

Consequences of Solomon's Sin

1 Kings 11:14-43

1 Kings 11:14-28 - *“Now the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was a descendant of the king in Edom. For it happened, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, after he had killed every male in Edom (because for six months Joab remained there with all Israel, until he had cut down every male in Edom), that Hadad fled to go to Egypt, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him. Hadad was still a little child. Then they arose from Midian and came to Paran; and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, apportioned food for him, and gave him land. And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him as wife the sister of his own wife, that is, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. Then the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh.*

So when Hadad heard in Egypt that David rested with his fathers, and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, 'Let me depart, that I may go to my own country.' Then Pharaoh said to him, 'But what have you lacked with me, that suddenly you seek to go to your own country?' So he answered, 'Nothing, but do let me go anyway.'

And God raised up another adversary against him, Rezon the son of Eliadah, who had fled from his lord, Hadadezer king of Zobah. So he gathered men to him and became captain over a band of raiders, when David killed those of Zobah. And they went to Damascus and dwelt there, and reigned in Damascus. He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon (besides the trouble that Hadad caused); and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

Then Solomon's servant, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zereda, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king. And this is what caused him to rebel against the king: Solomon had built the Millo and repaired the damages to the City of David his father. The man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valor; and Solomon, seeing that the young man was industrious, made him the officer over all the labor force of the house of Joseph.”

Background Notes

God raised up three adversaries to King Solomon: Hadad the Edomite (v14), Rezon of Zobah (v23), and Jeroboam the son of Nebat (v26).

The first adversary was Hadad the Edomite. The nation of Edom was located southeast of Israel, where southern Jordan is today. The Edomites were descendants of Esau. During the reigns of King David and King Solomon, the Edomites had been subservient to Israel (2 Samuel 8:13-14). 1 Kings 11:17 tells us that as a young boy, Hadad, who was in the royal

line of Edom, escaped to Egypt with some other Edomites. Hadad was brought up in Pharaoh's household, and he married within the royal family of Egypt. But when Hadad heard that King David and General Joab of Israel were both dead, he came back to Edom, and was able to raise up forces to trouble Israel during King Solomon's reign.

The second adversary that God raised up against King Solomon was Rezon of Zobah. Zobah was located in Syria, just south of Damascus. David defeated the Syrians (2 Samuel 10), but Rezon escaped death and became the captain over a band of raiders. He went on to become the King of Syria, and troubled Israel all the days of King Solomon.

The third adversary of King Solomon was Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. Jeroboam was not a foreigner; he was an Israeli from the tribe of Ephraim. He was a very capable servant of King Solomon. He was a military leader as well as a labor force leader, but in time he rebelled. This rebellion was a key factor in the breakup of the United Kingdom of Israel. Jeroboam became Jeroboam I, the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Doctrinal Points

1. God may raise up “adversaries” against backsliding believers.

Notice that **God** raised up King Solomon's adversaries (v14 & 23). This does **not** mean that God was the source of the evil of those adversaries, but God used the evil adversaries to discipline the backslidden King Solomon. Solomon had not only allowed idolatry to enter Israel, but he himself actually worshiped these foreign gods (v5).

It wasn't that Solomon denied the existence of the true God. His sin was that he also acknowledged and followed after the foreign gods. It's hard to realize that this was author who wrote the concluding verses of the book of Ecclesiastes: *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil”*(Ecclesiastes 12:13-14). How far King Solomon had backslidden!

It should be mentioned that some biblical scholars believe that Solomon returned to the Lord at the end of his life, and that he wrote Ecclesiastes in his later years. We can't be sure. But we do know that Solomon did backslide, and God did raise up adversaries as part of His discipline of the backslidden king.

This doctrinal point is still true today. God may raise up adversaries in the lives of backslidden believers. In fact, true believers who backslide can expect to find adversaries that will trouble them. It may be people, or it may be problems, but God can use adversaries to discipline a backsliding believer. When I was nineteen years old, I was starting to drift away from my close walk with the Lord, and the Lord allowed me to have three serious accidents in that one summer. These were not pleasant experiences, I can assure you! Those accidents were “adversaries” that the Lord used to discipline me – and His discipline worked! God may raise up adversaries against backsliding believers.

2. God may take away territory from the backslidden believer.

1 Kings 11:29-39 - *“Now it happened at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite met him on the way; and he had clothed himself with a new garment, and the two were alone in the field. Then Ahijah took hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. And he said to Jeroboam, “Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you (but he shall have one tribe for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), ^{because} they have forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David. However I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, because I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of My servant David, whom I chose because he kept My commandments and My statutes. But I will take the kingdom out of his son’s hand and give it to you—ten tribes. And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there. So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel. Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you. And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever.”*”

In a very dramatic way, the Lord spoke to Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah. Ahijah ripped his own new cloak into twelve pieces, and gave Jeroboam ten of the pieces. These ten pieces represented the ten tribes that would make up the new northern kingdom of Israel. They were given to Jeroboam because he would be the first king of the northern kingdom. The Lord told Jeroboam that he would bless his kingdom if Jeroboam would obey the Lord. Sadly, Jeroboam did not obey the Lord. He failed to follow the Lord.

Notice verse 39. All this loss to Solomon and the Davidic dynasty was a form of God’s discipline. Verse 39: *“And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, but not forever.”* The phrase *“not forever”* is a reference to the future coming of the Messiah, David’s greatest Son and Descendant.

I believe there’s a spiritual lesson for us in Solomon’s loss of territory. As the Lord announced that He would take physical tribal territory away from King Solomon because of his backslidden state, so the Lord will take spiritual territory away from backsliding believers. Now we’re not talking about salvation here. Backslidden believers do not lose their salvation. But backslidden believers do lose spiritual territory. Spiritual territory involves areas of service, and responsibility, and reward in the kingdom of God. Backslidden believers lose territories of spiritual opportunity to one degree or another, because they must be removed from areas of spiritual responsibility.

Remember the story of Jabez in 1 Chronicles 4. Godly Jabez asked for more territory, and God blessed him. This, too, has a spiritual application. We can ask the Lord for more spiritual responsibilities and more areas and more territories of service for Him, and the Lord will answer these prayers. *“Ask and it will be given to you” (Matthew 7:7).*

The reverse is true as well. “Use it or lose it” is not a verse from the Bible, but it is a biblical principle. God may take territory away from the backsliding believer.

Practical Application

What is our reaction to God's discipline?

1 Kings 11:40-43 - *“Solomon therefore sought to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon. Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? And the period that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.”*

“The book of the acts of Solomon” is not a book in the Bible, It is not found today, but it was available when 1 Kings was written. In verse 40 we learn that Solomon reacted badly to God's discipline: he tried to kill Jeroboam!

Solomon did not repent! Solomon did not humble himself, and he certainly did not submit to God's authority. Instead he tried to overturn God's will in a violent way.

What about us? When God has to discipline us because of our sin, do we repent? Do we submit? Do we humble ourselves? Or do we get angry, and try to blame everyone else for our situation? Like Solomon, do we try to escape from God's discipline without learning the lessons He's trying to teach us?

Read about God's discipline in Hebrews 12:5-11. What's our reaction to His discipline?