

The Importance of Remaining Faithful

Solomon was the wisest man to ever to ever live. The wisdom he had was not of his own, rather God gave him wisdom based upon Solomon's his request to God. Young King Solomon asked God for wisdom to properly rule over God's people: "Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours" (1 Kings 3:9). God acknowledged his humble request by making him the wisest man ever (1 Kings 3:12) and gave him riches and honor (1 Kings 3:13). However, these great blessings from God were conditional as clearly stated by God. "So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments..." (1 Kings 3:14). The glory of God would shine upon Solomon as long as he remained faithful until death.

Reading further into the Book of 1st Kings, we read of the terrible downfall of this wise man, resulting from being in the world and of the world instead of in the world but not of the world. Solomon allows his heart to be taken over by the lusts of life. "But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh; women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites, from whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, you shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely, they will turn away your hearts after their gods. Solomon clung to these in love" (I Kings 11:1-2). God's warning in His command held true. Solomon went after other Gods, he went after idols, and even built alters for the false gods and idols (1 Kings 11:5-8). In addition, if such were not bad enough, Solomon even offered sacrifices to the false gods.

Solomon did not obey God and God became angry. "So the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his hear had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded" (1 Kings 11:9-10).The preacher (Solomon) would have done well to heed his own advice, written in Ecclesiastes: "Better a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who will be admonished no more" (Ecclesiastes 4:13). There is no recording in the Old Testament of Solomon every repenting of the evil he had committed.

The story of Solomon helps us appreciated the words of the Apostle Paul: "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). Solomon began as a great king, with wisdom given him by God that far exceeded that of any other man. Yet, we see in Solomon the very thing he writes about in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. He failed to do the completely according to what God had

commanded. He seemingly trusted in his own ability to stand fast against the lust of the eyes and the flesh.

Jesus helps us understand the impossibility of attempting to serve God and life at the same time. "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24). Even when it comes to our own family (howbeit it is difficult to imagine how Solomon saw those 700 wives has his family, 1 Kings 11:3), God expects that we put His will and His commands above them. Jesus warns us "a man's enemies will be those of his own household" (Matthew 10:36). Loving anyone or anything more than God has always and will always lead to destruction.