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1 KINGS 11:1-43

Last week we saw “the little foxes” that caused Solomon to stop walking with the Lord...and today we’re going to see a little more of that. It’s so sad to think how Solomon started out and then to see how he slowly drifted away from God.

Someone has said that the heart of the matter is a matter of the heart...and I believe that’s true. The Bible says, “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”

We are what our heart dictates us to be. We become what our heart desires us to become.

We need to understand that it’s very important for the child of God to guard his heart because there is One who loves us and wants us to be all that He wants us to be and there is one who hates us and wants us to fail in our walk with the Lord.

And we also need to remember that just when we don’t think we’re going to fall, that’s exactly when we are in the most danger of falling.

But, as we said last week, a man seldom is walking a committed walk before the Lord one day and turns and walks away from Him the next. He usually takes different steps...and I hope we’ll see today in the life of Solomon some steps that we can avoid taking.

1 Kings 11:1-8...

The first thing I want us to consider is the fact that Solomon had

1) A Divided Heart...

I want you to look at **1 Kings 3:3...**

Solomon loved the LORD. And I believe Solomon really loved the Lord. I mean, that’s what the Bible says. But, what does the first verse of **chapter 11** say? It says, “**Now King Solomon loved many foreign women.**”

I believe Solomon had a heart that once loved God...and then little by little Solomon allowed the little foxes to come in and steal away those things that once enabled him to walk a devoted walk before Him and before he knew it, his heart had become divided.

Many times we see folks who aren’t walking with the Lord, and we’re so very quick to judge them. We say, “Well, he (or she) couldn’t possibly love the Lord...look what he’s into.”

But, just like Solomon, it’s possible for folks to have a divided heart. And that’s not a good thing. **It will steal our witness and it will steal our joy and it will steal our commitment to Jesus.**

Jesus said, “No man can serve two masters.” And for those of us who’ve tried it, we know we can’t.

For example...How many of us have tried to serve the Spirit and the flesh? When we do this, we have a divided heart. As long as we live in this body of flesh, we’ll be tempted to walk in it. But, God longs for His children to walk by the Spirit and when we do that, we’ll not fulfill the desires of the flesh.

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So, if your heart is in danger of being divided today it's only the first step in a downhill road away from walking with God. I pray you will take note of what happened to Solomon.

Another step in this downward slope is

2) A Disobedient Heart...

God had told the people of Israel not to intermarry with the nations around them, hadn't He? This didn't have anything to do with the color of their skin. This didn't have anything to do with race. This had to do with the fact that these folks were heathens...they were pagans...they were idol-worshippers.

Let me tell you something that you already know. God never ordained marriage as a tool for evangelism. NEVER! And some of us are living proof of that fact.

Some of us married thinking we would get our mate saved after marriage, but this is not the will of God! God has told us in His word that we are not to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever.

But, that's not all...I believe Solomon's divided heart that led to a disobedient heart became

3) A Deceived Heart...

Verse 4...

Solomon deceived himself in thinking he could do anything he wanted and he had 700 wives and 300 concubines.

Now isn't that what God said would happen?

God said, "Don't marry these strange women with their strange gods...they will turn your heart away..."

And that's exactly what happened!

There were two areas in which Solomon was deceived. He was deceived in thinking what God said was not true. Isn't that what we all think? God tells us to do this and this and He tells us not to do that and that, and before you know it, we're doing all of the above because we don't really believe God!

It happened to Eve. It's happened to you and me. Any time we quit taking God at His word, we've let the devil come in and deceive our heart.

Another way Solomon was deceived was that he began to believe any old god would do. I mean, we saw last week that he was going to the temple three times a year...that's all God required of him. So, what would it hurt for him to worship these other gods, too?

And these gods were horrible. One was **Ashtoreth**, the goddess of the Sidonians. She was a *fertility goddess*. She was a sex goddess. Solomon worshiped her really well, didn't he?

Then, there was **Milcom** or **Molech**. That was the Ammonite god that demanded *human sacrifice...child sacrifice*.

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Then, there was **Chemosh**, the god of Moab. He was a *god of war...a god of violence and vengeance*...and the way you appeased Chemosh was by winning in battle.

And here was Solomon...and we need to remember that Solomon wasn't just a king. Solomon was also a preacher. When he wrote the book of **Ecclesiastes**, he identifies himself as the preacher king.

So, here is God's preacher, worshiping at the altar of Ashtoreth, worshiping at the altar of Molech, and worshiping at the altar of Chemosh. As I studied this week, I couldn't help but wonder how many times a year Solomon went to **their** temples... I mean, he fulfilled only the minimal requirement in going to God's temple three times a year!

Every time I think of folks worshiping false gods...gods that are just thought up in the minds of men, I think of the illustration Ron Dunn used to use...

A man had run up a large bill at the local "mom and pop" grocery store. Well, he went in there one day and announced to them that he had turned over a new leaf. "From this day forward," he said, "I'm going to pay in cash for my groceries. I'm not going to charge any more of my groceries."

