

# 1 Kings Ch 11

(On your way to 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 11 stop off at Duet Ch 17)

God's perfect will for the nation of Israel was that they be a theocracy, that is, a nation governed by God. That's what Israel means, "Governed by God." He didn't want them to set a king over them as the other nations of the world had done, He was to be their King, the One who would guide them, provide for them and protect them. So by the very fact that we have the books of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles, that testifies to us that Israel didn't remain obedient to God's desire for them and rather than function in God's *perfect* will, they were functioning in His *permissive* will for them as a nation. Which of course is something that we can do as well, God has His perfect will for your life, but so often we function in His permissive will because we won't fall in line with His perfect desires for us. And consequently just as it did in the nation of Israel it always makes for trouble, believe me when I tell you that the best thing any of us can do is to be obedient to God's Word, and follow after His will for us as revealed in His Word. Israel chose not to do this, they said they wanted a king like the other nations, and God knew that this would happen, so He set up some guide lines and parameters with in the law by which the King was to function. (Now of course at this point in our study we're 3 kings into Israel's history, 1<sup>st</sup> was Saul, then was David, and now we've been following the life of Solomon). And God had told them here in Duet 17.

Vs14-20

We left off last time observing the radical expanse of Solomon's kingdom. And so far it seemed as though things were going well, but as I'm sure you noticed as we read through that portion of scripture we read where the king wasn't to multiply horses to himself, nor was he to multiply silver and gold, and finally he wasn't to multiply wives lest his heart be turned away from the Lord. Even though God honored the people's desire to have a physical king set over them, yet still they were to look to Him to provide for them, to protect them, and be a shield about them. And I'm sure that you recall from ch 10 that Solomon had multiplied so much wealth unto himself that silver was as common as stones in Israel, and he had literally 10's of millions of dollars worth of gold décor just in his vacation homes. In vs 28 we read where he had horses imported from Egypt, and in ch 4 we read that 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots. Yet in His grace God continued to bless Solomon, and we've said before that just because God is moving, that doesn't mean that God is approving. And so many times people take God's grace, and assume that because judgment hasn't fallen that God must somehow be Ok with compromise in *their* lives. And that God is able to wink at their sin and continue to approve of their lives, when in reality God is giving us a gracious span of time whereby we might repent and just get right with Him. And so though things seemed to be going well, and in many respects ch's 9-10 find the kingdom of Israel at it's pinnacle, ch 11 starts with that 3 lettered word of such sharp contrast, "But."

Vs1-2

That's one of those sad statements that we encounter throughout the scriptures, "Solomon clung to these in love" as opposed to the Lord his God. He was supposed to be clinging *to* the Lord, loving *on* the Lord, but instead he clung *to* and loved *on* the women of foreign nations. (And we'll touch on that in a sec) but 1<sup>st</sup> I want to consider the 1<sup>st</sup> word of the 1<sup>st</sup> vs, "but," because there's just so much that pivots on that single key word. And often times it's for the good, we read in Titus ch 3 "*For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,*" Titus 3:3-5

So that things seemed so bleak, so black, so desperate and hopeless, "But" and the whole thing changes, and a ray of hope pierces the blackness and shines forth the hope of salvation. In Eph 2 we read, "*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*" Eph 2:1-6 And So we see how this one little word is so incredibly significant, and it can drastically change the flow of the scenario, and such is the case here, only unfortunately instead of to the positive, it's to the negative.

Things were going well, the kingdom was being blessed, people were witnessing the glory of God there in Israel, "but" king Solomon loved many foreign women. Perhaps your bible says, "strange" women, realize that what's *not* being said here is that it's against biblical protocol to marry someone of a different ethnicity. The point here is that the women Solomon loved were women who were not following after the God of Israel, they were of completely different spiritual demeanors, they were deceived, following after pagan ideals rather than the truth of God's Word. To put it simply they were ungodly women, and God had said, you're not to do this, vs 2 (read from quotes).

And we talked about this last time, God doesn't warn us if there's no reason to be warned. So you can rest assured that if God takes the time to warn you about something, it's because something is coming down the tracks that we need to be warned about. And God's warning regarding non-believers is, "Don't get involved with them relationally, and whatever you do don't marry the non believer lest they turn your heart away from the Lord your God after their own ways." "Oh, that'll never happen to me" believe me it'll happen to you, I've seen it over and over again. Solomon clung to these non-believing women rather than the Lord, and ultimately it destroyed his life. The bible says, "*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*" Rom 12:9

To that which is godly, Solomon opted to cling to these ungodly women, towards the end of Joshua's life he warned the nation as well saying, *"take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God. Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations -- these that remain among you -- and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you."* Josh 23:11-13 Over and over again the warning goes out in the word of God that we be careful regarding the relationships that we enter into. Because God know the tendencies of the human heart, and we gravitate towards the flesh, yet the bible calls us to crucify the flesh, not make provision for it. And give opportunity for the flesh to feed and gain momentum lest it destroy our lives, Solomon ignored these warnings, and he's going to find that even he is no exception to the rule of the Word of God.

