

THE WARNING OF SOLOMON'S OLD AGE

Quote:

“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek Yahweh!”

Isaiah 31:1

Three Causes of Solomon's Decline: Wealth, Weapons and Women.

Mark above & below 1 Kg 11

In **Deut 17:14-20**, Yahweh through Moses provides instructions for a king. They were first required to write out a copy of the Law, to keep it and to read it regularly. By doing this he would learn to fear Yahweh, he would be directed to keep the Law, to humble himself before God.

Those who came to hear the wisdom of Solomon brought great presents which added to his great wealth (**1Kg 10:24-25, 27**). In addition to this - Solomon began to tax the people (**1 Kg 12:4**) and in doing so placed heavy burdens on the people. The wealth Solomon acquired enabled him to pursue great building projects, and to establish parks and gardens (**1 Kg 7:1-8; 9:15-24**). Such amazing projects led Solomon away from the true source of real wealth - the riches of faith (**Rev 3:18**). Yahweh had forbidden Israel's kings to multiply silver and gold (**Deut 17:17**).

Solomon also followed the kings of the nations around him in trusting in horses and the arm of the flesh for defence. He forgot that, “Yahweh had given them rest on every side” (**1 Kg 5:4**) and turned to Egypt for horses (**1 Kg 10:26, 28-29**). Scripture often warns of the dangers of this (**Isa 31:1; Psa 147:10-11; 33:16-19**), and Yahweh again had forbidden kings to do so (**Deut 17:17**).

Solomon added to his troubles by following the customs of the nations of those times in marrying wives from many of the surrounding nations - Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians and Hittites (**1 Kg 11:1**). Yahweh had commanded them not to marry into these nations (**v2**).

Scripture clearly instructs us not to marry unbelievers (**1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14-18; Deut 7:1-3; 22:10** - principle; **Gen 24:3-6**), and again **Deut 17:17** forbade kings multiplying wives. These foreign women “turned away Solomon's heart” (**v3**) from Yahweh. He built them altars and temples to their gods (**v7**). Some of these abominations remained in place until Josiah destroyed them (**2 Kg 23:13**). Finally he turned to worshipping the gods of his strange wives (**1 Kg 11:5**).

Colour the Decline of Solomon in 1 Kg 11:1-9

(Colour these red)

1. “loved many strange women” (**v1**).
2. “his wives turned away his heart after other gods” (**v4**).
3. “went after Ashteroth” “and after Milcom” (**v5**).
4. “did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and went not fully after Yahweh” (**v6**).
5. “built and high place for Chemosh” “and for Molech” (**v7**).
6. “likewise did he for all his strange wives” (**v8**).
7. “his heart was turned from Yahweh Elohim of Israel” (**v9**).

The End of Solomon

Mark above or below the second page of 1 Kg 11

In all the glory of Solomon's reign - something had eluded him. He could not find true pleasure, peace of mind or lasting satisfaction. He tried all available means only to find himself more dissatisfied than before. All he saw about him was empty and vain (**Ecc. 1:2**), his wisdom only brought him grief (**v 18**), his labour brought no lasting satisfaction (**Ecc. 2:11**), life itself seemed often burdensome (**v 17**). It would appear that late in life he learned the answer; but it was too late to then obtain the full benefit of the great joy that Yahweh had placed within his reach (**1 Tim 4:8**). As an old man, he wrote: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (**Ecc. 12:13-14**). He found that when we have Godly principles to govern our lives, even the trials of life have a purpose - being the development of God's elect (**Rom 8:18, 28**).