

1 Kings 11

Written by K B Napier
Friday, 19 August 2016 14:31

It is a very sad fact that Satan goes out of his way to destroy the pastors of God. Some years ago six faithful pastors were struck down by their sexual lusts *in the same year, and in the same area* of Wales! Six! Of further sadness was the fact that they were well-known in evangelical circles. Thus, their infidelities cast a black cloud over the name of God and His people. The incidents almost ruined many churches. Even so, Christians should not place their pastors on a pedestal! They (we) are men with sinful hearts, though saved by grace.

Solomon began his reign as a shining example of God's chosen man, and did many wondrous things, but, in the end, his love of women overshadowed his best sense and faith, bringing his reign to a dubious end. This must not cause us to say Solomon was therefore cast aside or that his life was worthless. His father committed a foul series of sins in one episode; God punished him for it, and David repented.

Thus, when we see pastors today falling to sin, we should not thereby cast them aside as if their whole lives were worthless. If they repent and change, they will be accepted back by God. They might not be able to return to the pastorate, but they can certainly again begin to teach truth. It all hinges on their repentance (genuine – not just being sorry for being found out). God forgets the sins repented of... so we have no right to continue punishment on this earth. (Obviously, there is more to this kind of situation, but enough has been said for the moment).

Verses 1-3

1.

But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites;

2.

Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.

3.

And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.

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Many modern, faithful Christians who read the first verse of this chapter will probably be very shocked by what it says. As always, we must read the account in context. That is, in the era in which it is found. For example, it was common to seal treaties by a lesser king marrying-off one of his daughters to the greater king. Without doubt, Solomon was the greatest king of his time. In this way Solomon easily built up a long list of extra wives. But, in doing this Solomon became sinful. The wives he married came from tribes and nations forbidden to him and the Israelites by God. And when we cross God there are always consequences. Even today, as I have warned many times, no Christian may marry or even 'court' a man or woman who is not a believer, or who is a member of a cult or some other paganism.

As for having many wives, this was also a sin. Deuteronomy 17:17 warned against a king marrying many wives. This was a known Mosaic law! And, though he was given wealth by God, he went further by accruing horses and wealth for their own sake (v16, 17). Wealth is not just for personal gain, but is meant to be used charitably to help those of the faith who need it. These things gathered strength because no man dared to question the king, and because Solomon became full of his own importance.

The text lists just a few of the nations from which Solomon took wives. They are called "strange" – strangers or foreigners – because they were barred by God from an Israelite king and his people. Only a short while before these nations were battled against by the Hebrews, on God's command. Now, Solomon married into the very same barred nations.

The text clearly tells us that Solomon was deceived by his own love for many women. By loving them at all, he crossed the line drawn before him by God, not to have any liaisons with pagan women, whose paganism would cause him to move away from God's commands. This is exactly the same objection God has for modern believers who move amongst the unsaved, or who marry an unsaved man/woman. Trouble always follows, partly because the Christian's heart is slowly turned from truth, and wholly because God condemns it in the first place.

Some people bleat that they could not help falling in love with this or that person. Not so! At every step we can stop a relationship in its tracks... IF we want to! And if God tells us we may not do this or that from the start, it is well to obey, for when we ignore His warnings there are ALWAYS consequences. (We could say a lot more, but it is not within the present textual interpretation to do so). Note that many, if not all, of his extra wives "turned away his heart", so

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he gave in to their whims on many fronts, thus giving precedence to many false gods.

This was disastrous. 'Young love' (or any love) does not exist in a vacuum! If the relationship should not occur, to continue to encourage it will bring God's anger and His removal of blessings. And, if/when such an illicit relationship breaks apart, it has many waves affecting everyone around the couple. In the case of Solomon and MANY wives, those waves crashed on Israel's spiritual shores as a storm.

Verses 4-8

1.

For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.

2.

For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

3.

And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father.

4.

Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.

5.

And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

David fell into gross error between wars, when he was relaxing. Solomon fell into unholiness

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when he was old and did not maintain the zeal he had in his youth. But, until that time he was holy and acted according to God's demands. Once again, women used their wiles to seduce a man into their way of thinking. Very easy to do when a man is unwary! His wives, daughters (princesses), and concubines all wanted Solomon to come around to their way of thinking... and they succeeded, for each managed to turn his heart away from truth, divine commands, and the warnings of Moses. Solomon began to listen to the voice of idols through his pagan wives. I have asked in the past "*How much sin is too much?*" The answer is "*All of it!*" When we give way to even a tiny portion of untruth we fall to Satan.

