

1 Kings Chapter 11 Commentary

1Ki 11:1 ¶ 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. 4 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. 5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6 And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. 7 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. 8 And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods. 9 ¶ And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, 10 And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded."

4 "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." When I read this, my mind went directly to the scripture in *Pr 22:6 ¶ "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."* Although King David gave Solomon a lot of good instructions when Solomon was put on the throne. It seems apparent that David as a parent did not teach his children about the Lord and the laws of God. It seems that Solomon had not been taught, in his younger years, the laws of God. Even though God had spoken to Solomon twice and warned him to keep a true heart toward God. Apparently, David, his father, did not bring Solomon up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This was apparent in the lives of David's other children also.

We have mentioned several times already that Solomon was messing up right from the start, by making a league with Pharaoh of Egypt and taking Pharaoh's daughter to wife, which God strictly forbade both. Now, we are told that Solomon took many strange wives who were idolators, and we see that it happened to him just as God had predicted in *De 17:14-20; 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."* King Solomon has done everything that he was not to do, and as God predicted, Solomon's many wives turned his heart away from God to idolatry.

We would think that God would have struck him dead for these great sins, but we remember a promise that God made to King David, Solomon's father, in *2Sa 7:15; 12 "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee."* This scene alone proves to us that God is longsuffering and faithful to fulfill

every promise He makes, even when the actions of Solomon are bringing shame, and disgrace, to the name of God.

We point out that the anger of God was not stirred up until King Solomon's heart turned from God and he began to worship other gods. Do you remember the first of the Ten Commandments that God gave to Israel? **Ex 20:3** *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*" If we are blest to keep this one commandment, everything else will be in the right place, and sin will not have dominion over us.

We point out that in scripture, most kingdoms fell that were consumed with sexual revolutions, where men took as many wives as they wanted. What does scripture tell us of this? Let's look at the time just before the flood: **Ge 6:1 ¶** *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, 2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.*" We see that sexual sin is the first thing that is listed, which led to the destruction of the earth through the flood. Only by God's grace were Noah and his family saved.

Now let's look at what Jesus told his disciples when they enquired of the time of the end. **Mt 24:37-39; 37** *"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."*

And finally, let's look at the predicted end of the world, when the Pharisees demanded to know when the end would come: Jesus replied to them in **Lu 17:26-27; 26** *"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. 27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all."*

We notice that Jesus acknowledges that sexual sins are one of the first things mentioned in each text. This gives to God's people the warning that they are to live sexually pure lives as directed by Jesus in **Mt 19:5** *"And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?"* Did you notice "*shall cleave to his wife*," wife being in the singular form. The bible precedent is one man married to one woman. We add that this is one man married to one woman, at one time, not having multiple wives, since God has made provisions for cases where adultery is involved.

Solomon's turn to idolatry is what will rend ten tribes of Israel from the reign of his son. Solomon's turn to idolatry will end the zenith of the glory of God upon Israel and its kings. Wherefore, when someone tells you, or you convince yourself, that your sin does not effect anyone else, you remember this scripture and God's judicial judgment, not only upon King Solomon, but also upon the nation Israel. This is why God gives us the proper way to deal with sin in Matthew chapter 18.

One final point on these verses. Did you notice that when Solomon was old these wives turned his heart away to idolatry? The principle we do not want to miss is Solomon did not take all these strange wives at one time, but he gathered them over many years. This is one of Satan's best tools to turn God's people away from God. You commit one sin and there is no immediate retribution; then, it is easy for Satan to say to the flesh nature, see I told you nothing would happen, which makes it easier to commit more sin. Also, a reminder that the sin does not have to be sexual sin, but any sin that is a sin against God. If a child of God continues to commit sin and doesn't become grieved, in their heart, and humbly plead to God for forgiveness, they have been ensnared in Satan's trap and are being led further and further away from God, as was Solomon.

This is why we are told by scripture to purge our hearts and minds daily, seen in **2Ti 2:21; 19 ¶** *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. 22 ¶ Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. 24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."*

It is also why God has commanded us in **Mt 18:15-17; 15 ¶ "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."** And in **Ga 6:1-2; 1 ¶ "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."** Of course, if we all obey the first commandment of God we will not fall into Satan's snares, but our flesh is weak, this is why God gave us instruction to bear one another's burdens.

We can follow this up looking at the principle set in Solomon's life, that this is at least one reason Jesus gave the New Commandment in **Joh 13:34 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."** How does Jesus love us? He loves us so greatly that he gave his life for our sins. He did not castigate his disciples when they sinned, but rather he addressed them in love, which is what we should do.

This is one of the reasons that we do as we are directed in **Heb 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**" Why? Because in close, and constant, fellowship, we are less apt to fall into Satan's traps.

11 "Wherfore 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. 12 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. 13 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."

God reminds Solomon why he is going to rend the kingdom from him, in his son's time, and not now, which is because of God's promise to king David, seen in **2Sa 7:15; 12 "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee."**

Matthew Henry states in his commentary, Solomon's wisdom waned as he turned to idolatry, just as Samson's strength waned when he departed from the Lord. With this thought we can agree if we consider two things: Solomon's wisdom and understanding had to have waned already, or he would not have turned to idolatry. The sexual perversion of Solomon was the root cause of his turning to idolatry. We know this because we are told his wives turned his heart away. Secondly, if we look at God's promise to Solomon in **1Ki 3:12 "Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee."** This promise does not say that Solomon will be wise all his life.

14 ¶ "And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom. 15 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; 16 (For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom:) 17 That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child. 18 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. 19 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. 20 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. 21 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. 22 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."

