

1 KINGS 11:14-43

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. Solomon's downfall came when he stopped loving God, trusting God, and obeying God.

God's response to his lack of love, trust and obedience was tear Solomon's kingdom away from him and give it to one of his servants.

This would happen after he dies.

However, this doesn't mean that Solomon does not experience any consequences for his sin.

In 1 Kings 11:14-43, God raises up three enemies to oppose Solomon.

These three enemies would foreshadow three enemies that would later oppose God's people (Aram, Assyria and Babylon), and three enemies that would oppose Jesus (Herod, Romans, Jewish authorities).

B. The enemies Solomon faced

1. The first enemy Solomon faced was Hadad.

"Then the LORD raised up against Solomon an adversary, Hadad the Edomite, from the royal line of Edom. Earlier when David was fighting with Edom, Joab the commander of the army, who had gone up to bury the dead, had struck down all the men in Edom. Joab and all the Israelites stayed there for six months, until they had destroyed all the men in Edom. But Hadad, still only a boy, fled to Egypt with some Edomite officials who had served his father. They set out from Midian and went to Paran. Then taking men from Paran with them, they went to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food. Pharaoh was so pleased with Hadad that he gave him a sister of his own wife, Queen Tahpenes, in marriage. The sister of Tahpenes bore him a son named Genubath, whom Tahpenes brought up in the royal palace. There Genubath lived with Pharaoh's own children. While he was in Egypt, Hadad heard that David rested with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was also dead. Then Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me go, so that I may return to my own country." "What have you lacked here that you want to go back to your own country?" Pharaoh asked. "Nothing," Hadad replied, "but do let me go!" (1 Kings 11:14-22)

Who was Hadad?

He was an Edomite who had survived from a time under David when Israel was at war with Edom.

Having found refuge in Egypt, he returned to Edom after hearing that David had died to cause trouble for Solomon and the people of Israel.

He provided an ongoing threat to Solomon from the south.

2. The second enemy Solomon faced was Rezon.

"And God raised up against Solomon another adversary, Rezen son of Eliada, who had fled from his master, Hadadezer king of Zobah. He gathered men around him and became the leader of a band of rebels when David destroyed the forces of Zorah; the rebels went to Damascus, where they settled and took control. Rezon was Israel's adversary as long as Solomon lived, adding to the trouble caused by Hadad. So Rezon ruled in Aram and was hostile towards Israel." (1 Kings 11:23-25)

Who was Rezon?

He was a Gentile who hated Israel.

He provided an ongoing threat to Solomon from the north.

3. The third enemy Solomon faced was Jeroboam.

"Also, Jeroboam son of Nebat rebelled against the king. He was one of Solomon's officials, an Ephraimite from Zeredah, and his mother was widow named Zeruah. Here is the account of how he rebelled against the king: Solomon had built the supporting terraces and had filled in the gap in the wall of the city of David his father. Now Jeroboam was a man of standing, and when Solomon saw how well the young man did his work, he put him in charge of the whole labour force of the house of Joseph. About that time, Jeroboam was going out of Jerusalem, and Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh met him on the way, wearing a new cloak. The two of them were alone out in the country, and Ahijah took hold of the new cloak he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. Then he said to Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces for yourself, for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: "See, I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you ten tribes. But for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, he will have one tribe. I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Molech the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in my ways, nor done what is right in my eyes, nor kept my statutes and laws as David, Solomon's father, did. But I will take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand; I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant, whom I chose and who observed my commands and statutes. I will take the kingdom from his son's hands and give you ten tribes. I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name. However, as for you, I will take you, and you will rule over all that your heart desires; you will be king over Israel. If you do whatever I command you and walk in my ways and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and commands, as David my servant did, I will be with you. I will build you a dynasty as enduring as the one I built for David and will give Israel to you. I will humble David's descendants because of this, but not for ever." Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam fled to Egypt, to Shishak the king, and stayed there until Solomon's death." (1 Kings 11:26-40)

Who was Jeroboam?

Jeroboam was a servant of Solomon that rose to prominence.

He was the servant that 10 of the tribes of Solomon's kingdom would be given to, and Jeroboam discovers this after an encounter with Ahijah the prophet.

God promised Jeroboam that he would bless him if he walked as David did – which included patiently waiting for God to give him the kingdom He had promised him as David had done when Saul was king.

Jeroboam was unwilling to do this. He rebelled against Solomon unsuccessfully and was forced to flee to Egypt until Solomon died.

Jeroboam was a different kind of enemy to Hadad and Rezon, because Jeroboam was from within Israel.

4. So Solomon faced three enemies: Hadad, Rezon, and Jeroboam.

Two of these enemies came from outside God's people.

One of them came from inside God's people.

"As for the other events of Solomon's reign – all he did and the wisdom he displayed – are they not written in the book of the annals of Solomon? Solomon reign in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years. Then he rested with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king." (1 Kings 11:41-43)

Solomon reigned for 40 years and after his death Rehoboam became king.

We know that Rehoboam will have a kingdom smaller than the one Solomon reigned over.

C. The enemies Jesus faced

1. Like Solomon, Jesus would face three enemies.

Two enemies came from outside of God's people and one came from inside.

Hadad was an Edomite like King Herod.

Rezon was a Gentile like the Romans.

And Jeroboam was from God's people like the Jewish authorities (the Scribes, Pharisees and teachers of the law).

2. Unlike Solomon though, Jesus faced these enemies not because of His own sin, but in order to take away the sins of His people.

Herod, the Romans and the Jewish authorities each had a part to play in putting Jesus to death.

D. The enemies we face

1. Like Solomon and like Jesus, the church faces enemies from inside and outside of God's people.

The enemies from outside God's people bring persecution and suffering on the church.

The enemies from inside God's people cause confusion and division into the church.

2. Sometimes we face these enemies because of our disobedience like Solomon did.

It is God's discipling hand to bring us back to love, trust, and obedience to God.

3. Sometimes we face these enemies because of our righteousness like Jesus did.

It is God's testing hand for us to show our love, trust, and obedience to God.

4. Application.

The need for faithfulness in how we live and what we do, otherwise the consequences of our disobedience maybe unpleasant like they were for Solomon.

The need for faithfulness like the 'one greater than Solomon' in how we live and what we do, when the consequences of our faithfulness are unpleasant.