

1 Kings 11

Good evening and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to 1 Kings 11.

COMMUNION

It's very rare that I ask the worship team to play a specific song. In my years I can only think of a handful of times.

But tonight, I specifically asked Jim, and he graciously agreed, to play that timeless hymn, "Come Thou Fount".

That ageless hymn turns 265 years old this year. And as is true with all old hymns, in our day and age its common to sing words that no longer captivate us, which is unfortunate.

A careful reading of the words in most older hymns will reveal that they are not only overflowing with great theology, but they also have a story behind them which is compelling, and sometimes tragic. Such is the case with Come Thou Fount.

Robert Robertson was only 22 yrs. old when he composed this hymn. He endured a rough childhood-his dad died young. He was such a troubled kid he was sent off to London to learn a trade in barbering, hoping that would set him on the right course.

Yet that didn't deter Robert Robertson's appetite for sin-at a young age he began to drink and carouse. He was headed on a path of self-destruction.

That is until he heard the words of the famous preacher George Whitfield. Robert Robertson was converted as a result of Whitfield's preaching, and he fell deeply in love with the one who loved him even more-Jesus. Robert Robertson immediately began studying for ministry.

He became captivated, he couldn't get enough of the Bible, he immersed himself fully in the scriptures. He clung closely to those who mentored him and taught him.

3 years after writing the hymn Come thou Fount, at the age of 25 he was called to the Baptist church in Cambridge where he ministered effectively. Crowds increased and his popularity grew. Before long, Robert Robertson was a name known all across the city of London and beyond.

I'm going to let Richard Seume, the former chaplain of Dallas Theological Seminary finish the tragic story of Robert Robertson:

"His serving at the Baptist church was the beginning of his great popularity, and the beginning of his lapse into careless ways and his eventual succumbing to his own carnality. He lived in that condition for many years.

It came about, in the old coaching days, a lady seated on a stagecoach was reading a little book with evident enjoyment. 1 page of that volume held special appeal to her, and so she consulted it from time to time.

She then turned to her fellow passenger, a gentleman she presumed may be acquainted with the subject of religion. She held the page toward him, and pointed to the words she had been reading, and asked him what he thought of it. He read the section that said

O to grace how great a debtor

Daily I'm constrained to be

Let Thy goodness like a fetter

Bind my wandering heart to Thee

Prone to wander Lord I feel it

Prone to leave the God I love

Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above.

The stranger read no further-he turned his head from it. The man sought to engage the woman in something other than these words, but she was not to be denied.

Venturing another appeal, she told the man the benefits she had received from that hymn, and expressed her admiration for its message.

With that, overcome beyond the powers of controlling his emotions, the man burst into tears. 'Madam' he said, 'please. I'm the poor unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago, and I would give 1,000 worlds if I had them to give, to enjoy the feelings now, that I had back then.'"

I'm sure by now you've guessed that the man on that stagecoach was Robert Robinson, the author of Come Thou Fount.

How tragically ironic he seemed to prophesy his own failure!
Prone to wander Lord!

And so he did, and so he died in defeat at the young age of 55.

Robert Robertson's name is added to the littered graveyard of countless Christians, men and women who were used by God greatly, yet a wandering heart dramatically altered their life, and brought shame upon God's name.

We've seen it happen recently with the greatest apologist of our generation, Ravi Zacharias. How could a man who touched so many lives, including my own, in such profound ways be caught up in such sin? Didn't we all feel like we got punched in the stomach when his actions were brought to light? I don't know

why I was caught so off-guard, I've seen it happen a lot, so have you.

Sadly, it would not take us much time at all to come up with a list of names, who's hearts wandered from God, and it marred their lives forever.

And this is what we see tonight with the tragic conclusion of the life of Solomon.

The title of tonight's message is A Slow Erosion

Let's pray

God was clear when he instructed the future kings of Israel.

Deuteronomy 17:16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' 17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

God commanded that the kings of Israel should avoid accumulating horses, wives, and wealth...And we wonder why? Too many horses cause the king to trust in his cavalry rather than God.

Too many wives turn the king's affection and loyalty away from God.

Too much money makes the king proud and hardens his heart.

As we've seen in our study the last few weeks, king Solomon violated all three of these commands of God. The wisest man in all the earth has played the fool.

1-3

1 But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites— 2 from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. 3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. In the ancient world, peace treaties were often ratified when the lesser king gave his daughter in marriage to the greater king. This gave both kings a common interest - and supposedly, the mightier king would be less likely to attack his in-laws. This is probably how Solomon accumulated such a large harem.

