



February 15, 2015
1 Kings 11
“Heart Failure”
Pastor Gary Hamrick

Solomon Loved Many Foreign Wives

1. Solomon’s 700 wives were for bearing him children, and the 300 concubines were for his pleasure.
2. His 700 wives were considered to be princesses, but his 300 concubines were considered to be his legal partners, although they were inferior in status to his wives.
3. Solomon failed in two ways: he had many wives and he had foreign wives.
4. [1 Kings 11:1-2](#) - *“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.’ ”*
5. Although we read about polygamy many times in the Old Testament, we shouldn’t think that because polygamy existed, that the practice was acceptable to God, because it wasn’t.
6. God addressed polygamy in [Genesis 2:24](#), when he said: *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”*
7. Jesus restated God’s position on the matter in [Matthew 19:4-6](#), when he said: *“Haven’t you read, that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and*

female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.' "

8. The Apostle Paul reinforced Jesus' remarks in [Ephesians 5:31](#), which says: *"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."*
9. When asked on his 50th wedding anniversary for his secret to marital bliss and longevity, Henry Ford replied: "Just the same as in the automobile business. Stick to one model." ¹
10. God has no problem with interracial or international marriage.
11. The problem with Solomon's wives wasn't their nationality; it was their idolatry.
12. God did not want the Israelites to marry foreign wives because the real problem was the foreign gods that these foreign wives brought with them.
13. We read in [Deuteronomy 17:17a](#), that God specifically forbid the kings of Israel to have many wives: *"[The king] must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray."*

Pagan Worship

14. These gods were not just the average, every-day, "run of the mill" gods; these were serious, evil, and all-consuming gods, which required a combination of sexual practices and human sacrifices.
15. Ashtoreth
 - a. Also known to the Canaanites as Astarte, and Ishtar to the Babylonians.
 - b. The primary female deity of the Phoenicians and Sidonians [Lebanon].
 - c. The goddess of sensuality and fertility.
 - d. The worship of Ashtoreth involved prostitution, and lewd sexual practices, which took place out in the open on the *"high places."*
16. Molech
 - a. The god of the Ammonites [Jordan].
 - b. The worship of Molech included the sacrifice of children, which required children to pass through or into the fire.

¹ <http://www.harvest.org/devotional/archive/devotion/2008-12-08.html>

- i. Archeological excavations have uncovered skeletons of infants in burial places around heathen shrines.
- c. Ammonites revered Molech as a protecting father.
- d. Hebrew law prohibited worship of Molech.
 - i. **Leviticus 20:1-5** - *“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites: Any Israelite or any alien living in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death. The people of the community are to stone him. I will set my face against that man and I will cut him off from his people; for by giving his children to Molech, he has defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name. If the people of the community close their eyes when that man gives one of his children to Molech and they fail to put him to death, I will set my face against that man and his family and will cut off from their people both him and all who follow him in prostituting themselves to Molech.’ ”*

17. Chemosh

- a. The god of the Moabites [Jordan].
- b. The worship of Chemosh involved child sacrifice.
- c. Archeologists have excavated a stone tablet, known as the Moabite Stone, on which Mesha, king of Moab, recorded the sacrifice of his own son, who was to be the heir to the throne.
 - i. He did this because he believed Chemosh had helped him in battle.

18. It’s unimaginable, but the man who built the Temple of the Living God, also built altars to other gods on the Mount of Olives, and it was upon these pagan altars that children were sacrificed in full view of God’s Temple!

- a. **1 Kings 11:7** - *“On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.”*

19. It’s possible Solomon himself may have been guilty of sacrificing his own children to these gods.

- a. **1 Kings 11:8** - *“He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.”*

20. It’s interesting to note that out of 1,000 women, Solomon only had one son and two daughters, and the reason may be that his children were sacrificed as infants and therefore weren’t enumerated in the Bible.

- a. **1 Kings 11:43** - *“Then [Solomon] rested with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king.”*

- b. [1 Kings 4:11](#) - *“Ben-Abinadab - in Naphoth Dor (he was married to Taphath daughter of Solomon)...”*
 - c. [1 Kings 4:15](#) - *“Ahimaaz - in Naphtali (he had married Basemath daughter of Solomon)...”*
21. Jewish people today refer to the Valley of Ben Hinnom, which is the lower part of the Kidron Valley, as the Valley of the Children, in remembrance of the countless children who were slaughtered in the pagan worship of these false gods during the reign of King Solomon.
- a. [Jeremiah 32:35](#) - *“They built high places... in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to sacrifice their sons and daughters to Molech... [God] never commanded it, nor did it enter [his] mind...”*
 - b. These altars stood approximately 300 years, until King Josiah tore them down.
 - i. [2 Kings 23:14](#) - *“Josiah smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles and covered the sites with human bones.”*
22. We're left to wonder how Solomon, who specifically asked for and was given wisdom by God, and is known for being the wisest man who ever lived, could actively participate in these things!

