

“Sin Crouching at the Door”  
1 Kings 11  
(Preached at Trinity, January 17, 2021)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Solomon was blessed above measure. The gold flowing into his kingdom was abundant. He was a masterful builder, a poet and scholar, and he is said to be the wisest of men. But as wise as he was, he began making deadly spiritual compromises. There are stories of those who suddenly fall into apostasy and turn away from God. But far more often it happens little by little with small concessions that slowly turn our heart from God.
2. Solomon's abundant wealth may have been a contributing factor that began his spiritual. It would seem Solomon couldn't get enough. Jesus warned that it was virtually impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.  
**Luke 18:24-25 NAU** - "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> "For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."
3. Solomon also faced the temptation of placing his trust in military might.  
**1 Kings 10:26 NAU** - "Now Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem."
  - A. The end of the chapter informs us that Solomon became a major weapons dealer for the Middle East.  
**Verse 28** – Egypt was south of Jerusalem, Kue was to the north.  
**Verse 29** – Solomon transported arms across the earth
  - B. This would prove disastrous. Solomon was providing weapons to nations that would lead to Israel's destruction.  
Worst of all, Solomon obsession with weapons of war was in direct conflict with the law of God.  
**Deuteronomy 17:15-16 NAU** - "you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, *one* from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. <sup>16</sup> "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself,"
4. **Chapter 10** reminds us of the dangers that are always present. Temptations come in many forms. Solomon was being bombarded by some of the strongest temptations we face in this life – riches and power and fleshly lusts. Sin is always seeking dominion over us. God warned Cain as his anger seethed because God rejected his offering:  
**Genesis 4:7 NAU** - "If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."

In other words, sin is always seeking to gain mastery over us but we must maintain dominion over it.

5. Now as we come to **Chapter 11** Solomon was already in serious spiritual decline. Sin had already entered. Riches and power were had been slowly turning Solomon's heart from God. But now we are given the final element that led to his final fall.  
**1 Kings 11:4 NAU** - "For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father *had been*."
6. These wives and concubines had been present the whole time. Solomon was a ladies' man. He was attracted to ladies of all sorts. As I've stated before, one of the problems with polygamy is looking at every woman as a potential wife. And Solomon had many. To make matters worse, Solomon did not limit his lusts to only ladies of Israel. He included many foreign ladies in his harem.  
**1 Kings 11:1 NAU** - "Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women"  
 A. To love a wife is good and necessary but it must never exceed our love for God. Solomon's love for his foreign wives became greater than his love for God.  
 B. Solomon's love for God in Chapter 3 led to the building of the Temple. His love for his foreign wives led to building shrines for their gods. Knowing Solomon's engineering skills, they were probably magnificent. God saw this idolatry as detestable, or abominable – **Verses 5-7**
7. The narrator reminds us that Solomon's infatuation with his foreign wives was strictly prohibited. :  
**1 Kings 11:2 NAU** - "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, *for* they will surely turn your heart away after their gods."
8. Solomon knew the Law of God. He knew this was sinful, but the text tells us he continued to hold fast to his sin. The word literally means "to cleave."  
**1 Kings 11:2 NAU** - "Solomon held fast to these in love."  
 A. Interestingly, this is the same word used to describe a man's proper commitment in Biblical marriage—marriage as it ought to be.  
**Genesis 2:24 NAS** - "For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."  
 B. It was also the word used to describe Hezekiah's faithfulness to God.  
**2 Kings 18:6 NAU** - "For he clung to the LORD; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the LORD had commanded Moses."  
 C. We presume the author is describing Solomon's dedication to his wives.  
 This is the way the CSV translates it.  
**1 Kings 11:2 CSBO** - "Solomon was deeply attached to these women and loved *them*."  
 But this wasn't possible with 1000 wives and concubines. So what does it mean here?  
 D. The word for "these" is masculine. Instead of referring to Solomon's wives it is more likely referring to their gods. His love for his foreign wives led to his apostasy. Solomon held fast to their idols in love. What a tragedy to turn from loving God to loving an idol.  
 Solomon had lost his first love. This was the charge of our Lord to the Church of Ephesus:  
**Revelation 2:4 NAU** - "But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love."

- I. Sin will progressively steal our hearts from God
- A. The text tells us that Solomon’s wives slowly turned his heart from God  
**1 Kings 11:3 NAU** - "and his wives turned his heart away."
1. The heart refers to the driving force of a man—that which drives our desires, our decisions, our dreams.  
 John Woodhouse describes the heart:  
 “In the Bible the heart is more than the emotional center of a person. The thoughts, plans, will, and decisions, as well as deep emotions, come from the heart.”<sup>1</sup>  
 We should not miss that the same heart that God made wise and discerning in **Chapter 3** was now the heart that turned away after other gods.
  2. Perhaps at the beginning Solomon resisted the religious practices of his wives. He brought pharaoh’s daughter into Jerusalem but still built the Temple to the praise of God.
    - a. Early in his reign Solomon loved God and desired to honor Him.  
**1 Kings 3:3 NAU** - "Now Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David"
    - b. After completing the Temple Solomon lifted a prayer of praise before God  
**1 Kings 8:22-23 NAU** - "Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. <sup>23</sup> He said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and *showing* lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart,"
    - c. But sin slowly stole away Solomon’s heart. His great fall didn’t happen suddenly, but little by little. Each compromise became easier until he was no longer convicted by his sin.
  3. Solomon began to regard his wives more than he regarded God. The word “loved” in **Verse 1** regarding Solomon’s love for his wives is the same word used to describe his love for God in **Chapter 3**  
**1 Kings 11:1 NAU** - "Now King Solomon loved many foreign women"
  4. But one by one his wives held their gods before Solomon. He would have watched them sing praised to their idols. This he tolerated. Slowly, little by little he lost his zeal for God. They lifted up their gods and Solomon gave hearty approval. He lost all ability to resist their voices.
  5. Finally, Solomon began to join them in their worship.  
**1 Kings 11:5 NAU** - "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites."

