

## 1 KINGS 11:1-13

### A. Introduction

1. In our elders' meetings, we're tracing the story of King Solomon, from his coronation to his burial, as recorded in 1 Kings 1-11.

As well as seeing how he points us to the 'one greater than Solomon', we're going to focus in on what we can learn as elders from his life and particularly his downfall, as we seek to lead those whom God has made us overseers over.

2. Finally we come to Solomon's downfall.

God appears to Solomon a third time, but this time it wasn't to bless him but to announce His anger towards him.

"The LORD became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the LORD's command." (1 Kings 11:9-10)

He has good reason to be.

Solomon, the wisest of all men, had foolishly broken the first commandment and the greatest commandment.

"On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods." (1 Kings 11:7-8)

God in His anger tells Solomon that his kingdom will be torn away from him and given to one of his servants.

"So the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates." (1 Kings 11:11)

But this would only happen after he dies. And even then it won't be the whole kingdom that would be torn away from him. God will keep the promise He made to David in 2 Samuel 7.

"Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will not do it during your lifetime. I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen." (1 Kings 11:12-13)

3. The results of Solomon's downfall are devastating.

But let's go back to the start of the chapter to find out how his downfall happened.

What went wrong?

### B. He stopped obeying God

1. Solomon chose to disobey God's clear word to Him in Scripture.

"Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the Lord's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you." (Deuteronomy 7:3-4)

"[The king] must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray." (Deuteronomy 17:17)

Solomon was not to a) take a foreign wife and b) take many wives.

He did both!

"King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter – Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from the nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love." (1 Kings 11:1-2)

"He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray." (1 Kings 11:3)

## 2. We should not be shocked by Solomon's actions.

The seeds of compromise have already been seen earlier chapters.

Solomon made an alliance with Egypt (1 Kings 3:1).

He married Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings 3:1).

He did not get rid of the high places (1 Kings 3:3)

He spent more time building his house than God's house and his house was more extravagant (1 Kings 7:1-12).

He starts to act like Pharaoh (1 Kings 9:17-21).

He acquired too much gold and too many horses (1 Kings 10:14-29).

This was not a brief lapse into sin but a gradual drift that ended in disaster.

### **C. He stopped trusting God**

#### 1. Why did Solomon marry so many women?

It was for political reasons.

These marriages were designed to secure peace with nations Israel would usually be at war with.

"King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter – Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites." (1 Kings 11:1)

These 700 weddings point to a lack of trust in God for security.

#### 2. These foreign wives turned his heart to trust in foreign gods.

"As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done." (1 Kings 11:4-6)

The stupidity of Solomon's actions is seen when you remember that these gods were gods that had already been shown as being useless by the conquering of these nations by Israel.

### **D. He stopped loving God**

#### 1. At the root of Solomon's disobedience and distrust was that he had lost his first love.

Earlier in 1 Kings we're told that Solomon loved the Lord.

Now we are told:

"King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women." (1 Kings 11:1)

“Solomon held fast to them in love.” (1 Kings 11:2)

2. Solomon had allowed his love for the Lord to cool and this led to his heart no longer being fully devoted to the LORD and not following the LORD completely as David his father had done.

### **E. Application**

1. Perseverance in love, trust and obedience is a necessary thing.

“As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.” (1 Kings 11:4)

In those words, ‘As Solomon grew old’ we have a warning.

Perseverance is just as necessary in the later years of our lives as it is in earlier years.

2. Perseverance in love, trust and obedience is a daily thing.

Daily fighting – if we are to keep obeying we need to be daily putting to death sin with help of the Spirit (Puritans said small sins are like baby snakes, which if you let live will grow into huge serpents).

Daily depending – if we are to keep trusting we need to be asking God each day in prayer to provide the grace, faith, wisdom, strength, gifting we need to keep following the Lord Jesus and serving Him as elders.

Daily remembering – if we are to keep loving we need to be reminding ourselves what Christ has done to us and how underserved our salvation and the privilege of serving Christ as elders is.