

When God's Faithfulness Isn't "Nice"

1 Kings 11

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, ²from 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. ³He had 700 wives, [that means he had 700 mothers-in-law] princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. ⁴For 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. ⁵For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done. ⁷Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. ⁸And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods. 1 Kings 11:1-8 (English Standard Version)

- **ABOVE ALL ELSE, GOD WANTS OUR WHOLE-HEARTED DEVOTION.**

- Heart = the willing, thinking, feeling center of a person: the real inner you
- Whole-hearted devotion = a mind that sets itself to understand God, a will that sets itself to obey God, and emotions that set themselves to love God

Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. Psalm 86:11 (New International Version)

"And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought.
1 Chronicles 28:9a (English Standard Version)

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money." Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. 2 Chronicles 16:9a (NIV)

Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. Proverbs 4:23 (New Living Translation)

- An important element of listening to God and staying current with Him: ongoing, interdependent relationships with committed Christians.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24 (NIV)

And 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 ¹⁰and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the LORD commanded. 1 Kings 11:9-10 (ESV)

- **GOD DOESN'T TOLERATE HALF-HEARTEDNESS.**

God's anger = His direct, calculated response to sin

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. ¹⁰He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; . . . Psalm 103:8-11 (ESV)

- **GOD DISCIPLINES BELIEVERS WHOSE HEARTS DRIFT AWAY FROM HIM.**

And the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He was of the royal house in Edom . . . ²³ God also raised up as an adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah . . . ²⁶ Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king.
1 Kings 11:14, 23, 26 (ESV)

And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, ⁶because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." ⁷Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons.
Hebrews 12:5-7a (NIV)

- **GOD'S DISCIPLINE IS ALWAYS TINGED WITH HIS MERCY.**

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. ¹²Nevertheless, 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. ¹³Yet 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."
1 Kings 11:11-13 (NIV)