God sets in motion the things needed to fulfill what he has told Solomon. It is ironic that God sends from Egypt, one to be an adversary to King Solomon and his sons, since dealing with the Egyptians was his first error. The harassment of Hadad began in Solomon's lifetime. Hadad did not wait until Solomon died. He started as soon as he heard that King David had died. However, we are not told what havoc Hadad wrought.

23 "And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah: 24 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. 25 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."

The next adversary was Rezon who reigns over Syria. Rezon is an enemy to Israel all the days that Solomon reigned over all Israel, just as Hadad was. We are not told what adversarial things Rezon did either.

26 ¶ "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. 27 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. 28 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. 29 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: 30 And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: 31 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: 32 (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:) 33 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. 34 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: 35 But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. 36 And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. 37 And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. 38 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 did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. 39 And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever. 40 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."

Next, God appoints a king to be over ten of the tribes of Israel, by the prophet Ahijah. God tells Jeroboam that if he hearkens to God's commandments, God will establish him king over the ten tribes of Israel with the same surety that he gave to King David.

King Solomon hears of this prophecy, because he tries to kill Jeroboam, who flees to Egypt. So again, we will see trouble against the house of King Solomon come from Egypt. Therefore, we see, two enemies come out of Egypt. One reason is that King Solomon making a league with Pharaoh of Egypt and married Pharaoh's daughter. Another was that King Solomon gathered horses and chariots out of Egypt, against the commandment of God. Another is that King Solomon caused Israel to begin trade with Egypt, which God has commanded them not to do. Another is the many wives and concubines Solomon took.

Now, if there are going to be ten tribes of Israel ruled by Jeroboam, which two tribes will be under Rehoboam? The answer is found in **1Ki 12:23; 21 "And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which**

were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. 22 But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, 23 Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying, 24 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD."

But isn't there a conflict in scripture because God told King Solomon that there would only be one tribe left to his son. How then did he end up with two? Let's examine what God said in **1 Ki:13 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.**" King David's lineage was of the tribe of Judah, but Jerusalem was in the land of the tribe of Benjamin. Since God was going to preserve the city of Jerusalem where his name was established, thus we see why Rehoboam reigned over Judah and Benjamin, and Jeroboam reigned over the ten tribes that God gave unto him, and there is no conflict in scripture.

I think it worthy to note that God sent three enemies, three satans, to harass King Solomon, which is in accordance with God's word in **2Sa 7:14; 12 "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee."** God told King David that if his son failed to follow God, God would punish him by the hands of men, men being in plural form. We see that God is keeping his word.

Think about the difference between King David and King Solomon. As soon as King David was confronted with his sin, which God had already forgiven, he humbled himself before God and pray with repentance to God. God himself confronts King Solomon when he turned to idolatry, but we do not find any hint in scripture that Solomon repented or sought God for forgiveness.

Now, take these two principles and apply them to your own life as a child of God. God had given us all a conscience, which will immediately remind us when we sin against God. As with King David, our sins are already forgiven, however, we must immediately repent and pray to God for forgiveness. Sometimes, as with King David, the informant of our sin may not be our conscience, it may be a brother in Christ, who is following the scripturally prescribed way of dealing with known sin, as prescribed by God to bring one back into the church fellowship.

However, there are some who turn from God, and the church, who will not repent. We are given scriptural directions to put these out of the church fellowship. Just as with King Solomon, there may never be any sign that they have repented, but if they are a child of God, God may take their life to stop the blight of sin upon the name of the Lord.

A secondary consideration is that in both cases, King David, and King Solomon, because of their sins against God, Got sent trouble into their lives. Wherefore, if we want to live a life that is as free of tribulations as possible, we must follow the example of our Saviour and be completely obedient and sinless before God.

41 ¶ "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? 42 And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. 43 And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam, his son reigned in his stead."

Solomon reigns forty years and dies, which is the same amount of time that his father reigned. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, is king after Solomon. Remember, God has already set in motion to remove from the reign of Rehoboam ten tribes of Israel, which are given to Jeroboam.

What lessons can we apply to our lives from this chapter? If we are a child of God, it is necessary to observe all that God has commanded us. Why? We are told in **Re 5:9-10; 9 "And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou was slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, 10 and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon earth."** If we are kings and priests to God, we can apply the same

principles laid down for the life of kings chosen by God, and the God appointed priests to serve according to the commandment of God, to do all things as I have commanded you for the New Testament Church.

We can also claim the promise of God the Father to King Jesus, God the Son, who served God with complete and total devotion. Because King Jesus did not fail in his obedience to God the Father, we have the sure promise that the mercy of God will not be withdrawn from us, even when we fail to follow God.

How do we know this for sure? We know that King David sinned, and God did bring judicial judgment upon him, however, even before King David owned his sin and repented, his sin was already forgiven. **2Sa 12:13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.**" Hath is past tense, so we know the sin was already forgiven.

There is a difference between King David and King Solomon. King David, when confronted with his sins, repented of his sins and did not continue to commit them. King Solomon turned to idolatry, and when confronted with his sins, he continued therein. When King Solomon turned from God, there was no repentance and turning back to God. We have already given in the commentary above, after verse forty, how this would apply to our lives.

Because the finished work of Jesus Christ, in the eternal remission of sins for all of God's people, every child of God, who turns from God to a life of sin, already has their sins forgiven. However, there will be a consequence for those sins as we see in the life of both David and Solomon. We would hope that when we are confronted with our sins we would immediately repent and turn back to God. If we continue in sin, God will bring the consequence of our sin upon us, in time, and may prematurely take our life, to remove the blight that we are casting upon the name of the Lord. Therefore, we give praise to King Jesus for the eternal remission of sins, repentant hearts, and eternal life in Christ in the place He has gone to prepare for us. Jesus also tells us **Mt 16:18 "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.**" Thank you, King Jesus, for our eternal security. Hallelujah! Amen!