

# SOLOMON, AT THE END

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*“And the LORD was angry with Solomon,  
because his heart was turned from the  
LORD God of Israel, which had  
appeared unto him twice. ...*

*And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto  
Solomon.”*

I Kings 11:9,14

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## SOLOMON, AT THE END

One of the great enigmas in the Bible is found in the final chapters in the life of Solomon. How could the wisest man who ever lived and who loved the Lord in his early life, forsake his faith in God in his old age? When he was born it was said *“that Bathsheba bare a son, and he [David] called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.”* (II Sam. 12:24) If there was ever a man who was favored and loved of God it was Solomon. Even Nehemiah, when referencing the wives of Solomon said that he, *“Was beloved of his God.”* (Neh. 13:26) He was given every reason to love and be faithful to the Lord. In truth, for most of his life he was a devoted follower of God as his father David had been. God in His instructions to Solomon specifically warned him about the necessity of his fidelity to the Father. *“And we may even infer from the repeated warnings of God (ch. li. 14, vi. 12, ix. 4), That from the earliest years of his reign Solomon was in danger of falling into idolatry.”* (K&D. P. 167)

One of the evidences that the Bible was not written by man but God, is the fact that the Bible does not hide the flaws of its heroes. It tells the reader about each of those flaws. The flaws of Solomon came to maturity *“when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.”* (Vs. 4) Because of his marriages to “foreign women,” he became a very poor public example to his people. God said that, *“they have forsaken me and have worshipped.”* (Vs. 33b) pagan gods. For this reason, *“the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded.”* (Vs. 9-10) Because of his failure God brought three judgments against Solomon.

#### **I. God stirred up adversaries.**

During Solomon’s reign, Israel was protected by God against the attack of foreign enemies. Israel knew a period of time

of unparalleled peace. (4:24; 5:12) Now, however, God *“stirred up adversaries against Solomon. He moved Hadad the Edomite to rise up against Israel.”* (Vs. 14) In like manner God raised up Rezon, an enemy of David’s. He abhorred Israel. He *“he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad did: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.”* (Vs.25) Despite his hatred, he was never allowed by God to move against Solomon. Now, however, God removed His hand of protection, allowing Rezon to move against Israel. Next, Jeroboam lifted up his hand against the king. He would later assume leadership of the ten northern tribes of Israel. (12:20) The interesting thing about these enemies is that they had been there all along waiting the chance to strike. God would not allow them to move against His people while they were faithfully Him. God had warned that if they forsook the Lord other people would say, *“Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them:*

*therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.” (9:9)*

## **II. God removed the kingdom from Solomon.**

God had led the people of Israel gloriously for nearly 40 years. Now, here at the end, he failed and forsook the Lord. As a result, God would take the kingdom from his successors. His son, Rehoboam, foolishly provoked the people. This resulted in the division of the nation into two parts. For David’s sake God allowed Solomon’s son to retain the tribes of Benjamin and Judah which contained the city of Jerusalem.

## **III. God brought his life to an end.**

The king of Israel’s glory years died when he was about 65 years of age. His death is summed up in two verses. *“And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father.”* (Vs. 42-43) In the remainder of the Bible the name of Solomon is just an adjective. It simply describes something else. (Solomon’s temple, Solomon’s porch, etc.). We read his writings in Proverbs, which were

prepared before his failure, and Ecclesiastes which illustrates his empty outlook on life. God promised to give him long life. (3:14) Yet, because of his sin, his life ended before three score and ten years. Had he remained faithful to the Father there is no telling how much more he could accomplished for the Lord and his people.

Years after the passing of Solomon, God's people were taken into captivity because of their sin of idolatry. Solomon's endorsement of these wicked pagan gods opened the door to his people's sin and judgment. When they began to return to the land after their captivity, God gave them strong leaders to help them as they returned. One such leader was Nehemiah. At the end of the book that bears his name, we read that he discovers that some of the people had married pagan wives. In chapter twelve of the book he sharply rebukes them for this. His challenge to his people was, *"Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel:*

*nevertheless, even him did outlandish women cause to sin.”* (Neh 13:26) “Though seemingly harsh, such measures were absolutely necessary, as subsequent history has proved. The sad case of Solomon (cf. Neh 12:45) is effectively brought into use at this point. Although he was unique among kings (II Chr 1:12; I Kgs 3:12) and beloved of God (II Sam 12:24), nevertheless foreign wives proved to be his downfall. (I Kgs 11:1-8)” (Wycliffe. P. 445)

King Solomon allowed his heart to be led away from the Lord by the pagan wives he married. This compromise with evil ruined a life that was lived to the honor of the God of Heaven. Many lessons can, no doubt, be drawn from this sad occurrence. Certainly, none better than strict obedience to the Word of the God who loves us and firm fidelity to the Saviour who gave Himself for us.

K&D = Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes.  
C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch. Vol. III. William B. Eerdmans  
Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1982.

Wycliffe = The Wycliffe Bible Commentary. By Charles F.  
Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison. Moody Press, Chicago, Il. 1962.

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