

THE UNITED KINGDOM

Saul, David & Solomon

Lesson 10
December 18

Solomon
Loses His Way
1 Kings 10-11

The reign of King Solomon was an incredible time in Israel. Judah and Israel “were as many as the sand by the sea. They ate and drank and were happy” (1 Kings 4:20). Solomon ruled from the Euphrates to the border of Egypt (4:21). God had given him wisdom and understanding beyond measure (4:29-34). When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, “there was no more breath in her” (10:1-13). Solomon sat on a great ivory throne overlaid with the finest gold (10:18-20), excelling all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom (10:23). It was a “golden age” in Israel, a time when silver was as common in Jerusalem as stone (10:27). But 500 years before Solomon’s reign, the LORD had warned Israel through Moses...

“...you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.” (Deut 17:15-17)

...and Solomon fell into the trap that the LORD had warned about five centuries before.

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 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. He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. 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. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 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. 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. And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

(1 Kings 11:1-8)

And unsurprisingly, the very next verse tells us that the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD. In fact, what the LORD foretells in 1 Kings 11:9-13 is the end of the united kingdom of Israel. How did Solomon lose his way? Let’s talk about it...

For Class & Family Discussion:

- **1 Kings 4:32** tells us that Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs. We have an entire book of the Bible called *Proverbs* and the very first verse identifies the majority of them as “The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel.” So what can we learn from them? How can they help us understand a little more of how and why Solomon lost his way? Let’s think about and discuss some of them together...
 - How would you describe **Proverbs 1:1-6** in your own words? What are these “proverbs” and what is their purpose?
 - How could **Proverbs 1:7** have kept Solomon from a whole lot of trouble?
 - And what about **Proverbs 1:8-10**? How does that directly relate to the sad things we heard from **1 Kings 11**?
 - In **Proverbs 1:20-33**, Solomon talks about “wisdom.” What is “wisdom”? How does that section of Proverbs relate to the sad things we heard from **1 Kings 11**?
 - And what about **Proverbs 3:5-8**? How did Solomon ignore his own wise advice?
 - We heard Solomon’s “heart” referenced a few times in **1 Kings 11**. When God talks about our “hearts,” what is he talking about? What really, really good advice did Solomon give about your heart in **Proverbs 4:20-23**?
- So here’s the question: how can someone who gave such good and wise counsel get so off track? What should we learn from this sad situation?
- We heard a lot in this lesson about Solomon’s “glory.” How did Jesus talk about Solomon’s glory in **Matthew 6:25-34** and make a connection to us?