

Exegetical Notes – 1 Kings 11:1-8

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen for Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kyllies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

charleshjensen@aol.com

1 Kings 11:1-8

Verses 1-2

¹ King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. ² 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.

- In Exodus 34:12-17, God firmly warns Israel against making alliances, contracts, or intermarrying with the people who lived in Canaan. The warning specifically says that intermarriage between Hebrew men and non-Hebrew women will lead the men into the sin of worshipping false gods.
- Solomon chose to ignore this warning.
- The phrase, "held fast to them in love," means that he was devoted to the women he had married regardless of their background.

Verse 3

³ He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.

- Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines. This means that he had 1000 women with whom he had sexual relations.
- Because he "loved" these women, he allowed them to honor the religious affiliations they had had prior to their relationship with him. Eventually, he joined them in worshipping the gods of their choice. He followed them in worshipping gods other than YHWH.
- Solomon did not lead his "women" to YHWH! Instead, they led him away from YHWH! This is exactly what God had warned would happen.

Verses 4-5

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. ⁵ He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites.

- As time passed, Solomon's devotion to these false gods supplanted his devotion to YHWH.
- Solomon was specifically devoted to Ashtoreth and Molek. Ashtoreth was a goddess. Worshiping her involved ritual prostitution and child sacrifice. She promised fertility and prosperity to those who worshiped her. Molek was her male counterpart. Worshiping him also involved ritual prostitution and child sacrifice. He also offered those who worshiped him fertility and prosperity. So, while Solomon still worshiped YHWH, he also worshiped these false gods who required of those who worshiped them practices which were detestable to YHWH.

Verse 6

⁶ So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the Lord; he did not follow the Lord completely, as David his father had done.

- Solomon did what these false gods required of their followers. He became unfaithful to YHWH!

Verses 7-8

⁷ 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. ⁸ He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

- Solomon established a "high place" for the worship of Chemosh and Molek. (Chemosh may actually be another name for Molek.) This god also required ritual prostitution and child sacrifice from his followers.
- A "high place" was a place specifically devoted to the worship of these gods. Child sacrifice may actually have been practiced at the place Solomon built for these gods. Certainly, ritual prostitution was practiced there. Solomon brought these practices to Israel.
- The final sentence implies that while Solomon actually worshiped the three gods named in this passage, he also established "high places" for the

worship of other gods who his many wives worshiped. Solomon's devotion to YHWH was undermined by his devotion to his wives.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon based on 1 Kings 11:1-8. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. All rights are reserved by Cornerstone Fellowship & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)