Vs3-8

We read this and we think, how could the wisest man to ever live make such foolish mistakes? Because we're under the miss-guided assumption that only fool's make foolish mistakes. There's a true story about a man a # of years ago who was going to rob a Bank of America somewhere in San Francisco and he grabbed a deposit slip and wrote these words on it, "This iz a stikkup. Put all your munny in this bag." But while he was waiting in line waiting to hand the note to the teller he got nervous thinking that someone may've seen him write that, and that they might call the police before he was able to do his deal, so he left and went to a Wells Fargo across the street. And when he handed the note to the Wells Fargo teller, noticing all the spelling errors she suspected that this guy wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed. So She told him that she could not accept his stick up note because it was written on a Bank of America deposit slip and that he would either have to fill out a Wells Fargo deposit slip or go back to Bank of America.

Looking somewhat defeated, the man said "OK" and left the Wells Fargo. The Wells Fargo teller then called the police who arrested the man a few minutes later, as he was waiting in line back at the Bank of America.

And so often we think that it's only stupid people who do stupid things, but here's the wisest man who ever walked the face of the earth (outside of Christ Himself) doing something so foolish. But this just testifies to the fact that just because we have a degree of wisdom, that's no guarantee that we'll employ it in a given situation. Wisdom that goes unapplied is of no value, and how many times we've all known what was right and chosen instead to do wrong.

And that's the boat that Solomon finds himself in, 700 wives, 300 concubines. Now depending on your perspective that sounds like heaven to some guys, and quite the opposite to others if you know what I mean. And I have no doubt that a large portion of these women were politically acquired, in that day if you made a peace treaty with a foreign nation, often times that deal would be sealed by you taking one of the daughters of that king to be your wife.

But no doubt a significant portion was the result of the lust of his flesh, perhaps he would get fed up with a certain woman, and think he'd be happier if he just had a different woman in his life. And all kinds of people fall into this snare, trying to find satisfaction and fulfillment in the relationships of this world. It can't be done, but consequently people are on marriage #3, or 4, or 5, or even more, because they think that true fulfillment is found in someone else, *anyone* else than the person there with. It's like grasping for wind, and Solomon learned that lesson the hard way, and in the end that's the wisdom he dispensed in the matter. He said, "*He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.*" Prov 18:22 Time and again there in the proverbs and then again in Eccl 9:9 you find reference by Solomon to the singular *wife* rather than multiple wives, and the reward and contentment that's to be found there. And that's the way we were created, God brought one woman to Adam, and that's His divine design, one man, one woman, and in every case that you find where people have gone outside of that design in the scriptures you find problems. And in Solomon's case his problems are huge, his wives (we read) turned away his heart.

Look at vs 4 (read), the phrase "Solomon was old" is a relative term, it means towards the end of his life. Which is to say that though he started well, Solomon is a tragic case of not finishing well, and though a good start is key, a good finish is even more important. Remember when Paul told the Galatians "*You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.*" Gal 5:7-9 and Of course we're reminded of the fact that Jesus never said, "Well begun" but rather, "Well done."

And to me there's a very stern warning here ladies, regarding the influence that you have in your husbands life. And it's not to say that men don't lead their wives astray, but I've seen over and over again, men fall, and families torn away from God's direction for their lives because of the influence of the wife in the relationship. It's been said that though the husband is the head, the wife is the neck and she has this ability to influence the head, and turn it in various directions, and that's true. Listen ladies, never underestimate the power of the influence that you have in your husband's life. And again I'm not saying that men haven't had their share in leading wives away from the Lord or in a wrong direction, but that's not the portion of scripture we're in. And I would just have you to consider well, your input, and influence in your marriage relationship. Are you an encouragement to your husbands godliness, or a discouragement, is he strengthened in his commitment to God because of you, or is he sick of fighting about why he wants to be involved all the time and ready to cast in the towel because you're eroding his stamina and he's ready to compromise if it'll just keep you happy and the house free from contention?

And I'm by no means trying to beat up on the ladies, but by way of encouragement be aware of the power of persuasion that you bring into the spiritual demeanor of your home life. Solomon gave in to the desire of these women who wanted to do their own thing rather than be in line with what God had called Solomon to do.

Now that in no way justifies Solomon, it could've all been avoided if he'd have obeyed God's word, yet we see the influence that he was confronted with in his wives.

And reverting back to this principle that the vast majority of these women were unbelievers, this is more buckshot in the bucket of evangelical dating, or marrying for ministry. Getting involved with unbelievers thinking that we can change them over time, the bible teaches emphatically the opposite, that more than not the believer is the one who changes, and becomes more ungodly, rather than the nonbeliever becoming godly. It's that principle that we're so commonly aware of there in 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor, let's look at it quickly (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor Ch 6:14-18).

You see rather than coming out from among them, Solomon assimilated himself unto them and the results were disastrous. He facilitated the worship of all these pagan gods to accommodate his wives beliefs, Ashtoreth, Chemosh, and Molech, fertility gods, gods of war, and agricultural prosperity, of course with Chemosh and Molech child sacrifice was involved, so don't be deceived there was some wicked things taking place in the worship of these various "gods."

