9 ESV)*

**Vs 8 –** As if we have not read enough. It appears the writer of Kings is telling us that Solomon built numerous high places for his foreign wives who ***“made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.”***

Again, Solomon is not only chasing after false gods, he is actively building and constructing (Solomon’s gift) places to worship these false Gods.

**This is tragic and sad.** **Solomon’s unique abilities and spiritual gifts are now being used to advance the kingdom of Satan against the Kingdom of God.**

**Last week, was the high water mark for the nation of Israel.** The nation appeared to be at its zenith. But there was a spiritual rot, there was a turning from God that was occurring in King Solomon’s heart, and the tragedy of that turning is revealed here is I King 11.

**APPLICATION:** Now I know Milcom, Molech, Chemosh, and Ashtoreth are no longer part of our culture. They have been replaced by idols that are not so obvious sex, money, power, fame, pride, and convenience.

**THOUGHT:** Generally, at this time in history. Nations would adopt the God’s of their more powerful enemies, concluding that false deity is more powerful than the one they were following. A very pragmatic approach.

Ironically, Solomon started worshipping the God’s of the nations that Israel had conquered and now controlled. Sin is so blinding!

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***9 And 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 concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the LORD commanded. 11 Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. 12 Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen." 14 ¶ And the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He was of the royal house in Edom.***

**Vs 9a -** The first thing that should arrest our attention is **- *the LORD was angry with Solomon.***

Solomon’s behavior is now stirring up the anger of Yahweh. God’s anger, and if not his wrath, for sure his chastening hand, is being stirred up by Solomon.

**This is sad, shocking and factual.** This is just the facts. Yahweh had done everything and more necessary to help Solomon stay on the right path.

Solomon had failed. Solomon (in his heart) had turned away from Yahweh, the God who **“appeared to him twice.”**

**Vs 10b -** But Solomon turned away and ***did not keep what the LORD commanded.***

Don’t miss the point, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit in our life we would go the same way:

*“10 as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." 13 "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." 14 "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 in their paths are ruin and misery, 17 and the way of peace they have not known." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."” (Ro 3:10-18 ESV)*

The bottom line, Solomon has failed to follow after Yahweh with his whole heart, like David did.

**Vs 11 –** Anger on God’s part, and His response to sin are not character flaws, rather they are holy responses to sin and disobedience from an absolutely Holy God.

We do not know **when** Yahweh said this, we do not know **how** he said it, but we know **what** he said: ***"Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.***

We do not know what Solomon thought or what he did, we do know what he should have done! **Repent!**

**APPLICATION:** When God whispers in our ear that we are on the wrong path, that is our queue, to get back on the right path, right away!

Our God is patient and longsuffering. Think of Nineveh.

One of the things that makes this so tragic, is God had clearly warned Solomon. Last week, remember the “if” and “then” statements that God had made to Solomon?

Let me remind us: *“****4*** *And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules,* ***5*** *then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’* ***6*** *But if you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them,* ***7*** *then I will cut off Israel from the land that I have given them, and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight, and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.” (1Ki 9:4-7 ESV)*

**Vs 12 -** David is dead and long gone. Better than 20 years gone, probably at this point closer to 40 years gone.

**God is withholding full chastisement of Solomon, because of David.**

**APPLICATION:** What is the application for you and me and our children?

**But like us, we each ultimately answer for our own sins and the chastening hand of God is falling upon Solomon and his house (for his own sin).**

Equally, his son who follows on the throne (Rehoboam) will not enjoy the start that he enjoyed. His son, will not enjoy the blessings that come from being raised by parents who love the Lord and follow him in the details of their lives.

**Vs 13 –** A promise of grace, one group will not be torn away, one tribe will not be removed for the line of David.

**Vs 14** This verse should cause us pause. Solomon’s kingdom had been a kingdom where God kept in check all the would-be power players, and it was a time of great peace. **Remember Solomon sent to Kin Hiram:** *“But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor misfortune.” (1Ki 5:4 ESV)*

**Vs 14 –** First, in spite of a reign that had been in the greatest time of peace, near the end of his reign, that peace ends. God lifts his restraining hand, and adversaries begin to rise up from multiple directions.

Notice the Lord raised up an adversary against Solomon.

**APPLICATION:** God is sovereign, even in securing peace for Solomon’s entire reign, and in evaporating peace and raising up adversaries at the end of his reign.

He raised up a man who was from the royal house (kingly lineage) in the nation of Edom, and Edomite, whose name was Hadad.

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***15 For when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the slain, he struck down every male in Edom 16 (for Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom). 17 But Hadad fled to Egypt, together with certain Edomites of his father’s servants, Hadad still being a little child. 18 They set out from Midian and came to Paran and took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and assigned him an allowance of food and gave him land. 19 And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him in marriage the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. 20 And the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh’s house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh’s house among the sons of Pharaoh. 21 But when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, that I may go to my own country." 22 But Pharaoh said to him, "What have you lacked with me that you are now seeking to go to your own country?" And he said to him, "Only let me depart."***

First some backstory, since the days of Jacob and Esau there had been bad blood between the Israelites and the Edomites. The Israelites descended from Jacob and the Edomites descended from his brother Esau. If you are unfamiliar with their story, read Gen 25-28.

**Vs 15-16 –** First, Israel’s conquest of the promised land did not endear the Edomites to the Israelites. Equally, there were other times when many, but not all were killed, as we are reading here. For additional details see (II Sam 8:13-14).

