

Solomon turns away

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 April 2019

Preacher: Rev.Prof. F. Dalrymple-Hamilton

- [0 : 00] This one is in 1 Kings 11, verses 1-6. 1 Kings 11, 1-6. Now, King Solomon loved many foreign women.
- The daughter of Pharaoh and Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women. From the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after other gods.
- Solomon clung to these in love. He had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart.
- For when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods. And his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.
- For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not wholly follow the Lord, as David his father had done.
- [1 : 41] And then, turning over to the book of Proverbs, and there at chapter 29. And I'll read from verse 1.
- Verse 1. He who is often reprov'd, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing. When the righteous are an authority, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan.
- He who loves wisdom makes his father glad, but one who keeps company with harlots squanders his substance. By justice, a king gives stability to the land, but one who exacts his gift ruins it.
- A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet. An evil man is ensnared in his transgression, but a righteous man sings and rejoices.
- A righteous man knows the rights of the poor. A wicked man does not understand such knowledge. Amen. May the Lord bless us these readings.
- [3 : 09] May they be to his praise and glory. We sing again. I will turn your attention this evening to Proverbs chapter 29 and verse 1.
- He who is often reprov'd, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing.
- In a few moments I'll try to say that these verses, or that verse, is actually autobiographical, because Solomon is talking about his own experience.
- When you consider the book of Proverbs, it's made up of several collections. In the first nine chapters, you have pastoral advice addressed to his son or sons.
- And then you have a whole range of Proverbs from chapter 10 to the middle of chapter 22, all about the Proverbs of Solomon. One line is positive and the next is negative.
- [4 : 15] And then from there to the end of chapter 24, you have the words of the wise arranged in the form of 30 proverbial sayings.

Chapters 25 to 29 are described as the Proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah had transcribed, which employs some kind of editorial activity during the reign of Hezekiah.

And then finally, in the last two chapters, they are an appendix to the whole book. So first of all, let us look at this idea of the reproving of Solomon.

Right at the beginning, I want to say I regard that verse as autobiographical, referring to the actual experience of Solomon during his 40-year long reign.

The career of Solomon you will find in 1 Kings 1-11, parallel to 2 Chronicles 1-9. Now, what did Solomon actually achieve in his reign?

[5 : 29] Well, the first thing that we learn is that he made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, in that he married Pharaoh's daughter. You find that in the first two verses of 1 Kings chapter 3.

1 Kings chapter 3 goes on, and it is all about Solomon's prayer to the Lord for wisdom. Then we have Solomon's building program in Jerusalem, the building of the temple and his own palace, followed by his prayer and worship, and the dedication of the house of the Lord.

These occupy chapters 5-8. In chapter 10, we have the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon in Jerusalem, followed by another aspect of Solomon's reign, namely the gathering of all nations to worship the Lord in the temple that he had built.

And in his teaching, Jesus often referred to Solomon's kingdom. In the Sermon on the Mount, he says this, I tell you that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

And then, Matthew 12, the Queen of the South, that's referring to the Queen of Sheba, will arise in judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

[7 : 01] The glory and the fame of Solomon given by God to him. But that's not the way it ended. Indeed, something went wrong.

He who is often reproved yet stiffens his neck will suddenly be broken beyond healing. And the first action that I noted about Solomon was that he'd made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, so that he married Pharaoh's daughter.

That can be regarded as the first step in the wrong direction. In the Mosaic Law, we read in Deuteronomy 7, when the Lord your God brings you into the land which you are entering to take possession of it and clears away many nations before you, you shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them.

You shall not make marriages with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons. Contradicting, this was the first step in the wrong direction.

Does this not have something to teach us about our walk with God? Make sure you're following the right steps.

[8 : 27] Solomon seems to have realized very early on that this was contrary to the will of God because we read that in chapter 9, Pharaoh's daughter went up from the city of David to her own house, which Solomon had built for her.

And the final stage of his reign, it's read in 1 Corinthians 1 Kings 11, that he loved many foreign women. In addition to the daughter of Pharaoh, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, Ammonite, and Hittite women.

So the fact is that from now on, everything's moving in a downward direction. And the writer of the book of Kings is in no doubt about this because he says in verse 2 of chapter 11, from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, you shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.

Solomon clung to these in love. It would have been more appropriate to say Solomon clung to the Lord in love, but he'd made a mistake.

Let's think secondly about the resistance. He who is often repugned, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing.

[10 : 03] When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice. When the wicked rule, the people groan. Now, he's about to be reproved for his actions.

So we read in chapter 11, the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice and had commanded him concerning this thing that he should not go after other gods, but he did not keep what the Lord commanded.

In other words, if we were to prescribe an epitaph for him, it is that Solomon, later in his life, contradicted God's law and did not keep it.

So now, God speaks to him, not through personal appearance, but perhaps through prophets. Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant.

The word of the prophet. In the king's narrative, there's no mention of any prophets, but in the parallel chunk in the book of Chronicles, we read that the rest of the acts of Solomon from the first to the last, are they not written in the history of Nathan the prophet and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilohanite and the visions of Edo the seer concerning Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.

[11 : 58] Now, Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, you read about him often in the text of the book of Kings. And what is it that people, what the recorded history says about him?

