

SOLOMON ABANDONED WISDOM

1 Kings 10:14 - 11:43

STRUCTURE

Key-person: Solomon

Key-location: Jerusalem

Key-repetitions:

- Solomon's wrongdoings: he required forced labor (1 Kin 5:13-14; 9:15-28); he multiplied his wealth (1 Kin 10:14-29); he married foreign women and they seduced him to abandon God (1 Kin 11:1-3); he practiced idolatry (1 Kin 11:4-8); he tried to kill Jeroboam (1 Kin 11:40).
- The Lord appeared to Solomon twice (1 Kin 11:9; 3:5; 9:2).
- Solomon's many wives/concubines: Solomon loved many women not from Israel (1 Kin 11:1); he had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kin 11:3); his wives seduced him away from the Lord (1 Kin 11:4); Solomon built shrines for the god of each foreign wife (1 Kin 11:7-8).
- David: for David's sake, God wouldn't rip the kingdom away from Solomon during his lifetime (1 Kin 11:12); Solomon's son would keep one tribe for the sake of David (1 Kin 11:13); David would always have a lamp in Jerusalem (1 Kin 11:32, 36); if Jeroboam obeyed God's commands like David, God would build him a dynasty as enduring as the one he built for David (1 Kin 11:38).
- Negative results of Solomon's sins: God was furious with Solomon (1 Kin 11:9); God promised to rip the kingdom away from Solomon's descendants (1 Kin 11:11); the Lord raised up adversaries against Solomon (1 Kin 11:14).

Key-attitudes:

- Solomon's impudence and arrogance when he married foreign women and pleased them instead of God.
- God's displeasure with Solomon after he married foreign women.
- God's anger when he promised punishment to Solomon and his descendants.
- The prophet's seriousness when he gave Jeroboam God's message.

Initial-situation:

King David died and his son Solomon firmly established his rule. Solomon asked and received wisdom from the Lord. Solomon built the temple in honor of the Lord's name and as a place for God to be worshiped.

Initial-problem:

King Solomon was wealthier than all the other kings of the world. Solomon loved many women who weren't from Israel.

Final-situation:

A prophet told Jeroboam that the Lord would rip ten of the tribes of Israel away from Solomon's son and give them to Jeroboam to rule. The Lord was doing this because Solomon stopped following him and started worshiping many other gods.

BIBLE STORY

King Solomon received more than twenty-five tons of gold each year (1 Kin 10:14). Solomon was wealthier than all the other kings of the world. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 war horses (1 Kin 10:23-26).

King Solomon loved many women who weren't from Israel. The Lord had warned the Israelites, "Never intermarry with people of other nations because they will seduce you to follow their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon had seven hundred wives from foreign royal families and three hundred concubines. Solomon grew old and his wives seduced him away from the Lord and led him to follow foreign gods. Solomon openly defied God. Solomon built sacred shrines for the god of each of his foreign wives on a hill east of Jerusalem (1 Kin 11:1-8).

God was furious with Solomon for abandoning the Lord God of Israel. The Lord had appeared to Solomon twice, yet Solomon disobeyed God's orders. So the Lord told Solomon, "You haven't kept my covenant and obeyed my commands; therefore, I'll rip the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your officers. However, for your father David's sake, I won't do it while you're alive. I'll rip the kingdom away from your son when he becomes king. I won't take it all, I'll leave him one tribe to rule" (1 Kin 11:9-13).

The Lord raised up adversaries against Solomon. The worst adversary was Jeroboam, who had been in charge of forced labor of people from the tribe of Joseph. One day, a prophet who was wearing a new garment met Jeroboam on a remote stretch of road. The prophet took hold of his new garment and ripped it into twelve pieces. Then the prophet told Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces for yourself. The Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'I'm ripping the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and giving you ten tribes. But for my servant David's sake, and out of respect for Jerusalem, he'll keep one tribe. Here is the reason: Solomon stopped following me and started worshiping many other gods. I'll give one tribe to Solomon's son so that my servant David may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem.

