

1 Kings 11: Solomon's Wives, Adversaries, and Death

Part 1: The Wives

Read 1 Kings 11:1-3.

Who were these people?

1. The Moabites and the Ammonites – **Read Genesis 19:36-38.**
Now read Deuteronomy 23:3-4a.
What did these two groups have in common?
2. The Edomites – **Read Genesis 25:26a and Genesis 36:1.**
Now read Amos 1:11.
What was the origin of this group?
3. The Sidonians and the Hittites – Both of these groups can be traced back to Noah's son Ham and his grandson Canaan. (See Genesis 10:6, 15.)
 - Sidon was located on the Mediterranean Sea, north of Tyre. We'll read more about one of Sidon's famous citizens on 12/8.
 - **Read Deuteronomy. 20:17-18.** The Hittites lived in the mountains, near what is now Syria and southern Turkey. Two Hittites are mentioned by name in the Old Testament.
 - i. Ephron, who sold land to Abraham for a burial site. (See Genesis 23 to read the negotiations.)
 - ii. Uriah, one of David's 37 "mighty men". What happened to Uriah?
4. Deuteronomy 7 gives detailed instructions about driving out these nations and others. This didn't happen. Now we're told that "King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women." Why did he ignore God's orders? (hint: location, location, location)

Read 1 Kings 11:4-8.

5. What were these gods?
Ashtoreth (or Ashtarte), goddess of the Sidonians

Read Judges 2:11 & 13.

Worshipped as the goddess of sensuality and fertility, also a warrior goddess and the consort of Baal.

Worship included construction of Ashtoreth poles, which were tree trunks carved into a symbolic representation of the goddess.

Baal was the sun-god and Ashtoreth was the moon-goddess.

Why might this goddess be attractive to the women?

Milcom – the state god of the Ammonites or the patron god of their royal house. He was thought to be benevolent, exalted, and strong.

- What is Milcom called in verse 5?

Chemosh - Little is known about this god of the Moabites. One source said that he was credited with aiding Moab defeat Israel.

Molech – Worship of Molech, the god of the Ammonites, included the sacrifice of children.

Read Leviticus 18:21.

And probably some women worshipped number of the Egyptian gods and goddesses, since Solomon's first wife was the daughter of Pharaoh.

6. In what way does the worship of Ashtoreth and Molech summarize everything that our God hates the most?

Read Exodus 20:2-5.

7. Solomon broke the covenant relationship that the Lord had with Israel. What form did this covenant take?
What was the penalty for breaking the covenant?

Read 1 Kings 11:9-13.

8. When did the Lord appear to Solomon? (two times)
9. Why was the Lord delaying the penalty? How were the terms of the penalty changed?

Part 2. The Adversaries

First Adversary: Hadad the Edomite

Read 2 Samuel 8:13-14.

Read 1 Kings 11:14-22.

10. Why did Hadad become an adversary?
11. In verse 22, Pharaoh attempts to convince Hadad to stay in Egypt. Why would Pharaoh do this?

Second Adversary: Rezon

Read 1 Kings 11:23-25.

12. found in 2 Samuel 8:3-6.)

Even though Solomon was able to retain the territory north of Damascus, he was not able to drive Rezon from Damascus itself.

Third Adversary: Jeroboam

Read 1 Kings 11:26-28.

13. It seems that Solomon valued the work of Jeroboam. What may have changed Jeroboam's feelings about Solomon?

Read 1 Kings 11:29-33.

14. The prophet Abijah cuts his garment into twelve pieces. He gives ten to Jeroboam and keeps two for Solomon's heirs. The division is a little confusing.
 - a. Which two tribes stay with Solomon's heirs?
 - b. What happens to the tribe of Levi? Of Joseph?

Read 1 Kings 11:34-40.

15. Verse 39, where the Lord says, "I will humble David's descendants because of this, but not forever", is seen as a sign of hope. What is the verse predicting?

The pharaoh, Shishak, mentioned in verse 40, is the first in a new dynasty in Egypt. Thus he was not related to Solomon's wife.

Part 3: Solomon's Death

Read 1 Kings 11:41-43.

After all the activities during Solomon's reign, these final verses seem anti-climactic. Some contemporary authors have written additional comments.

Philip Yancey provides the following ending in a meditation titled "Solomon's Folly."

A quotation from Oscar Wilde might provide the best epitaph for Solomon: "In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it." Solomon got whatever he wanted, especially when it came to symbols of power and status. Gradually, he depended less on God and more on the props around him: the world's largest harem, a house twice the size of the temple, an army well-stocked with chariots, a strong economy. Success may have eliminated any crises of disappointment with God, but it also seemed to eliminate Solomon's desire for God at all. The more he enjoyed the world's good gifts, the less he thought about the Giver.

Timothy Keller concludes in a devotion based on Psalm 111 that "We become like the things we love most."

Supplemental Bible Verses

Genesis 19:36-38 Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab. He is the father of the Moabites to this day. The younger also bore a son and called his name Ben-ammi (son of my people). He is the father of the Ammonites to this day.

Deuteronomy 23:3-4a No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the Lord. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the Lord forever, because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way, when you came out of Egypt.

Genesis 25:26a Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was Jacob.

Genesis 36:1 These are the generations of Esau (that is, Edom). Note: *Edom* sounds like the Hebrew word for *red*.

Amos 1:11 Thus says the Lord: For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because he pursued his brother with the sword and cast off all pity, and his anger tore perpetually and he kept his wrath forever.

Deuteronomy 20:16-18 But in the cities that the Lord is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save nothing that breathes, but you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded, that they may not teach you to do abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the Lord your God.

Judges 2:11 & 13 And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals. They abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroath.

Leviticus 18:21 You shall not give any of your children to offer them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.

Exodus 20:2-5 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those that hate me.

2 Samuel 8:13-14 And David made a name for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. The he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the Lord gave victory to David wherever he went.

References

Concordia Self-Study Bible: NIV; The Holy Bible, ESV

Keller, Timothy. The Songs of Jesus. Viking Press, 2016. P. 292.

Yancey, Philip. "Solomon's Folly" in Grace Notes. Zondervan, 2009. P. 342.