He caused Israel to sin. So you see, there's a step, there's a downgrade step going on here. First of all, we read that Solomon did not keep the law of the Lord.

Then we read that his servant, who became king of the northern part of Israel, caused Israel to sin.

He who is often reproved, yet stiffens his neck, will suddenly be broken beyond healing. Now, what is it that this word reproved actually means?

In the text of the English Bible, it's translated as a verb, but it's actually a noun. And so the first bit actually reads man of reproof. It simply means the man who has been reproved.

[13 : 07] Now, this term, reproof or reprimand, occurs 16 times in the book of Proverbs. But only in chapter 29, verse 1, does it refer to Solomon himself.

In verse 25 of chapter 1, we read that, you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of nigh reproof.

So what is this reproof? What is this reprimand? In New Testament language, it's conviction of sin. Jesus said that when the Spirit of God comes, he will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Conviction of sin. Reproof. Reprimand. Reproof. Now, this verb that's used here in the New Testament, in John 16, verse 8, has a wide variety of meaning.

It means to show fault or error. It means to convince of fault or error. It means to reprove.

[14 : 36] It means to condemn. In other words, the ministry of the Spirit of God in that verse is like the prosecutor in a trial.

Because the prosecutor is there to prove that if it's you, you're guilty. And that's what the Spirit of God does.

He comes to you and shows you your fault. He comes to you and convinces you of your fault or error. He reproves you and he condemns you.

That's conviction of sin. That's what this means. He's under conviction of sin, 29, verse 1, through the prophets that had spoken to him.

It's interesting to note that in 2 Peter, chapter 1, Peter identifies the prophets as men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

[15 : 48] And God is still speaking in this fashion. This isn't something that's unique to the history of revival in the past.

nor is it unique to the history of the early church in the Acts of the Apostles. This is for now. When he comes, he will convict the world of sin.

So there's a judgment. He who is often reproved yet stiffens his neck will suddenly be broken beyond healing.

Solomon, in this verse, states, he had often been reproved. But such was his contempt for God's word, he stiffened his resolve not to act on such warnings.

And that's expressed in the phrase in the first verse of chapter 29, yet stiffens his neck. Now this is a phrase that occurs again and again.

[17 : 02] It's the language of the prophets. Now in 2 Kings, chapter 17, that chapter is all about the actions of the kingdom that Jeroboam inherited.

That is, the northern part of Israel. You'll often have them referred to in the Old Testament other than names of Ephraim or Manasseh.

And these names are used because these tribes had the massive portion of the land. What's indicated is this is the northern part of Israel from whom the righteous had been expelled.

And so, 2 Kings 17, verse 14 says this, Now that phrase, we're stubborn, uses the same phraseology as Proverbs 29, verse 1.

That is, they stiffened their neck. It's an illustration of what is happening when people refuse God's word and resist the challenge that God makes to them.

[18 : 28] Now there are various prophetic challenges which are made to Solomon, one of which are quoted as, the Lord said to Solomon, since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant, the servant being Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

So what is this teaching us? It's teaching us this. there's a limit to the challenges that the Lord will put before us after which the day of grace is over and nothing remains but the judgment of God.

And you see that in chapter 29 verse 1. He will be broken beyond healing. Now this statement that I'm now drawing your attention to, this idea that the day of grace comes to an end, you can also find it in the story of the great flood, in the society that lived in Noah's day.

Concerning that society, God said this in Genesis 6 verse 3, My spirit shall not always strive with man for he is flesh, but his day shall be a hundred and twenty years.

The generation in which Noah lived was a wicked generation. He would not respond to the word of God through his servant Noah.

[20 : 18] And Jesus himself said, As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed? How was it in the days of Noah?

They bought, they planted, they built, they married, they gave in marriage. Of these things, there's absolutely nothing wrong with them.

But the point that Jesus is making to say is simply this, that in that society all these activities were being carried out to the exclusion of God and his worship.

Equally true of the day of Lot. Now what is it that the Lord had to say about the people of Sodom and Gomorrah? Well you don't find it in the Genesis narrative, but you do in the prophecy of Ezekiel chapter 16 49 to 50, where the Lord through the prophet refers back to the people of Sodom.

He says this, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom. She and her daughters had pride, surfeit of food, and prosperous eves, but they did not care for the poor and the needy.

[21 : 49] They were proud and did abominable things before me, therefore I removed them when I saw it. That people had stiffened their neck and would not respond to the offer of God's mercy.

There weren't even ten righteous people in Sodom. had there been, the judgment would not have fallen. Now all of this is true of Solomon, this ideal person of wisdom and prosperity.

And in something that was written later by him in the book of Ecclesiastes, he says this, better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who will no longer take advice.

So the opportunity is given to Solomon to repent and change his ways, but he has refused God's effort of salvation and mercy.

humanity. But Jesus Christ stands among us as the one who says, come unto me. Come unto me and experience God's grace before the day is ended.

[23 : 24] In the book of Revelation it says, Jesus speaking, behold, I stand at the door and knock. if anyone hears my voice and open the doors, I will come into him and eat with him and he with me.

Jesus Christ is knocking at your door. He's knocking at my door. He wants you and me to follow him, to give up everything if necessary and follow his leading to wherever that might take us.

The challenge is now. Will Father sing and can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood?

Amen.