"However, as for you, I'll make you king over Israel. If you obey my commands and do what is right in my eyes, as my servant David did, I'll be with you. I'll build you a dynasty as enduring as the one I built for David. Israel will be yours."

Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam fled to Egypt where he remained in exile until Solomon's death (1 Kin 11:23-40).

Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years. Solomon died and his son Rehoboam succeeded him as king (1 Kin 11:41-43).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What wrongs did Solomon do toward the end of his kingship?
2. What caused Solomon to abandon God to serve other gods?
3. Why should the person who begins to serve God be concerned about continuing to serve him until the end of his life?
4. Why did God become angry with Solomon?
5. What punishment did God promise Solomon?
6. Why does God reject his people worshiping other gods?
7. What promises did God, through his prophet, make to Jeroboam?
8. What tempts you to abandon God and disobey his clear commands?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **A short-time benefit may result in long-term disaster.** Solomon's marriages to foreign women resulted in political alliances (1 Kin 3:1); however, his wives seduced him to follow other gods (1 Kin 11:3-4). Forced labor (1 Kin 5:13:13-18) enabled Solomon to build the temple, the palaces, and other projects in a hurry, but Solomon's people rebelled against his harsh labor and heavy yoke (1 Kin 12:4). Solomon received twenty-five tons of gold in taxes every year (1Kin 10:14). This made him the richest king in the world (1 Kin 10:23), but the people considered the taxes a heavy yoke (1 Kin 12:4).
2. **It is not enough to begin life serving God, it is important to end life being faithful to God.** Solomon began well; however, he finished badly.
3. **The continuation of divine blessings depends upon the fidelity of the recipient of the blessings.** The fulfillment of every promise that God made to David and to Solomon, with reference to blessing their families, depended upon their fidelity to divine precepts (1 Kin 9:4). God promised Jeroboam that God would make him a great king, if he observed the Lord's commands and walked in his ways (1 Kin 11:29-38).
4. **God's commands are for the good of people. People who ignore God's commands experience negative consequences.** Solomon had clear instructions from God not to intermarry with women from other nations. However, Solomon

married many foreign women, and they subsequently led him away from God (1 Kin 11:2-3).

5. **Prosperity achieved outside of God’s plan brings disaster, not a blessing.** Solomon accumulated chariots, horses, a huge harem, and incredible wealth. However, Solomon violated God’s commands for a king (Deut 17:14-20). God knew that Solomon’s activities would hurt the nation both politically and spiritually (1 Sam 8:11-18). The more luxurious Solomon’s court became, the more the people were taxed. High taxes created unrest (Kin 12:4).
6. **A sin that is considered minor and it is subsequently excused, may be the first step in turning away from God.** Solomon’s spiritual coldness started with a minor departure from God’s laws when he married Pharaoh’s daughter (1 Kin 3:1). Over the years, Solomon loved many foreign women, and his wives led him astray (1 Kin 11:1-6).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Chant:

Words in **bold and underlined** are stressed. Stress words by stretching them out instead of increasing volume.

All	
“There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death” (Proverbs 14:12 NIV).	
Group 1	Group 2
There is a <u>way</u>	that <u>appears</u> to be right
but in the <u>end</u>	it <u>leads</u> to death.
There <u>is</u> a way	that appears to be <u>right</u>
<u>but</u> in the end	it leads to <u>death</u> .
All	
“There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death” (Proverbs 14:12 NIV).	

2. Twitter Prayers (short, concise prayers):

Invite listeners to pray about the story in “twitter” length prayers. Tell God:

- How they feel about the story.
- How they are similar to or different from Solomon.
- What tempts them to disobey clear commands from God.
- Decisions they need to make as a result of hearing the story.
- How the story helps them face personal life-issues.
- How the story helps them to know God better.