But clearly, Solomon’s motives weren’t just political and diplomatic. Notice again the last line in verse 2, “Solomon clung to these in love.” He liked pretty princesses and exotic, forbidden women.

Based on the size of his harem, today, we’d probably call Solomon a sex-addict. The king had placed no reins on his sexual appetite. Depth and meaning with one woman had been replaced with the variety and superficiality of many women.

With 1,000 partners Solomon had long stopped caring for these women as people – they were just objects. Tools he used to satisfy his sexual desires.

And in order to keep his harem happy he compromised his loyalty to God.

4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. When these foreign women became part of Solomon's court they brought with them their foreign gods and pagan religions.

To appease his women, Solomon betrayed his God. He made ever-increasing compromises to pacify the pagan tastes of his wives. Before long, King Solomon, David's son, had introduced full-fledged idolatry into Israel.

But how does a person of God fall so far? It always starts with a little concession here and there – small accommodations begin to add up. Compromise tends to snowball. Once it starts, it's very difficult to stop.

Solomon should've listened to his own proverb. In **Proverbs 27:20**
Hell[fn] and Destruction[fn] are never full;
So the eyes of man are never satisfied.

6 Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as did his father David. Here's the reason Solomon was so quick to compromise... he "did not fully follow the LORD". Oh, he followed God partially, but radical obedience was never an option.

Here's the cure in verse 6, especially for those who desire to break free from sexual sin—"fully follow the LORD." If you're struggling to break free from sin, especially sexual sin, tith your free time, with your eyes, with every waking second – even when it cries out to be fed, don't give yourself any opportunity to indulge your flesh.

Folks remember we don't rehabilitate the flesh, we crucify the flesh. That means burn the bridges, and make no room for retreat – and God will win the victory.

Yet Solomon did just the opposite. He built places of compromise throughout the land.

7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. 8 And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. This seems almost unbelievable. This man of great wisdom, and blessing turns to the most depraved gods of the pagan nations.

It's quite likely that Solomon didn't see this as a denial of the Lord God of Israel. In his mind, he probably justified his actions by thinking he was still honoring the Lord, but you know, just adding the honor of these other gods to his honor of the LORD.

But this is never acceptable to God. He demands to be the only God in our life.

This is a tragic example of the power of the lust of the flesh. Lust drove Solomon to a place he probably never would've believed

he'd be. He found himself burning incense at the altars of depraved pagan gods. **SHOW PIC** He found himself at the altar of child sacrifice unto the god Molech. **CLOSE PIC**

9 So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, God had appeared to him twice, and Solomon still went after other gods.

We sometimes think that great spiritual experiences, or miracles, or signs and wonders will keep us from sin and will keep us faithful to God.

This wasn't the case with the wisest man who ever lived, and it will not be the case with us also. Remember the Israelites saw the 10 plagues and still wound up worshiping the golden calf.

10-11

10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. 11 Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. At this point in history, Solomon was the most powerful ruler on earth. He seems unconquerable. Yet Solomon's sin had so blinded him, that he had forgotten that his security lay not in his horses or wealth - but in his loyalty to God.

And because of his rebellion, God promises to tear away his kingdom.

Now if you remember, God promised the entire kingdom of Israel to the descendants of David forever, but they needed to follow God with their whole heart. In fact before David died, he reminded his son Solomon of this promise shortly before his death **1 Kings 2:4 “that the LORD may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,’ He said, ‘you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’**

Yet they could not remain faithful even for one generation. But in God’s great mercy, even as He pronounces judgment, He tempers it with mercy.

12-13

12 Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; 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.”A Civil War will tear away the kingdom in the days of Solomon’s son, his name is Rehoboam. The Davidic dynasty still retains a tribe to rule – the southern tribe of Judah. The northern 10 tribes will become their own nation, and serve their own king.

Solomon’s downfall is utterly tragic. He had so much going for him, but he blew it. He didn’t finish well.

And now the rest of the chapter reveals how God raises up 3 adversaries against Solomon

14-22

14 Now the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was a descendant of the king in Edom. 15 For it happened, when David was in Edom, and Joab the

commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, after he had killed every male in Edom 16 (because for six months Joab remained there with all Israel, until he had cut down every male in Edom), 17 that Hadad fled to go to Egypt, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him. Hadad was still a little child. 18 Then they arose from Midian and came to Paran; and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, apportioned food for him, and gave him land. 19 And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him as wife the sister of his own wife, that is, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. 20 Then the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

21 So when Hadad heard in Egypt that David rested 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 Then Pharaoh said to him, "But what have you lacked with me, that suddenly you seek to go to your own country?"