The result of his fall meant God did not see him as 'perfect' or whole. He was less than he should have been, or, as we might say today, he was 'damaged goods'! When any Christian starts to slide away from God's truth and behaviour, he allows sin to come in and his whole life slowly turns away from truth. His decisions and judgments are questionable and he loses his discernment. That is what happened to the man who used to be the wisest king in the known world.

When a man allows idolatry and sin by others, he is counted to be guilty of that same sin. Solomon may have let down his guard as an old man, but the net effect was to give Satan freedom to bring Israel to a very bad position. He "*went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians*" (people of Sidon). This was the goddess of war and fertility worshipped by the Phoenicians/Canaanites. She was often worshipped alongside Baal, and was also known as Astarte, Ashera and Ishtar. She is known in Hebrew as the 'abominable idol', *šī qqûs*, and is linked to sadism, debased behavior and idol-temple prostitution, both male and female. This was totally opposite to the high moral tone of Israel via God's commands. There could be *no* compromise, but in one fell swoop, Solomon introduced these beliefs and practices to the Israelites, ignoring God's divine demands.

He also brought in the "*abomination of the Ammonites*", worship of Milcom. An abomination (a word used in the New Testament to describe homosexuality) is something to be detested, filth, idolatry, something impure (including clothing, figurines, etc.). Ammon was the son of Lot born of incest with Lot's sinful daughter. The god, Milcom, was considered to be a great king, though an idol. Israelites, following him, sacrificed their infants to him, as did Phoenicians and the Ammonites. Note that many modern Muslims follow a similar path by killing their own children (such as in 'honour killing', and as a media-grabbing idea whilst blaming the West).

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The same attitude is also found in the West in the desire for limitless abortions. Those who call themselves 'Palestinians' think nothing of using their children as shields or as 'examples' of Israeli war. In general Muslims have no real regard for either women or children... something that seems to have been inherited from the Ammonites. Both Milcom and Ashtoreth represent a low and filthy attitude taking over Israel as a direct result of its king's infidelity to God.

Therefore, verse 6 is very much under-stated! The farther a man moves away from God, the greater are his sins; and if he is a leader of men, he will cause the people to follow his example. In this, Solomon followed after his father when David was at his own low spiritual ebb. Make no mistake, sins are always punished by God, as David discovered.

To add insult to injury, Solomon built an *"high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab"*. To put it bluntly ANY deviation from the high standards and demands of God are ALWAYS an *"abomination"*, filthy in His sight. This is how every Christian must regard homosexuality, its many hues, and Islam. All are filthy, to be discarded and cast down. To make it worse, he built the 'high place' in the sight of Jerusalem. Moab was a son of the eldest daughter of Lot.

Chemosh was a national god of the Moabites and Ammonites. His other names are Mars, Saturn, Baal-peor and Baal-zebul. King Josiah later abolished this worship. Chemosh means 'to subdue'. This is exactly what Satan does when he deceives a man into one of his evils. One outward sign is that the man begins to 'go soft' on sin – especially the type he was involved in.

Solomon's slide to evil was not just confined to one or two errors. He brought them in with great fanfare. Added to the other false gods was Molech, the *"abomination of the children of Ammon"*. Remember ALL and ANY acceptance of ANY falsity is filth to God. The Ammonites, too, were descended from Lot through being inbred. Their particular brand of filth was Molech (also regarded as a 'king'). A well-known feature of worship of Molech was the sacrifice by burning of infants in the valley of Hinnom (mentioned in the New Testament). Molech was depicted by a huge statue of brass, human body with an ox head. The statue was heated with coals at its base, and infants were put into its outstretched arms to be roasted. All this was in order to appease the planet Saturn.

Solomon went even farther by allowing ALL his wives a say in what they wanted him to build for their own gods! The smell of incense burning to a wide variety of false gods permeated the palace that once housed a wise and great king; the smell of godliness was replaced by the foul

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stench of filth. This is how God looks upon modern Christians who “*fall from grace*”. Never think that our sins, even if they are unknown to others, is anything but filth, and an abomination to Almighty God! He will not be mocked and must act against the unrepentant sinner.

Verses 9-13

1.

And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice,

2.

And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.

3.

Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

4.

Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.

5.

Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

To be expected, especially after He had given Solomon everything, God was angry. He had appeared to Solomon twice, and this alone should have caused Solomon to stick close to Jehovah and never to stray. God specifically told Solomon never to go after other gods, yet the king completely ignored the command. God's wrath was now upon the greatest king on earth. God would remove the throne from Solomon – not from him personally, but from his son. This was a sign of God's high regard for David. And in taking the kingdom from Solomon God would

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divide up the tribes: only one tribe would remain in the kingdom when Solomon's son took over, a sign of God's regard for both David and the city of Jerusalem, which was His. (Note that Israel allowed Islam to take over the old site of the Temple; an abomination).

Verses 14-18

1.

And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom.

2.

For it came to pass, when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom;

3.

(For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom:)

4.

That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child.

5.

And they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land.

As part of his punishment, God sent along an enemy, Hadad the Edomite. God "*stirred (him) up*". That is, God deliberately raised up Hadad to oppose Solomon. Worse, Hadad was a son of Solomon born to an Edomite wife. Several Hadad's are mentioned in the Old Testament; this one was of the royal Edom household who escaped to Egypt with his life when David's general, Joab, killed the Edomites. Joab stayed on in Edom for half a year to make sure every Edomite male was slain. When David died Hadad returned to Edom. When he escaped with servants, Hadad was

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only a child, so by now he was getting on in years. When he escaped he first went to Paran where others joined the small band. When they reached Egypt the Pharaoh gave Hadad a house, food and land, because of his royal blood.

Verses 19-22

1.

And Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen.

2.

And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.

3.

And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country.

4.

Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing: howbeit let me go in any wise.

Pharaoh liked Hadad and gave him the sister of his own wife Tahpenes, for a bride. Hadad's Egyptian wife bore him a son, Genubath, who was brought up as part of the royal household. When he heard that both David and Joab were dead, Hadad asked Pharaoh to release him, to go back to Edom. Pharaoh asked him why he felt it necessary to return to Edom when he lacked nothing in Egypt. Hadad said he lacked nothing but still needed to go back home.

Verses 23-25

1.

And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah:

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2.

And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus.

3.

And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad did: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

Solomon's reign grew sour as even more adversaries were raised by God, as a punishment for Solomon's amazingly bizarre unfaithfulness to His Lord. Despite being given everything and more by God, Solomon began a very sinful move away from holiness and truth. When we see faithful pastors and teachers do the same today, we should be saddened rather than angered, for we must not put them on a pedestal: they (we) are nothing but fallen human beings capable of much sin except we stay firmly in God's sight. Satan pays special attention to them (us) and does not rest from trying to trip all faithful men until they fall. The only remedy is to stay close to God and not allow one's eyes and mind to travel away from Him and His word.

Make no mistake – God DOES issue punishment to those who slide into sin, especially they have been given more than others by Him. The aim is twofold – to punish (an alien concept to modern Christians who, instead, insist on trying to change people through rehabilitation; this is admirable, but judicial judgment still applies and comes first!) in order to show the individual and the world that God means what He says, and, to restore the person to faith and obedience after repentance. The only alternative is to be cast out of fellowship and shunned. When God says He will punish, He always does. The ONLY variation is when He says He will NOT punish IF we do this or that.

It is important, then, to recognise that *God* caused an enemy to rise against Solomon. This is why God raised up many enemies against Israel when the nation and its king rebelled and/or went after false gods. It is also why the Jews have been hounded and attacked for the past 2000 years. God will not be mocked or ignored! Note that the word for 'adversary' also applies to Satan (more than twice the number of times)... the Hebrew word 'adversary' in this text spells as 'satan'.

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The adversary was Rezon, son of Eliadah the Syrian, who ran away from king Hadadezer of Zoban, and set up a kind of brigand's hideout in Damascus, declaring himself to be a petty king. Rezon, then, was a prince in name only, leading a smallish number of men who followed him. They were smallish because David had chased Eliadah's men and killed most of them before the remainder took over Damascus, much as gunslingers took over small towns in the Wild West! From their walled hideout, Eliadah's men fought the men of Israel for many years, adding to the attacks by Hadad and gaining in strength over most of Syria. Note how this petty tyrant hated Israel... very little has changed concerning Israel over the past several thousand years, and it should not be a surprise that Satan raised up haters of Israel from nations descended from these enemies, especially the recent violent fake, Islam.

Verses 26-28

1.

