

The Rise And Fall Of Solomon

Introduction. Perhaps no man began with more promise than Solomon. Yet a good beginning does not mean a good finish. Solomon drifted and defected -- can it happen to us?

In 1 Kings 1-10, Solomon was literally the king who could do no wrong. But his fatal disease was sin. What caused this disastrous demise in Solomon's life? In a word, it was compromise. All his compromises led to a king with an empty heart and a kingdom torn apart.

Compromise is the acceptance of lower than desirable standards. Compromise is sin and double-mindedness (Matthew 6:24; James 4:4, 8). Truth cannot continue in that environment (Galatians 2:4-5). Compromise causes God's people to be indecisive and faithless (1 Kings 18:21). When one compromises, the heart is turned away from God and one no longer will stand militantly for the truth. Sin and error cannot be met by a soft approach (Isaiah 58:1; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:10-17). Solomon compromised his life in four crucial areas, all stemming from one sin.

I. ***He Compromised His Wisdom***

- A. God blessed Solomon with great wisdom (1 Kings 3:11-14).
 - 1. For a while he used his wisdom in a very useful way.
 - 2. His great wisdom is illustrated in 1 Kings 3:16-28, and described in 1 Kings 4:29-34.
- B. But Solomon soon became a wise fool.
 - 1. His problem began when he intermarried with heathen women who worshipped idols and turned away his heart (1 Kings 11:1-3).
 - 2. Wisdom is using knowledge to make good decisions. The wisdom of God is a precious commodity (Proverbs 1:7; 3:13-15). It can be obtained from asking the Lord and studying His will (James 1:5; Psalm 119:66, 129-131).
 - 3. What fools we are when we allow something to turn our heart away from God (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Woe unto them who are wise in their own eyes (Isaiah 5:21).

II. ***He Compromised His Conduct***

- A. At first Solomon had a close walk with the Lord.
 - 1. He built the temple and dedicated it to God (1 Kings 8:14-21).
 - 2. His prayer of dedication is one of the most beautiful in the Bible (1 Kings 8:22-53).
- B. God continued to remind him of the importance of a daily walk with Him.
 - 1. God told him what he needed to do to receive His blessing (1 Kings 9:4-9).

2. Yet His greatest error and compromise was with his marriages. An Israelite was not to marry a foreigner, but Solomon had married many (Deuteronomy 7:1-4).
 - a) He had not found one good woman among 1,000 (Ecclesiastes 7:28). His problem was that he was around the wrong kind of women.
 - b) These evil women were the cause of his downfall (Nehemiah 13:26).
- C. You need to walk before God in newness of life (Romans 6:4; 8:1, 4). That begins with someone obeying the gospel and becoming a Christian (John 8:24; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:10; Mark 16:16).

III. ***He Compromised His Worship***

- A. Solomon did not fully follow the Lord (1 Kings 11:5-8). He even built pagan worship centers -- no wonder God was angry (Habakkuk 2:18-20).
- B. God alone is to be the sole object of our worship (Matthew 4:10).
 1. He will not accept second best. We had better be very certain that we do not fall down to the gods of the 21st century.
 - a) Many fall down and worship the god of material possessions. When one commits himself to the acquisition of wealth, and makes that top priority, he will fall into the worship of money and be separated from God.
 - b) Some fall down and worship the god of personal relationships. Sometimes one must choose between a boyfriend or girlfriends and serving God.
 - c) Others fall down and worship the god of family relationships. They think more highly of a relative than they do the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - d) Still others fall down and worship the god of recreation. As I drive to services on Sunday morning and evening, I see people preparing to mow the yard, take a trip, or playing a round of golf.
 2. We must make sure we worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24; Leviticus 10:1-2). This means exercising great care in following the New Testament pattern.

IV. ***He Compromised His Influence***

- A. Solomon was a bad example before an unbelieving world.
 1. Instead of him influencing them for good, they influenced him for evil.
 2. It is no wonder that God took the kingdom away from him (1 Kings 11:11-13).

3. God did this by stirring up Solomon's enemies against him (1 Kings 11:14-25).
- B. In a land of opportunity, you can literally be anything if you try hard enough, and there are some goals you can never reach, no matter how hard you try, but there is something you will always be, whether you try or not -- an example.
1. Children, neighbors, friends, the local church, negligent Christians, and unseen people may all be influenced by you (Judges 7:17; Proverbs 2:20; Hebrews 6:12).
 2. Paul taught that a little leaven leavens the whole lump (1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9). A little evil spreads evil to the entire group.
 3. Eternity will reveal how good our influence has been. Will your influence exerted here be for good or bad throughout eternity?

Conclusion. Compromise may be fine in politics and arbitration, but when it comes to honoring and obeying God, compromise is deadly. Solomon discovered the severe consequences of compromise. His problem was not ignorance but rebellion. He knew better but did not do better (James 4:17). The result was that he lost God's blessings (1 Kings 11:9, 11).

Many can be dragged down by the compromise of one. Under no circumstances should we compromise with sin (Jude 22-23). Instead, we need to earnestly contend for the faith and never have fellowship with the works of darkness (Jude 3; Ephesians 5:11).