CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
JANUARY 27 2024

Scripture Story: 1 Kings 11.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapters 3; 4.

the wise and foolish king



Photo by Jacqui Janetzko

flashlight

"Had Solomon continued in humility of mind to turn the attention of men from himself to the One who had given him wisdom and riches and honor, what a history might have been his! But while the pen of inspiration records his virtues, it also bears faithful witness to his downfall. Raised to a pinnacle of greatness and surrounded with the gifts of fortune, Solomon became dizzy, lost his balance, and fell" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 68).

key text

"The LORD became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the LORD's command."

(1 Kings 11:9, 10, NIV)

what do you think?

Imagine that your parents are going to take one of the following items away from you. On a scale from 1 ("Gotta have it") to 4 ("No sweat without it"), rank the items in order of importance to you.

a. Money
b. Cell phone
c. Internet access
d. Freedom to hang out with friends

did you know?

Did you know that Solomon built temples for the worship of heathen gods in addition to the temple he built for the true God? What's more, he didn't just build them in some obscure place, safely out of sight; He built them on a hillside opposite Mount Moriah, the exact spot where he had built a magnificent temple for God (see *Prophets and Kings*, p. 57).

INTO THE STORY

"King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, 'You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods.' Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.

"On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

"The LORD became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. Although he had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the LORD's command. So the LORD said to Solomon, 'Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates. Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will not do it during your lifetime. I will tear it out of the hand of your son. Yet I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.' "

(1 Kings 11:1–13, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

What parts of this passage are most striking to you?

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_____
_____

What parts of the story are new to you?

_____
_____
_____

Who is the main character of this Scripture?

_____
_____
_____

Circle some of the other characters playing a role in this passage?

Underline what you believe is the main point of the passage.

Number each portion of the passage where you see an important lesson to be learned.

_____
_____
_____

In spite of David's sin with Bathsheba, this passage says that David "followed God completely." What does this tell us about what God values in His children?

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What does this passage say to you about self-discipline in the choice of a life partner? How can that choice influence our relationship with God?

_____
_____
_____

What are some biblical examples of people who made wise decisions in their choice of a life partner?

_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression" **(Psalm 19:13, NIV).**

"I am too ashamed and disgraced, my God, to lift up my face to you, because our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens" **(Ezra 9:6, NIV).**

"The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: 'Turn from your evil ways. Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your ancestors to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets' " **(2 Kings 17:13, NIV).**

"But the LORD is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one" **(2 Thessalonians 3:3, NIV).**

"Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways" **(Psalm 25:8, NIV).**

further insight

"He who falls into some of the grosser sins may feel a sense of his shame and poverty and his need of the grace of Christ; but pride feels no need, and so it closes the heart against Christ and the infinite blessings He came to give."—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 30

Sabbath

Read 1 Kings 11:11.

Complete the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. What item would you most hate for your parents to take from you? Now, think of all the different things that Solomon stood to lose as a result of disobeying God. What would you say is the thing he most hated to lose:

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What judgment did God pronounce upon Solomon? If you were Solomon, how would you have reacted to such an awesome statement from God?

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Sunday

Read 1 Kings 11:1–13.

Read this week's *Into the Story*. Pay close attention to verse 2. God gave His people what specific command?

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_____

What would happen to the people of God if they did not obey this command?

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What did Solomon do? How far did he go in breaking God's command?

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As the most important earthly figure in all of Israel, how do you think his example impacted the nation?

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Monday

Read 1 Kings 11:9, 10.

After careful thought, I am quite sure the wise person would not want to have God angry at them. After all, He is the all-powerful Creator, and we are created beings. He is the source of our breath, our very life. And yet, according to the *Key Text*, wise King Solomon did the very things that called out God's righteous anger.

Read the *Key Text* closely. Why did God become angry with Solomon? The Bible says that Solomon's heart "had turned away from the LORD." In your own words, write what you think God was saying here:

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_____

Is it possible for your heart to be turned away from God, even though you are a Christian?

Tuesday

Read Ezra 9:6.

Read this week's *Flashlight*. Ellen White says that "Solomon became dizzy, lost his balance, and fell." Explain what you believe she means by these statements.

Solomon became dizzy:

_____

_____

Lost his balance:

_____

_____

Fell:

_____

_____

Wednesday

Read Matthew 12:31, 32.

Check out the *Punch Lines* in this week's lesson. Does the sorrow for sin catch your attention in Ezra 9:6? What about the promise of protection in 2 Thessalonians 3:3?

What do you think is the "great transgression" or sin that David was afraid of in Psalm 19:13? What do you think continued willful disobedience and rejecting the guidance of God's Holy Spirit leads us to?

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Thursday

Read Proverbs 12:4.

Most people who read the life of Solomon focus on the number of wives (700) and concubines (300) that he had. But the numbers are not of utmost importance. It is the impact that they had on his worship and allegiance to God that was most unfortunate.

What does this say to you about the importance of your choice of a boyfriend/girlfriend or life partner and how it impacts your relationship with God?

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Friday

Read 2 Kings 17:13.

We can be fairly certain that God did much to warn Solomon to change his behavior. Is God warning you to change something in your life before it's too late? What might that be? Why not surrender it to God right now in prayer? Ask Him to make you willing to be made willing to have Him take it from you.

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapters 3; 4.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.