And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up his hand against the king.

2.

And this was the cause that he lifted up his hand against the king: Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breaches of the city of David his father.

3.

And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph.

A third adversary, Jeroboam, arose at the same time, bringing dissension to Israel as a whole. Jeroboam was the son of one of Solomon's servants, Nebat (who had since died, leaving his son in the charge of his widow, Zeruah). Why did he rise up against Solomon? The primary reason is that God decided to use him as a punishing adversary; the secondary reason was that Solomon rebuilt the Millo (the house and walls defending the city). Jeroboam was the unnamed 'servant' God said He would give the kingdom to. He was already Receiver-General over the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh and in charge of the tribute of them both. As has been said previously, this use of tribute labour caused some to be angry against the king.

Jeroboam was a good businessman with a meticulous eye for profit and work. He was also

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known to be a great warrior. This all appealed to Solomon, who should have followed his father's way of choosing close friends – their faithfulness to God and not how rich or workish they were. The two tribes he ruled over were descendants of Joseph.

Verses 29-35

1.

And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field:

2.

And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces:

3.

And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:

4.

(But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)

5.

Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.

6.

Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes:

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But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes.

One day Jeroboam travelled out of Jerusalem and was met by the prophet, Ahijah, who lived in Shilo. (There were nine men with the same name). At that time the prophet wore a new garment, caught hold of it, and tore it into twelve pieces. Ahijah gave ten of the pieces to Jeroboam, saying that the ten represented ten tribes he would rule over, the other two staying with Solomon's house, as a remembrance of David's loyalty to the Lord and to keep Jerusalem the holy city. As the city 'chosen out of all the tribes', Jerusalem should today be solely under the rule of Israel. The only reason it is not is because of Israel's infidelity to their Lord God. But, it is still theirs by right... because Jerusalem should represent God, not Allah!

The prophet reiterated the sins of Solomon – that he went after false gods, and forgot the ways of the Lord. Again, the faithfulness of David was repeated as an example to follow. Yes, he sinned greatly, but he then repented and changed. Because of David, God said He would not remove the kingdom from Solomon until he died.... again, for David's sake. Never underestimate the authority a single man can wield, even after his death. When Solomon's 'son' took the throne it would soon be removed and given to Jeroboam (consisting of ten tribes, who would form the 'northern kingdom'). The short-reign son would only rule over "one tribe". But, that only makes 11 tribes in total? The word for "one" is *'echad*, which can literally mean 'one', or, 'one after another' (and so, possibly, two). Also, the tribe of Benjamin was so small that it was usually swallowed up by the larger tribe.

Verses 36-39

1.

And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.

2.

And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel.

3.

And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant

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did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee.

4.

And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever.

So, two tribes would be measured as one, so that God's name would still burn brightly in Jerusalem. Jeroboam would then become king of the other ten tribes. The same promise was made to him – that if he obeyed God precisely and only, then God would give him everything. Exactly the same promise is made to everyone who claims to be a follower of Christ. And again, David is the measure. Even so, the House of David would suffer for a season (the season continues to this day, and will remain volatile until Israel returns to God).

Verses 40-43

1.

Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

2.

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

3.

And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

4.

And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

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The peaceful reign of Solomon now started to show cracks, as God's direct presence began to slowly recede. Solomon designed to kill Jeroboam, who had to flee to Egypt to be protected by Shishak of the 22nd dynasty. He later attacked Jeroboam's kingdom, making it a tributary. Jeroboam stayed in Egypt until Solomon died.

Surprisingly, little is written on Solomon, but, on the other hand (as the text reminds us) many of his writings remain as Proverbs, and much history was written of his forty-year reign (though not now available to us). Solomon finally died and was buried in Jerusalem. Jeroboam returned and took over the kingdom, less the two tribes left to another 'son'.

Jeroboam's reign was approximately 922 to 902, or, according to another source, 931 to 910 BC; about 22 years. In his eighteenth year Jeroboam's son, Abijah, ruled over the tribes of Judah in the south for just three years. He tried to take over his father's kingdom with 400,000 men, while Jeroboam had twice that number, 800,000 men... almost one and a quarter million soldiers in all. Even so, when Jeroboam attempted to kill off the southern soldiers, Abijah's soldiers killed half a million of his father's army, thus ensuring that the northern kingdom never again posed a threat to the southern kingdom while Abijah ruled. More details of this period are found in later chapters.

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