The owners of the store said, "Well, that's all well and good, but what about the money you owe us for groceries you've **already** bought? What about that debt?"

See, the gods of this world...Molech, and Ashtoreth, and Milcom...the god of Islam, and the god of Hinduism, and the god of Buddhism, and the god of Shinto and all the rest...none of them can forgive sin. They can't forgive sin in the past and they can't forgive sin in the present.

But our God can and does! And the person whose sins are not forgiven will die in their sins...

I recall having a conversation with a young girl who is a Buddhist and I was telling her how Jesus has paid for the sins of the world and how we don't have to do anything but turn from our sin and believe to be loved by and be saved and to have Him bring us into a relationship with God. In fact, He loved us before we ever came to Him.

I told her how much He **has already done** for us and **is doing** and **will continue** to do.

I told her that when I came to Him He forgave my sin...past, present and future!

And she said, "Well, **we** have to do things for **our god** to win his favor."

Take a lesson from Solomon! Don't have a deceived heart! Don't let the devil deceive you into putting anything or anyone before Almighty God! Our God is a jealous God. He will not share His glory with another. I love that song... "I'll worship only at the feet of Jesus..."

The last thing I want us to see **about Solomon's heart is not only was it a divided heart and a disobedient heart and a deceived heart**...it was also

4) A Dirty Heart...

Verse 6... "...Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord..."

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Solomon wasn't just **tempted** to do evil...**he did it**. Solomon didn't just **think** about doing evil...**he did it**. What did he do? *He began to build places of worship for these other gods.* The man of God who had build God a beautiful temple...the man of God who had received wisdom and wealth and renown from God's hand...began to build places of worship for gods that didn't even exist! Solomon had a dirty heart!

Well, what was God's response to this?

Verses 9-13...

Don't you wonder if Solomon really thought he would get away with all this? God was angry with Solomon because of what he had done.

In His wrath, God will tear the kingdom from him.

In His mercy, God said He would not do it until he died.

And because of God's love for David, God said He would give one tribe to Solomon's son.

And the next 20 or so verses tell us that God raised up adversaries...enemies that came against Israel during the latter days of Solomon's reign. Back in **chapter 5** Solomon said, "**I don't have any adversaries...God has given me rest on every side...**"

But, here adversaries are rising up all over the place...from Edom and from Midian and from Syria. And that's not all...there was also another adversary...an adversary from Israel.

By the way, do you ever have any adversaries? I mean, yours probably aren't adversaries from foreign lands coming against you. Sometimes our adversaries are in the area of health problems, or finance problems, or family problems.

And sometimes God allows us to have adversaries because we need to be drawn closer to Him. Any time we have adversaries, we need to examine ourselves and see if the Lord is trying to teach us something. I don't believe all our adversaries are from His hand, but all the adversaries that come into our lives are certainly **allowed** by His hand...

Let's look at the adversary Solomon has who isn't from a foreign country but from his own country...

Verses 26-39...

The blessings Solomon had been given weren't his for any other reason except the hand of God was upon him.

And what happened to Solomon in these verses didn't happen for any other reason except the judgment of God was upon him.

A mighty king... A mighty preacher... A writer of Scripture...Solomon was all these... But, Solomon allowed his many wives to turn him away from God.

Was Solomon a saved man? I believe he was...he loved the Lord. Did he lose his salvation? No. But, he lost the **joy** of it. He lost the **victory** of it. He lost the **witness** of it.

And this just points out to us again how messed up Solomon became. He tried to thwart the plan of Almighty God!

The tragic conclusion to Solomon's life can be laid at his own feet.

The end of Solomon's life was marred by the way he turned away from

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God. You know...David didn't live a perfect life...not by a long shot.

In fact, we have no record that Solomon committed some of the sins that David was guilty of.

But, we never ever see David committing idolatry. Time and again David went back to God in confession and true repentance. And we'll talk about that a little bit more in a moment...

David had left a great legacy for Solomon. David had left Solomon a kingdom that was intact...united. But, because of Solomon's sin, the kingdom Solomon's son inherited was a divided kingdom.

Don't we so often see this happen in our churches? Many churches that were once thriving and preaching the Word drift into complacency and preach a social gospel.

We see it happen in the lives of believers. Once they were in love with Jesus and then they slowly drift away and before you know it, their heart becomes **divided** and **disobedient** and **deceived** and **dirty**.

Verses 41-43...

This is the beginning of the divided kingdom. For hundreds of years Israel would be divided. The kingdom of Israel to the North, with Samaria as its capital and the kingdom of Judah to the South, with Jerusalem as its capital.

And the rest of our study in **1 Kings** will be a study of some of these first kings of Judah and Israel. We'll see the good ones and the bad ones. We'll see how, because of Solomon's sin, what was meant to be a united kingdom of God's people was reduced to two kingdoms **that often did battle against each other**.

