



Jason Smith – Our King

Part 3: The Failure of Earthly Kings

Scripture: 1 Kings 11:1-13

Key Verse: 1 Kings 11:9

Introduction: When Our Kings Let Us Down

Last week, we saw that the people of Israel wanted a king. They wanted to be like the other nations. They thought an earthly king would give them power, security, and identity.

So, God gave them kings.

And for a while, it seemed to be working.

They had Saul.

They had David.

And then they had Solomon—the wisest, wealthiest, most successful king Israel ever knew.

But here's the truth: **Even the best earthly kings fail. Even the wisest leaders fall. Even the strongest kingdoms crumble.**

It's a challenging but necessary lesson: **When we build our lives on the promises of earthly kings, we are continually building on shaky ground.**

Today, we're going to walk through the story of Solomon's downfall to see why **earthly kings can never hold the weight of our trust.**

The Failure of Earthly Kings

Read: 1 Kings 11:1-13

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.

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.”

1. Even the Wisest Kings Can Fall

Let's begin with Solomon. The son of David. The builder of the Temple. The writer of Proverbs. The man who asked for wisdom—and received it directly from God.

He had it all:

- Divine wisdom.
- Political peace.

- Unmatched wealth.
- International influence.

And yet, **even Solomon fell.**

Verse 4 tells us the heartbreaking truth:

“As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God...”

Let that sink in.

This is the man who literally **spoke with God**, who **built the house of God**, who had seen **God’s glory fill the Temple**—and yet **his heart still wandered.**

Why? Because his loyalty was divided. He loved God, yes—but he also loved many other things. And that split heart pulled him off course.

Reference: Proverbs 4:23 – *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”*

Solomon didn’t fall in a day. He drifted. One Compromise after another...One decision after another.

Marriage by marriage. Until eventually, the wisest man in the world **bowed down to idols.**

And here’s the truth we don’t want to hear: **If Solomon could fall, so can every leader. So can every king. So can we.**

Proverbs 14:12 – *“There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.”*

There are paths in life that seem wise. They feel like good decisions. They look like growth, and worse yet, they're celebrated by culture.

But if they pull our hearts away from God, they will eventually destroy us.

This is the failure of earthly kings.

They may be wise, gifted, and even blessed by God— But they are still human. Still fragile. Still capable of falling. And when we put all our hope in human leaders, we will eventually be disappointed.

So here's the **question** we need to ask ourselves today: *Who are you trusting right now that seems wise and strong, but may not actually be leading you closer to God?*

Is it a public figure? A mentor? A movement? Or maybe... is it yourself?

Because **even the wisest king can fall.**

But our hope isn't in fallen leaders.

Our hope is in the King who never falls, never fails, never turns away.

2. Earthly Kings Build for Themselves

Solomon didn't just drift away in private. His compromise became concrete. Literally.

Scripture tells us that he **built high places—altars to foreign gods.** Not in secret. Not by accident.

He *used his power, his labor force, his wealth* to build shrines to false gods—right in the land God had set apart for Himself.

“On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites.” (v. 7)

These weren’t harmless gestures. These were bold, visible acts of idolatry.

And here’s what’s so tragic: **He used the blessings of God to build rebellion against God.** He took the wisdom, wealth, and peace God gave him—and built a kingdom not for God’s glory, but for his own comfort.

Psalm 127:1 – *“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain.”*

And that’s exactly what Solomon did.

He built—and built—and built.

Palaces. Cities. Fortresses. Temples.

But without a heart for God, **all his building was in vain.**

That’s what earthly kings do.

- They build impressive things.
- They inspire crowds.
- They promise greatness.

But so often, it’s not about serving people—it’s **about building their own name.**

They may say they’re working for us. But when you look closer, you realize: **they’re just using us to build their own platforms.**

We see it in politics. We see it in influencers and celebrities.

We even see it in people close to us—leaders, bosses, even friends—who want loyalty not for mutual good, but for personal gain. And sometimes—if we’re honest—we see it in ourselves.

James 3:16 – “*For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.*”

Earthly kingdoms are built on self-interest.

God’s kingdom is built on self-giving love.

Solomon’s buildings didn’t last. His empire crumbled. Because what he built wasn’t for God—it was for himself.

So, here's the **question** we need to wrestle with: *What are you building with your life—and who is it really for?*

Are you investing your time, your talent, your influence to build something for the glory of God? Or is it subtly becoming about your own platform, your own comfort, your own name?

Because anything built for self will eventually collapse. But everything built for God’s glory will last into eternity.

3. Only the True King Builds What Lasts

God had been patient with Solomon.

Time and again, He appeared to him.

Time and again, He reminded him to walk faithfully.

But Solomon chose otherwise.

And eventually, the Lord responds.

“The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel... So the

Lord said, ‘Since this is your attitude... I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you.’” (vv. 9–11)

That’s a sobering moment. The very kingdom Solomon had poured his life into—**would not last.**

His accomplishments, his buildings, his legacy—**would be divided and dismantled.** Because anything not built on obedience to God will eventually collapse.

Matthew 7:24–25 – “Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock... The rain came... yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

Jesus tells us the truth plainly: **It’s not how impressive your house looks—it’s what it’s built on that matters.**

Solomon had gold-covered walls but a crumbling heart. He had global admiration but lacked faithfulness at home. His kingdom was built high, but not deep. And when the storms came—it fell.

Hebrews 12:28 – “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.”

There is only one kingdom that will not be shaken. Only one King who builds what truly lasts.

Jesus.

- He doesn’t build kingdoms on ego—He builds on grace.
- He doesn’t use people to expand His power—He empowers people to serve in His kingdom.

- He doesn't take from us—**He gives everything for us.**
- He doesn't rule by pride—**He rules through sacrificial love.**

And here's the beauty: **Jesus invites us to build our lives with Him.** To invest in something that won't rust, rot, or be torn apart. A kingdom that doesn't shake when the world falls apart.

So here's the **question** for you and me: *Are you building your life on the broken promises of human leaders... or on the unshakable promises of Christ?*

Because everything we build apart from Him will eventually fall. But when we build with Him—**we build for eternity.**

Conclusion: What Are You Building On?

So let me ask you: **What are you building your life on?**

Is it the shifting sands of human power, success, and comfort?

Or is it the rock-solid foundation of the True King?

Even the wisest earthly kings will let you down.

Even the strongest leaders will fall.

Even the most impressive kingdoms will crumble.

But Jesus—**the True King—will never fail.**

His kingdom will never fall.

His promises will never break.

His love will never fade.

So let's choose today: **Our King the True King.**

Let's dethrone the false kings in our hearts.

Let's stop building on shaky foundations.

Let's trust the only King who builds a kingdom that lasts forever.

Let's pray together.