**Vs 17** - Many Edomites died, but a few survived, one who survived was Hadad, he was from the royal family, in the kingly lineage. Hadad and some of his father’s servants, fled to Egypt. At this time Hadad was a child (boy or lad). Hadad’s name means **“mighty”**

**Vs 18 -** The Pharaoh took the young boy king in and fed him, provided for him, and gave him land.

**Vs 19 -** Further, he found great favor and the Pharoah gave him the sister of his wife to marry.

**Why – Human perspective…** This is very pragmatic, make friends with a deposed king.

**Why - God’s perspective…** *“The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will.” (Pr 21:1 ESV)*

**Vs 20 -** Children are born to Hadad in Egypt. Now Hadad had a good life, but he has not forgotten what the Israelites have done. **Rich how can you say that?**

Notice the writer of Kings tells us that Hadad named his first born child **“Genubath.”** That word means **theft** or **stolen**.

**Hadad’s son was to remind him of the kingdom that was stolen (in his eyes) from him.**

**Vs 21 –** Once David died, Hadad was ready to return.

Notice this follows the Exodus plotline, except it is upside down. The nation coming out of Egypt is not Israel, but Edom. Their coming out is not for Israel’s good, but for their detriment.

**The broader point, is what happens when our hearts turn away from God. Just ask Solomon…**

Hadad was an enemy from the south… Coming out of Egypt

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***23 God also raised up as an adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah. 24 And he gathered men about him and became leader of a marauding band, after the killing by David. And they went to Damascus and lived there and made him king in Damascus. 25 He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, doing harm as Hadad did. And he loathed Israel and reigned over Syria.***

God ends this time of peace, not with one adversary, but now a second adversary is announced. His name is **Rezon**. His name means **Prince**.

**Vs 23 -** Now it appears when David defeated Hadadezer, as recorded in (II Sam 8:3-4) and put many to death, Rezon flees from his master, possibly during that very battle.

**Vs 24** - So, Rezon gathers together a marauding band, again after what we read about in (II Sam 8:3-4) and they go and live in Damascus, where they declare Rezon is King.

**Vs 25 -** So, Rezon, is the threat from the north. He too, is a pot of boiling water and all that is required is for God to lift his hand of control and the water will boil over.

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***26 Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother’s name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king. 27 And this was the reason why he lifted up his hand against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the breach of the city of David his father. 28 The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph. 29 And at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed himself in a new garment, and the two of them were alone in the open country. 30 Then Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. 31 And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes 32 (but he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), 33 because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and they have not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my rules, as David his father did. 34 Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of David my servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and my statutes. 35 But I will take the kingdom out of his son’s hand and will give it to you, ten tribes. 36 Yet to his son I will give one tribe, that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name. 37 And I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel. 38 And if you will listen to all that I command you, and will walk in my ways, and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you and will build you a sure house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you. 39 And I will afflict the offspring of David because of this, but not forever.’" 40 Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.***

Here the writer of Kings informs us about a third adversary that the Lord raised up.

**Vs 26** - ***Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite…*** We saw the enemy from the south (Hadad), we saw the enemy from the north (Rezon), here we have the enemy from within the camp. His name means “the people will contend.”

**Vs 27-28** - Solomon recognizes that Jeroboam is a very able and industrious fellow. So, he puts him in charge of the labor force.

**Vs 29** - So Ahijah, the prophet comes to Jeroboam, we are told that Ahijah has a new garment, and it is just these two in the open country.

**Vs 30-31 -** We see Ahijah the prophet, take hold of his own near garment and tear it into 12 pieces.

Then he says to Jerobaom (this industrious young man who Solomon has put in charge of the forced labor), take for yourself ten pieces…

Then he explains why… ***“thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes…”***

**Vs 32-33** - It seems to mean one additional tribe besides his own tribe of Judah.

Ahijah explains why this is happening: ***because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and they have not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my rules, as David his father did.***

The grace and mercy of God on display, Ahijah, even explains to Jeroboam why God is doing this. **One would suspect that this would result in Jeroboam hotly following after God.**

**Vs 34-35 -** The “never the less” is the grace of God, yet again.

We have seen this theme over and over again. Worse things would have befallen Solomon, the blow, the chastisement, the punishment, the curse, was (in part) mitigated because of David’s relationship to Yahweh!

But, because of his sin, I am taking ten tribes and his family line will no longer be oversee those kingdoms. OHHHH, but there is one coming who reunite the Kingdom and bring in the Gentiles!

**Vs 36 -** Again, seems to be one additional tribe besides Judah.

Can I interrupt my own Sunday School lesson and remind you of something you know? God is sovereign over all kings and all kingdoms. He is the one who raises up and who puts down!

**Vs 37 -** WOW! God, through the prophet tells Jeroboam, God has chosen to make you king over Israel (but not Judah and Benjamin).

Here we are told that God intends to split the kingdom, with the bigger part (collectively Israel) being handed over to Jeroboam to serve as king.

This is a major announcement! This is a game changer! This will change the trajectory of the nation of Israel forever!

**Vs 38 -** The promise is extended to Jeroboam! **If you will obey, if you will follow. If you will keep my commandments.**

**MESSIAH:** Every human has failed at this point. The sinless, perfect Son of God

 did not fail at this point!

We need another plan, we need a savior, or in the words of a very popular Skillet song… **We need a Hero!**

**Vs 39 -** Chastisement, but not forever. Because of grace,

ot forever. **This affliction was not punitive, but meant to be corrective.**

**Vs 40 - This was not the response God was looking for.** God was looking for repentance, Solomon instead tried to kill the man whom God had raised up to be the next King over the ten tribes.

**It is interesting that God raises up three adversaries against Solomon.**

**Vs 41-42**  The writer of Kings ends with simply telling us how long Solomon reigned and he died and Rehoboam became king.

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