

The Failure of Kings - 1 Kings 11:1-13

- Story - Scientists came to God and said “we don’t need you anymore. God responded with “get your own dirt”.

The decline of King Solomon was due to his foreign wives, idolatry, and compromise of morality leading to God's judgment against him.

1. Kings and Divided Loyalties (Verses 1-3)

Verse 1-3 - “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.”

- Solomon loved many foreign women, including Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites. Many different cultures it all opposed to the God of Israel.
- These marriages, meant for political and pleasure pursuits were against God's command, which warned against intermarriage with foreign nations for their values would not be Gods! Re: the conquest of Canaan.
- Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines, with that behavior it made it incredibly difficult to be faithful to God.

2. Kings and Confused Worship (Verses 4-8)

Verses 4-8 - 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.

- As Solomon grew closer and then older, his wives turned his heart toward other gods. Poor morals often corrupts good character!
- Unlike his father David, who was hardly perfect, Solomon regularly strayed from God's will. David was always remorseful when confronted while Solomon was often unapologetic during much of his straying from God's will.
- Solomon built high places for Chemosh (God of the Moabites) and Molech / Moloch (a Canaanite deity associated with child sacrifice), leading Israel into the sin of gross idolatrous conviction - a king of Israel literally leading the people of Israel into the worship of false Gods!
- Why is the sin of idolatry is at the heart of the problem? To place your attention, focus and time in the direction of literally anything other than God - is to declare that thing or that person or even that pursuit - as your God. Never mind how disrespectful that is to our Lord and Creator - but only God satisfies the hungry soul of man!

3. Kings and the lie of Self Importance (Verses 9-10)

Verses 9-10 - 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.

- The Lord became angry with Solomon for turning away from Him. This was not sin of ignorance, this was sin of rebellion.
- God had appeared to Solomon twice and commanded him not to follow other gods. Solomon could not claim that he wasn't told. It should not be a surprise to the people of God (both the Jew and the Christian) that we are not to worship anything else - including ourselves!
- The beginning of the reign of kings was not God's idea! When the people "demanded" an earthly king, it was to blend in, look like and to intimidate everyone else so they would not appear different! See how God's will has been corrupted? God always wanted His people, both OT Saint and Christ follower, to both look and act differently! Now in the age of kings, and when man is leading his own destiny we don't stand out at all. That is tragic.

4. Kings and the Consequence of Disobedience (Verses 11-13)

Verses 11-13 - 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."

- God declared that He would tear the kingdom from Solomon's hand but would leave one tribe for the sake of David and Jerusalem. God would sustain Israel because of a faithful remnant. But God was willing to take that "borrowed authority" from Solomon because it belonged to Him anyway!
- This judgment reflects God's faithfulness to His promises despite Solomon's unfaithfulness. Solomon will eventually lament the emptiness of his actions - His pursuit of pleasure and personal enrichment ends in the description of "meaningless" in the book of Ecclesiastes.
- It was said earlier in our passage that Solomon did things that his father David didn't. It isn't that David was free of sin, but in each case David confesses and returns to God. Instead, Solomon rode the steady decline of a man who professed faith, yet ran his kingdom and his life for himself entirely - completely to his detriment!

Conclusion

- The passage serves as a warning about the dangers of compromising faith - in any way - and specifically the consequences of turning away from God and to any thing or one in replacement.
- It highlights God's justice and mercy, maintaining a remnant for His people when they keep their eyes on God himself. The view of God's mercy is astounding every time we rediscover it for the first time - what amazing blessing clearly underserved! - and yet that heresy of human self guidance forgets the gratefulness that is so easily lost yet essential to Christian flourishing!
- It's not that we have a problem with the "wrong king" it's that any king, or interest, or politician, or entertainment, or desire, or compulsion, or drive other than Jesus Christ was never the plan God has for His people and ultimately is "Meaningless, meaningless..." (Ecclesiastes 1:2). Yes - for all, even the supposed minor, "distraction" of the world is disastrous for the man or woman of God.

PRAYER