

KING SOLOMON: WHEN A HEART TURNS AWAY

1 Kings 2-11; 2Chronicles 1-9

Westend Bible Chapel

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"For it came to pass, 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." — 1 Kings 11:4

- Solomon began with a devoted heart and ended with a divided heart.
- He rose with unmatched wisdom and fell into unthinkable worship.
- He built the Temple of the living God, yet later erected altars to dead idols.
- He once asked God, *"Give me an understanding heart,"* but in time, his own heart turned away.

No king in Israel ever received more light, more wisdom, more privilege, or more blessing—and no king squandered them so tragically.

Solomon teaches us a sobering truth: *A great start never guarantees a faithful finish.*

A blessed life can still become a broken life when the heart turns away from God.

I. SOLOMON'S EARLY FAITHFULNESS (1 Kings 3; 4-10)

Solomon begins with humility and devotion. 1 Kings 3:3 *“And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David...”*

God appeared to him twice—a rare and sacred privilege. He asked God for wisdom, not wealth—and God honored that request by giving him both.

His early reign was marked by:

- *A submissive spirit*
- *A teachable heart*
- *A committed obedience to the God he loved*

But the greatest danger to a blessed life is forgetting the God who blessed it.

II. SOLOMON'S ENTANGLING RELATIONSHIPS (1 Kings 11:1-3)

Solomon's drift began quietly and slowly—through alliances and relationships.

In 1 Kings 3 we read, *“Solomon loved the Lord.”* But later on, in 1 Kings 11, we read: *“But King Solomon loved many foreign women...”* (v.1)

God had warned Israel, “You shall not intermarry with women of other nations... they will turn away your hearts...”

But for Solomon the bible says: *“His wives turned away his heart and they drew his heart after other gods (vv.3-4).”*

Solomon disobeyed God's clear command by marrying 700 foreign women—many of royal lineage—and taking 300 concubines.

His disobedience began in private relationships but soon affected his public witness. Lust and indulgence replaced devotion, and he tolerated what God condemned.

This was not sudden rebellion—it was a slow erosion of the heart, little by little. The heart doesn't leap into sin; it leans into it.

Picture a beautiful garden: if you water the weeds instead of the fruit-bearing trees, the garden will eventually wither.

In the same way, Solomon's attention to his foreign wives and their gods slowly choked the life from his relationship with God.

Solomon was about 60 when his heart turned from God. Scripture warns us : *"Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall"* (1 Corinthians 10:12).

What begins as entanglement and spiritual compromises soon becomes enslavement.

III. SOLOMON'S ERODING LOYALTY (1 Kings 11:4–8)

Solomon didn't stop believing in God—but his loyalty became divided. The man who once prayed, *"There is no God like You"* (1 Kings 8:23) eventually followed the gods of lust and fire.

The Gods Solomon Followed

1. Ashtoreth (Astarte) – Goddess of Sexual Immorality

Sidonian deity

Ashtoreth was the goddess of fertility, sexuality, and sensual pleasure.

Her worship involved ritual prostitution, sexual perversion, and immoral ceremonies designed to arouse fertility. Her worshipers believed their wombs were blessed by her .

She appealed to lust of the flesh.

2. Molech (Milcom) – God of Sacrifice and Fire

Ammonite deity

Molech worship involved the burning of children alive. Infants were placed into the heated metal arms of the idol while drums drowned out their cries. Parents offered their children for prosperity, security, and favor.

Molech represents any system that demands the sacrifice of children, conscience, or obedience to God in exchange for success. The modern abortion of unborn children reflects the same principle—innocent life destroyed on the altar of convenience and ambition.

3. Chemosh – God of War and Blood

The national god of Moab — a deity of war and conquest

Chemosh promised victory in war—at the cost of human sacrifice, often children. He appealed to power and pride.

Inconceivable . Solomon the king who built the magnificent Temple for the living God was now erecting altars for demons-

on a hill east of Jerusalem, beside the Mount of Olives , a place that would later be known as the Mount of Corruption.

Solomon broke the first commandment—*“You shall have no other gods before Me”* (Exod. 20:3). Once idolatry entered his heart, his downfall was certain.

For the believer, idolatry is not only a replacement of God—it is a provocation of God. He declares, *“For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God”* (Exod. 20:5). His jealousy is not weakness or insecurity, but holy zeal for what rightfully belongs to Him.

And though we may not bow before carved images, modern idols quietly slip into our hearts and compete for the loyalty that belongs to God alone.

What Are Some Modern Forms of Idolatry ?

1. The Idol of Self

We create an idol of self when my desires, my comfort, my pleasure, my rights, and even “my truth” rise above the authority of God’s Word.

When life centers on me instead of God, self has taken the throne—and become my god.