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<sup>1</sup> John Woodhouse, *1 Kings—Power, Politics, and the Hope of the World*, ed. R. Kent Hughes, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 312.

6. Instead of standing as the leader in his home Solomon came under the leadership of his wives. Instead of rebuking their idolatry he joined them. **1 Kings 11:8 NAU** - "Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods."
  7. Adam sinned by listening to the voice of his wife instead of obeying God. Solomon is guilty of the same sin – multiplied 1000 times. The text tells us his wives turned his heart away. At the beginning of his reign Solomon's heart was fixed upon God. In his old age his wives stole his heart away.
- B. When we allow sin into our lives we will progressively lose our ability to resist
1. It's the small sins that begin to whittle away at our heart. It's the minor concessions that soon get out of control. What may convict our heart at the beginning will soon become the norm.
  2. It's the small sins that we need to be ever so vigilant to watch out for – they as well as the large sins are crouching at the door.
  3. We need to be particularly vigilant regarding our relationships with other people.
    - a. Lost friends can exert pressure on us to compromise
    - b. Our lost relatives can exert a powerful pressure for us to make concessions. They can wear us down. After all, they don't see any reason to worship God or honor the Sabbath. Why should you?
  4. The Bible is not silent. We must put God before all else. **Matthew 10:34-37 NAS** - "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup> "For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; <sup>36</sup> and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. <sup>37</sup> "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." **Luke 14:26 NAS** - "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."
- C. Sin is always crouching at the door
1. The picture is of a vile, deceptive creature just outside the door of your home. It speaks lies and deceptions. It holds forth temptations that seem so right. But we must be wise and discerning and keep the door tightly shut.
  2. If you open just a crack sin will come rushing in and it will be very difficult to put it back out. Once sin is inside resistance become all the more difficult

## II. Sin will grow and multiply

### A. Solomon began with a single foreign wife

1. He took the daughter of pharaoh.
  - a. It would have been a shrewd political alliance.  
**1 Kings 3:1 NAU** - "Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem."
  - b. We are warned against friendship with the world  
**James 4:4 NAU** - "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."
2. By the time we get to this chapter we find Solomon had multiplied his wives and concubines to a vast number – at least 1000.  
**1 Kings 11:3 NAU** - "He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines"
3. Solomon would have justified his actions. After all, he was the king. And no one dared to question his actions. He could have as many wives as he wanted. Perhaps the priests warned Solomon, but they didn't dare oppose the king.
4. He became desensitized to their wicked idolatry and in the end he joined them. We are not told precisely how far he plunged into his sin but the human heart is capable of endless depth of depravity. We are told in **Verses 5 & 7** that Solomon went after Ashtoreth and Milcom and built high places for Chemosh and Molech. Molech was characterized by offering up children as human sacrifices. Surely, Solomon did not sink this far.  
**Leviticus 20:2 NAU** - "You shall also say to the sons of Israel: 'Any man from the sons of Israel or from the aliens sojourning in Israel who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones.'"

### B. Our life must be one of progressive sanctification

1. Sin must be quickly put away. It will lead to your ruin. How far are you willing to go? Sin will consume you.  
Homes are destroyed, reputations ruined, lives wrecked all because sin is allowed to enter and gain dominion.
2. We must give ourselves to continually gaining spiritual strength. We must read and study God's Word continually. We must pray that the Holy Spirit will increase our desire for God; that He would give us discernment and help us flee from every form of sin.
  - a. We must fight the good fight of faith resisting Satan's lies and temptations. God tells us if we resist the devil he will flee from us.
  - b. As we grow in holiness our ability to resist sin will grow stronger and stronger.
  - c. We must never presume we are too mature to commit some sins. Look at Solomon!

3. If we do not war against sin it will become stronger and stronger. You will either be defeating sin, or sin will be defeating you.
4. Notice Solomon's progressive concessions and compromises left him weak in old age.  
**1 Kings 11:4 NAU** - "For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father *had been*."

**Conclusion:**

1. Solomon stands as a solemn warning to us. We can easily become derailed and our lives can become ruined by sin. Solomon was the marvel of the world. People would come from great distances just to hear his wisdom and view the wealth and excellence of his kingdom. Yet, all of Solomon's accomplishments cannot erase his great fall in the end.
2. Sin is always crouching at the door. You must stand guard and flee from the smallest of sin in your life. It will consume you and steal away your heart.