So he answered, "Nothing, but do let me go anyway." We aren't told specifically how Hadad troubled or was an adversary to Solomon, only that he returned to bother Solomon with the permission of Pharaoh.

23-25

23 And God raised up another adversary against him, Rezon the son of Eliadah, who had fled from his lord, Hadadezer king of Zobah. 24 So he gathered men to him and became captain over a band of raiders, when David killed those of Zobah. And they went

to Damascus and dwelt there, and reigned in Damascus. 25 He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon (besides the trouble that Hadad caused); and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria God allowed an adversary from the south-Hadad. so God also raised up another adversary against Solomon, Rezon was from the North.

Now the 3rd adversary God raises up against Solomon is much closer to home...

26 Then Solomon's servant, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zereda, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king. Jeroboam was different from the two previously mentioned adversaries of Solomon, because he was a fellow Israelite.

27-36

27 And this is what caused him to rebel against the king: Solomon had built the Millo and repaired the damages to the City of David his father. 28 The man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor; and Solomon, seeing that the young man was industrious, made him the officer over all the labor force of the house of Joseph.

29 Now it happened at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met him on the way; and he had clothed himself with a new garment, and the two were alone in the field. 30 Then Ahijah took 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 will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you 32 (but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the

sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), 33 because they have^[fn] forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David. 34 However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and My statutes. 35 But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and give it to you—ten tribes. 36 And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there. God promised to divide Israel and put ten of the twelve tribes under Jeroboam as judgment for the sin and idolatry of Solomon. God would still keep one tribe under the house of David, in faithfulness to His promise to David.

Chapter 11 is significant because it's setting the foundation of the divided kingdom, which became Israel's history for hundreds of years after the death of Solomon. 10 northern tribes called Israel, 2 southern tribes called Judah

37 So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel. God ordained the division of Israel and the reign of Jeroboam. He did this as a judgment — a great judgment — upon Solomon for his embrace of idolatry.

38 Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you. This was an amazing offer. God promised to make a lasting dynasty for Jeroboam, if he would do what is right in the sight of the LORD. An obedient Jeroboam had the opportunity to establish a parallel dynasty to the House of David.

It's interesting, both Jeroboam and David were appointed by God to follow after disobedient kings. David followed after a disobedient and wayward king Saul, and Jeroboam followed after Solomon. Sadly, we'll see that Jeroboam's actions didn't follow God's will and God didn't bless his reign.

39 And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever.' Israel of course is no longer divided into 2 kingdoms, it's just one nation today.

Apparently word of Jeroboam's encounter with the prophet made its way back to the king.

40 Solomon therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon. This is another startling evidence of Solomon's decline. God specifically said this would happen after the death of Solomon, and in judgment of Solomon's apostasy. Solomon didn't want to hear it, so he sought to kill Jeroboam.

You see what's happening here...Solomon thought he could defeat God's will. But of course he was unsuccessful. God's word through Ahijah proved true.

41 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?

42 And the period that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. It's interesting the first three kings of Israel- who ruled over all 12 tribes of Israel – Saul, David, and Solomon – each reigned for 40 years each.

43 Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.” It's nice to think Solomon repented of his idolatry and ended up in heaven. But there's no evidence of it in the scriptures. Some folks believe Solomon did repent later in his life, then wrote the book of Ecclesiastes as a testimony of his search for meaning in the midst of vanity. I'm not sure we'll really know if Solomon made it to heaven until we get there.

Verse 43 “And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.” What a sad line. Rehoboam is suddenly given the authority to rule, but as we'll soon see he lacks the wisdom to rule. In his arrogance he causes several hundred years of damage to the nation.

Over the last few weeks we learned how Solomon's kingdom was an outstanding example of wealth, military power, and prestige.

Yet the true security of Israel did not rest in any of those things. It rested in the blessing of God and in the obedience and faithfulness of their king.

Now's a good time to ponder the fact that the wisest man who ever lived has fallen into this state of such disrepair, what hope do we have apart from constant dependence upon Jesus Christ? May the tragedy of Solomon drive us to greater dependence upon and abiding with Jesus.

Jerritts roof story-the cracks began to develop
CALL JIM UP FOR COMMUNION