2. The Idol of Materialism

Materialism becomes an idol when we bow at the altar of possessions, wealth, lifestyle, and comfort.

Never satisfied, we chase the next thing—new clothes, new gadgets, new upgrades, new pleasures , new appetites — sometimes even going into debt to get them. What thrills us today feels empty tomorrow, and the cycle begins again.

It becomes idolatry when we look to things to give meaning, joy, or security instead of God.

If I measure life by what I have rather than whom I serve, then “stuff” has become my god.

- Exodus 20:17 — *Do not covet.*
- Luke 12:15 — *Life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.*

3. The Idol of Pleasure

Sports, Netflix, hobbies, travel, leisure—these are all good gifts when kept in their proper place. But when pleasure replaces worship... it becomes an idol.

“When I always have time to be entertained—but never time to pray—pleasure is my idol.”

Solomon built his life around pleasure—and in the end pleasure pulled him away from God.

4. The Idol of Technology

Smartphones and social media offer instant connection and endless information, yet they can quietly pull our hearts away from God.

Many now measure their worth by likes, comments, and followers instead of their identity in Christ.

What should be a tool for communication and knowledge has become a source of validation, shifting the heart from God to self.

Technology is not evil, when used wisely. But when it dominates our thoughts, consumes our time, or shapes our identity more than Scripture, it crosses a spiritual line.

It becomes an idol—something that displaces God in our affections.

So how should we use it? Use technology for good. If you have Facebook or Instagram, share Scripture, communicate truth, and point others to Christ. Let these platforms be tools for witness, not mirrors for self-promotion.

As Paul reminds us:

“Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).

When social media becomes a means of self-exaltation or identity-building, the issue isn't the technology—self has become the idol.

As believers, our aim is not to elevate self or chase approval and recognition, but to glorify Christ in everything—even in how we scroll, post, and engage online.

6. The Idol of Relationships

Family is a precious gift from God. Yet even God-given gifts can become false gods when they take the place that belongs to Christ alone.

- *When a spouse is loved more than obedience to Christ...*
- *When children are cherished more than faithfulness to God...*
- *When relationships begin to compete with devotion to Him.*

If pleasing people matters more than pleasing Christ, then relationships have become idols of the heart.

Jesus said, *“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.”*

This is not a call to love family less, but to love Christ supremely. Christ must come first.

Every idol falls under 1 John 2:16:

- *The lust of the flesh – pleasure*
- *The lust of the eyes – possessions*
- *The pride of life – self-exaltation*

“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” —1 John 5:21

Jesus gave the cure for idolatry: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.”*
— *Matthew 22:37*

When Christ fills the heart—idols lose their power.

- What do you love most?
- What do you trust the most?
- What do you sacrifice the most for?
- What can you not imagine living without?

If the answer is anything other than Christ—that is your idol.

A divided heart always becomes a defeated heart. Because Solomon’s heart was divided, God’s disciplined hand was necessary.

IV. SOLOMON'S ENCOUNTER WITH JUDGMENT (1 Kings 11:9–13)

God appeared a second time and warned Solomon about his idolatry—but Solomon refused to listen.

His stubborn self-will now stood in direct defiance of God's will. This was no longer mere drifting or backsliding ; it had become open rebellion.

"So, the LORD became angry with Solomon , because his heart had turned away ... and had not kept God's covenant..." (1 Kings 11:9–10) .

So, the Lord told him," I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant "' (v.11)

"Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days; for the sake of your father David, I will tear it out of the hand of your son..." (v.12)

For David's sake, God would not tear the kingdom away during Solomon's lifetime.

The Davidic covenant stood firm—because God had promised that the Messiah would come through David's line, and remnant would be preserved.

God disciplines His servants, not to destroy them, but to turn them back to Himself.

"If God never breaks you when you sin, you are not His child, for a father disciplines the son he loves."

He is patient and slow to anger—but He will not tolerate sin indefinitely.

So, how does Solomon's life end? What does a man who wasted years finally conclude?

V. SOLOMON'S END-OF-LIFE WISDOM (Ecclesiastes 12:13–14)

Here is Solomon's closing words of his life on earth , preserved for all to read :

Better a poor and wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows how to take warning . Ecc. 4:13

"This is the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil." (Ecclesiastes 12:13–14)

This is the wisdom of a wounded man—a man who spent years chasing wind. His voice echoes across Scripture and it says:

- *Wisdom without obedience is wasted.*
- *Pleasure without God is empty.*
- *Achievement without holiness is vanity.*
- *A turning heart always ends in regret.*

After all the excess, indulgence, and regret, Solomon leaves us with one crystal-clear truth: only a God-centered, God-fearing, God-obeying life truly matters.

