

Setting

As you read the story, note the geographic locations mentioned (some are regions, some are nations, and others are cities). Locate the following places on the Bible map:

- Moab
- Edom
- Midian
- Paran
- Ammon
- Sidon
- Damascus
- Zeredah
- Jerusalem



Key Terms

Local false gods mentioned in this passage:

- **Ashtoreth:** “The name by which the Canaanite goddess more commonly known as Astarte is referred to in the OT; Ashtaroth (*ʾaštārôt*) is the plural form of this name. Astarte was a consort of Baal, the great Canaanite storm and fertility god.”¹
- **Milcom:** An alternate name for **Moloch** (or **Molech**). “Molech is found generally in contexts of cultic child sacrifice.”²
- **Chemosh:** “(*kēmōš*, the god of the Moabites, the people of Chemosh (Nu. 21:29; Jer. 48:46). The sacrifice of children as a burnt-offering was part of his worship (2 Ki. 3:27).”³

Covenant: a formal agreement between two parties that involves duties and blessing.

Story Moments

Solomon's Sin

11:1–2. How does Solomon directly disobey the Lord's commands about marriage?

- See Deuteronomy 7:1–5 for God's warnings about intermarriage with the pagan nations surrounding Israel. Why did God forbid Israel from marrying the people of the land?
- See Deuteronomy 17:14–20 (especially 17:17) for God's instructions to kings about marriage and wealth.

11:3. What is the result of Solomon's choice to marry so many foreign women?

11:4. When does Solomon begin to turn his heart away from the Lord? How does Solomon's faithfulness compare to David's faithfulness?

11:5–8. What actions does Solomon take that demonstrate his complete fall from a king who loved and served the Lord? From what you know of these false gods (see the descriptions under “Key Terms”), what would their worship look like? How does this show us the horror of what is happening in 11:8?

God's Response

11:9–10. Why does the Lord become “angry” with Solomon? Why does Solomon have no excuse for this wickedness?

11:11–13. What is God's judgment for Solomon's disobedience? What mercy does God show in His judgment against Solomon? Why does God say He has chosen to show this mercy?

¹ John Day, *AYBD*, s.v. “ASHTORETH(DEITY) ASHTAROTH,” 1:491.

² George C. Heider, *AYBD*, s.v. “MOLECH(DEITY) MOLOCH,” 4:895.

³ J.A. Thompson, NBD, s.v. “Chemosh,” 182.

Solomon's enemies

11:14–17. Whom does God raise up as an enemy to Solomon? How did David's armies contribute to this bad blood between the two nations?

11:18–20. With whom does Hadad have an alliance? How is this alliance formed? How does Pharaoh show favor to Hadad?

11:21–22. What event drives Hadad to return to his homeland?

11:23–25. Where is Rezon (another adversary) located (compare this with Hadad's homeland)? What kingdom does Hadad rule? How would this have put pressure on Solomon? What is Hadad's attitude towards Israel?⁴

11:26. What is the name of this last enemy of Solomon? What was his position before he rebelled?

11:27–28. What power does Solomon give to Jeroboam and why does he give it to him?

11:29–33. What sign does the prophet Ahijah give to Jeroboam about what would come to pass?

11:34–36. Why didn't God take away the entire kingdom from Solomon?

11:37–39. What promise does God give to Jeroboam about his future reign?

Solomon's final days

11:40–43. What does Solomon try to do to Jeroboam? How does Jeroboam respond?

Ask Yourself

Why was it so easy for Solomon to fall into the sin of idolatry? How can his fall be a warning to me?

What kinds of reasons might Solomon have given to excuse his sin?

What does this passage teach us about God's faithfulness even when we are unfaithful?

Cross References

Deuteronomy 7:2–5⁵

² "[A]nd when the LORD your God delivers them over to you, you shall conquer them *and* utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. ³ Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. ⁴ For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly. ⁵ But thus you shall deal with them: you shall destroy their altars, and break down their *sacred* pillars, and cut down their wooden images, and burn their carved images with fire."

1 Kings 3:1–3

¹ Now Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; then he brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall all around Jerusalem. ² Meanwhile the people sacrificed at the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. ³ And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

Exodus 20:2–3

² "I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

³ You shall have no other gods before Me."

Leviticus 18:21

And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through *the fire* to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD.

Habakkuk 3:2

O LORD, I have heard Your speech *and* was afraid; O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make *it* known; In wrath remember mercy.

2 Timothy 2:11–13

¹¹ *This is* a faithful saying: For if we died with *Him*, We shall also live with *Him*.

¹² If we endure, We shall also reign with *Him*. If we deny *Him*, He also will deny us.

¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

⁴ Note: the word for "adversary" is the Hebrew word *satan* and is used as a title for the Devil.

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