

Sunday Evening Message

April 7, 2024

The Demise of Solomon's Wisdom - The Death of Solomon

Text – 1 Kings 11

Introduction

So far in the Book of 1st Kings, we have seen primarily only the good that came about in Solomon's life because of the wisdom that God gave him. He was in love with the Lord, and he was determined to serve the Lord's people in submission to the will of God.

However, here in chapter eleven, we will see that in Solomon's later years, his love for God diminished and his love for his own lusts and the things of this world began to consume him. Solomon who was once known for his great wisdom started becoming very foolish, making many unwise decisions.

Preaching Point – As you get older in the Lord, do not change the good decisions that you made when you first got saved.

I. The Enemy from Within (vs. 1 – 13)

The Christian has three enemies – the flesh, the world, and the Devil. Solomon was conquered by the lusts of his flesh. The problem that would prove to be the undoing of Solomon was his lust for women – many women.

A. Solomon desired many women – God's plan was for one (vs. 1a & 3)

*"18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. 19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. 21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.**" (Genesis 2:18-24)*

God gave clear instructions in the Law regarding what the kings of Israel were to do and what they were not to do.

"14 When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the

nations that are about me; 15 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. 16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. 17 **Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.** 18 And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: 19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: 20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel." (Deuteronomy 17:14-20)

B. Solomon desired the wrong kinds of women (vs. 1b – 2).

Israelites were only supposed to marry women who were Israelites.

"1 When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; 2 And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: 3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. 4 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. 5 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. 6 For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." (Deuteronomy 7:1-6)

"14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And

will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

C. Solomon's desire for women superseded his desire for God – an unwise decision (vs. 4 – 8).

The lusts of your flesh will cause you to make many unwise decisions.

Do you know when you made good decisions? When you first got saved, when you first fell in love with the Lord.

- You decided to trust Christ and allow Him to rule your life – a very wise decision.
- You decided to go public with that decision by getting baptized – also very wise.
- You decided to join and serve within the local church – very wise.
- You determined to live a separated life; that there were a lot of things in this world that went against your faith, and you decided that you were going to stay away from them.
- You were also committed to telling others about the decision that you made regarding Christ and salvation.
- You determined that you were going to give back to the Lord your tithes and offerings as a demonstration of your love for Him.
- You were committed to raising your family in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

These were all very wise decisions, and as a result God was visibly blessing your life.

What happened? Why are you now making unwise decisions that are undoing the wise decisions that you made? Could it be that the world, the flesh, and the devil lured your heart away from your first love, which was your love for God. Like Solomon, you became more enamored with the things that God gave you than you were with the God who gave them.

II. The Enemies from Without (vs. 14 – 40)

Once you begin to lose the battle from within, God will allow some of the enemies from without to creep into your life.

A. Hadad (vs. 14 – 22)

See 2 Samuel 8:13 – 14; 1 Chronicles 18:12 – 13 regarding David's subjugation of the Edomites.

B. Rezon (vs. 23 – 25)

See 2 Samuel 8:3 – 8 for David's rule over Syria.

C. Jereboam (vs. 26 – 40)

Hadad and Rezon were enemies from without, but God raised up Jereboam to be an enemy from within Israel. He started out being a loyal servant to Solomon. Before it's all over, Jereboam will reign over all of the northern tribes.

III. The Final Enemy – Death (vs. 41 – 43)

"26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Corinthians 15:26)

Most of what Solomon was concerned with in life mattered little to him in death. Most of the things that we consume ourselves with in this life will be important to us when we die. What will be important to you when you are in Heaven? Devote as much of your time and energy on those things today.

The BKC states this regarding Solomon's tragic end of life:

Solomon's life ended in tragedy. Solomon was greatly blessed by God, but he allowed God's gifts to dominate his affections. The fault lay not with God for giving Solomon so much, but with Solomon who, though he had the wisdom to deal with such temptations, chose to set his affections on the gifts and not on the Giver. The man best qualified to live life successfully chose not to do so. Success in life in the eyes of God does not come automatically with the possession of wisdom but with the application of wisdom to one's life. Spiritual success depends not only on insight but also on choices.¹

After pointing out the many positive aspects of Solomon's reign, especially in the early years, the New American Commentary says this:

Sadly, no character sketch of Solomon is complete without an analysis of his flaws. He is capable of expressing his ambition to be a great king through the acquiring of vast wealth and numerous wives. Eventually these twin desires for prestige and sensuality lead to his nation's downfall. Solomon is not beyond using oppressive measures to get what he wants, as the institution of forced labor indicates, nor is he beyond cheating a friend, as his giving of worthless towns to Hiram proves. Worst of all, Solomon condones and even practices idolatry. Thus, he is capable of irrational thinking, ingratitude, and covenant infidelity. At his worst, then, this wise leader of Israel acts no better than the most foolish of his subjects. He thereby serves as a warning to those who take their God-given gifts for granted or, worse, come to believe they have achieved greatness on their own²

¹ Thomas L. Constable, "1 Kings," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 510.

² Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, vol. 8, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 174.