You Can Have Everything Going For You Outwardly
And Still Be Inwardly Messed Up

23. God can give us things that we don't use properly.
- a. God can give us talent and we may not use it properly.
 - b. God can give us influence and we may not use it properly.
 - c. God can give us money and we may not use it properly.
 - d. God can give us wisdom and we may not use it properly.
24. In [1 Kings 10:23-29](#), we read some of the details about Solomon's riches, wisdom, etc., but juxtaposing these against [1 Kings 11:1](#) (*“King Solomon, however...”*), is telling.
25. Solomon set aside the wisdom of God and gave in to the foolishness of man.
26. It's tragic to see in [1 Kings 11:2](#) that he knew exactly what he was doing concerning the *“many foreign women.”*
- a. The Hebrew for *“held fast”* is *davaq*, which means to glue.
 - b. In other words, Solomon was glued to these women!

27. Some scholars believe Solomon entered into all these marriages as a way of making alliances with foreign kings, which was a common practice for making peace treaties.
- a. The idea was that no foreign king would attack you if you were married to his daughter, because you were “family.”
28. **1 Kings 11:9-13** - *“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.’ ”*

Big Sins Come From Little Compromises

29. **1 Kings 11:4** - *“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.”*
30. It seems that over time, and little by little, Solomon’s heart failed him.
31. It could be that he was “worn down” by 1,000 women or it could be that he just became complacent in his old age.
32. Pastor Gary said that he had discovered, over many years of pastoral ministry, that people don’t typically decide to commit the “big sins,” but instead they let little compromises go unaddressed, which leads to the “big sins,” including:
- a. Pornography - Fantasy leads to adultery
 - b. Unforgiveness - Bitterness leads to revenge
 - c. Discontentment - Jealousy leads to covetousness
 - d. Anger - Rage leads to murder
33. **Song of Solomon 2:15** - *“Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards...”*

Above All Else, Guard Your Heart

34. Solomon had a major heart problem.
35. **1 Kings 11:4** - *“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.”*
36. **1 Kings 11:9** - *“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.”*
37. **Proverbs 4:23** - *“Above all else, guard your heart; for it is the well-spring of life.”*
38. The heart is the seat of our emotions, it is our mind, and it is our will.
 - a. We need to protect our heart.
 - b. We need to look out for what influences our heart.
 - c. We need to be careful concerning who can have access to our heart.
 - d. We need to limit what we expose our heart to.
39. All matters of life, from behavior to attitudes and actions, bubble up from the heart like a spring; everything originates from the heart, because *“it is the well-spring of life.”*
40. Many things can turn our heart away from God, including a relationship, habit, friend, career, co-worker, or a need we haven't asked God to meet or heal.

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read **1 Kings 11:1-13** to provide the foundation for this study.
3. Spend time talking about the “1-in-60” rule ² and discuss examples of situations in which you veered off course because you allowed little compromises grow into “big sins.”
4. Read and discuss the Tiger Woods' quote Pastor Gary shared.

² If you are flying from point A to point B, and you are one degree off in your calculations, you will be one mile off target in 60 miles.

- a. "Money and fame made me believe I was entitled. I was wrong and foolish." – Tiger Woods
 - b. How has a sense of entitlement caused you to make wrong decisions and act foolishly?
5. What poses the greatest threat to potentially turning your heart away from God?
 6. What have you allowed into your life that could turn your heart away from God? (See #40 above)
 7. Read and discuss [Proverbs 4:23](#).
 - a. What are some practical ways to "*guard your heart*"?
 8. Allow the people in your group to share examples of the ways the Lord has helped them overcome temptation in the "little compromises" or the "big sins." (See #32 above)
 9. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: prayerfully examine themselves concerning the areas of compromise that could lead to "big sins"; remember that a holy life and a right relationship with the Lord are preeminent for Christians; guard their heart (have someone prepared to read and pray [Proverbs 4:23](#)).

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).