I truly hope we can learn from this passage of Scripture some basic truths that we can take home with us today.

1) You really cannot sin and get by with it.

The kings of Israel were supposed to live by a high standard. God said in the book of **Deuteronomy** that the king of Israel must not multiply horses to himself, and he must not multiply wives to himself, and he must not multiply gold to himself. Solomon had sinned in all these areas!!

The Bible tells us **"Be sure your sin will find you out."**

This doesn't mean your sin will end up on the front page of the newspapers, and this doesn't mean your sin will be broad- on the evening news, but **it does mean your sin will find you out**.

No one may ever know. No one may ever suspect. But there will come a point in your life when you can no longer live with your own self because your sin has found you out.

Listen, if David could not sin and get by. And if Solomon could not sin and get by...what makes you and me think we can sin and get by?

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God hates sin. God loves His children. And He loves His children too much to let them get by with sin. There will come a time in our lives when we will feel such conviction of our sin that we will cry out to God in sorrowful repentance for forgiveness and cleansing...and He will hear and He will forgive and He will cleanse.

And if that time doesn't come...if we refuse the conviction of the Holy Spirit to repent, I believe the Bible teaches that He will take His children home early...

2) There is a law of the harvest.

The first principle of that law is ***you reap what you sow***.

Galatians 6:8: "...he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting..."

If you sow to the flesh, you will reap accordingly. If you sow to the Spirit, you reap accordingly. What is going to happen to the flesh? It will decay. What is going to happen to the spirit? It will live for eternity.

Not only do you reap what you sow, but ***you also reap later than you sow***.

A seed planted today isn't going to yield fruit until much, much later. And many times sin committed today isn't going to bear bitter fruit in our lives until much later.

There really is a "payday someday." And I'm firmly convinced that is one reason God doesn't just wipe away from our minds all memory of our sin. I believe one way we reap much later than we sow is by those memories coming back time and again to haunt us.

There is a third principle to this law of the harvest and it is that ***you reap more than you sow***.

One seed is planted and much fruit is harvested. Solomon was gifted with such wisdom and understanding and discernment, yet he died in shame and disgrace and dishonor...as a failure...reaping much more than he sowed.

Generations would reap from his failure. God never meant for the kingdom of Israel to be divided. But, for generations, the folks would reap the bitter harvest of Solomon's sin. And as we said...at times, these two kingdoms would even war against each other!

3) The flesh can never thwart the judgment of God.

Solomon tried. He tried to kill Jeroboam, didn't he? **Verse 11...** Solomon thought, "All I have to do is get rid of Jeroboam and that will stop the judgment of God on my family."

David had tried to get rid of his sin with Bathsheba by bringing Uriah in from the battle...and when that didn't work, he tried to get rid of his sin by having Uriah killed...

But, God's Word tells us that God does what He will among the hosts of the heavens and the inhabitants of the earth and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?"

4) Repentance brings forgiveness and cleansing.

If Solomon had just repented of his sin... If he had said, "Lord, I'm sorry that **I have built altars for pagan gods**."

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Lord, I'm sorry **I have turned my heart away from You.**
Lord, I'm sorry **I've stopped praying to You.**
Lord, I'm sorry **I've stopped living for You and loving You.**
Lord, I'm sorry **for the sin in my life."**

But, he didn't. We see no indication of remorse for his sin. We do see an acknowledgment of a life that was empty...Solomon wrote in ***Ecclesiastes*** that all is vanity...

But, we have no record of brokenness in Solomon's life. We see no record of reconciliation between Solomon and God...and because of that, we see no reprieve from God.

We can't help but wonder if Solomon had come to God in repentance if God would have stayed His hand of judgment. We don't know...because many times God still allows us to reap the consequences of our sin, doesn't He?

For Solomon, the judgment came just like God said it would. And instead of dying the death of victory and honor, Solomon died the death of defeat and dishonor.

You know, most of us like to think our last days will be our best days. We like to think our last days will be our godliest days. But that's not always the case. The pastor tells the story of driving Vance Havner to the airport from a revival years ago.

Bro. Vance had prayed for the pastor and then he asked the pastor to pray for him. The pastor asked him how he wanted him to pray and Bro. Vance Havner said, "Pray that I will get home before dark."

And what Vance Havner was saying is that he wanted to finish well...he wanted to go home to heaven before he "messed up."

Don't you wish Solomon had gotten home before dark?

My prayer is that we will all take a lesson from Solomon's life. Don't take for granted that if you haven't "messed up" yet you've run out of time. There's still time for all of us to "mess up". May God help us to learn this lesson well.

Also don't think that if you've "messed up" you can't still come to God in repentance and be forgiven. He is waiting for you to do just that!

My prayer is that we are going to leave a legacy to our children and grandchildren like David left...a legacy of confession and repentance and a heart that pants for God...not one like Solomon left.