And Solomon even built altars for them right there near the tabernacle, the law commanded that they destroy the altars to false gods, but Solomon was now building them. We read, "*Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice, and you take of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods and make your sons play the harlot with their gods.*" Ex 34:12-16 Yet that's exactly what we're seeing take place.

Vs9-10

Tying this back in with vs 4, how many times did God ever appear to David? Zero, yet David remained loyal to God, and Solomon had a miraculous encounter with God not once, but twice and God warned him the 2<sup>nd</sup> time specifically about going after other gods. And yet Solomon didn't heed the warning of the Lord, what's that say to us? That signs and wonders don't produce lasting faith in and of themselves. We're to place our trust in the word of God, not the experiential encounters, hey, they can be neat and all, but they're unable to sustain you.

Vs11-13

That tribe would seem to be the tribe of Benjamin that stayed loyal with Judah to the line of David, but Benjamin was so small that it's generally included in the reference to Judah when the bible is in regards to the division of the nation 1 side called Israel, the other referred to as Judah. But we see that no one is exempt from the surety of the Word of God. Why did Solomon pursue such compromise?

We mentioned that perhaps he felt exempt somehow, that he mistook that window of time that God was allotting for repentance for some form of approval upon his life from God. But perhaps he fell prey to that same type mentality that Samson fell prey to. Samson, being a Nazirite from birth was to find his strength in his consecration to God. He wasn't to touch anything dead, he wasn't to drink wine, nor was he to cut his hair. And when he tore the lion in two and later took honey out of its corpse he violated that code. But the Spirit of God still came upon him in time of need and God still seemed to honor his life, and while he was at a banquet with some Philistines, he drank wine, yet God still used him for His glory.

And I don't think that he was a fool, he more than likely knew what Delilah was up to in trying to coax out of him what would make him weak. But he was probably thinking, "I've touched dead things and God still got me out of jam, I've drank wine and God is still using my life, it won't be any different if I get a haircut, it'll grow back and besides God will still use my life and I'll make havoc of the enemy." But what happened, the Spirit of the Lord departed from Samson and he didn't even realize it, God extended grace, and extended grace, and instead of taking that opportunity to repent, Samson saw it as reason to presume upon more grace, big mistake.

And here Solomon multiplied silver and gold, nothing happened, the Lord was still blessing, the horses was next, but still things are good, what's a few wives God will still continue in His grace towards my life, and he presumed on the grace of God, crossed that line a thousand times, and his heart turned away from the Lord, and God said enough. "Your sin abounded, My grace abounded much more, but there's repercussion to your choices, you haven't honored My Word, and even as I said, now the kingdom will be torn from you." But because of the integrity of the heart of David, God still extended mercy to the household of Solomon, it's amazing, the unfathomable mercies, and grace of God.

Vs14-22

So this guy isn't altogether certain why he wants to go back, he's got a good life, but he wants to make havoc of Israel now that David and Joab have died. But we see through the eyes of the Spirit that it was the Lord orchestrating the whole thing, notice

Vs23-26

So God raised up 3 adversaries to Solomon 2 from the outside, and 1 from with in, why? So that Solomon might get off his high horse (or horses as the case may be) and back down on his knees. Why does God allow there to be adversity in your life, in my life? Whom the Lord loves He chastens, adversity has this way of getting us real familiar with the scent of our carpet, because our face is in it so much in prayer. And Solomon had gotten to this point where he was comfortable in his compromise, and so God began to shake things up a bit, because of His love for Solomon. And God will at times allow temporal adversity for the sake of eternal security, to keep us in that place of dependence upon Him. Well, these next 11 vs or so are parenthetical, they tell us what caused Jeroboam to rebel.

## Vs27-39

Notice back in vs 34 that David was given a position of prominence because he kept God's Word. And here in vs 39 his house would be disciplined but not destroyed, Solomon was a proven sinner, but the Savior of sinners would still come through the line of David.

## Vs40

It would seem as though upon Jeroboam's hearing this news he sought to go ahead and set the plan in motion, and Solomon sought to have him killed for treason. Jeroboam heard the news sought to rally people around him and Solomon sought to deal with it accordingly. Couple of quick things, David was promised to be king but did nothing to try and usurp that position. Jeroboam did just the opposite and so we're already seeing cracks in the armor of his character, David just trusted that the Lord would remove Saul when He saw fit. And Jeroboam was told that Solomon would finish out his reign, so he should've waited patiently for the Lord to raise him up. Now on the flip side of that, if Solomon *did* hear of the prophecy and sought to take him out because of the threat, he should've know that it was vain to fight against the Lord as well. But treason was punishable by death.

## Vs41-43

The book of the acts of Solomon we don't have, we have proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and of course the book of Ecclesiastes. But what's amazing to me about this whole thing is that we're tracking along with the life of Solomon, all this information is being given to us about his life. His heart departs from the Lord, is turned away from the Lord and it's like...that's it, there's nothing else that matters after that, the end. As soon as his heart departed from the Lord, the rest of his life is of no informative value, and Solomon came to know the reality of the vanity and worthlessness of leading a life apart from the Lord. And at the end of His life he uttered these words, *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil."* Eccl 12:13-14