

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

July 2

MONDAY

God does not ignore all that's going on. He appeared to Solomon, commanding him against these very things: marrying heathen girls and worshiping their gods. But Solomon chose not to obey His commands.

READ: I Kings 11:9-10

How simply the explanation of Solomon's spiritual ruin is described: *he did not observe what the Lord had commanded*. He just didn't do what God told him to do. Do you want God's pleasure and blessing to be upon you? Just do what He says. Follow Him with your whole heart. Examine yourself, and be certain that in your life, with all that lies within you, you are following the Lord!

TUESDAY

God tells Solomon that, because of his disobedience, he is taking the kingdom from him, and giving it to one of his servants. But, the Lord explains, that will happen when Solomon's son comes to the throne. For the sake of Solomon's father, David, God will allow Solomon to remain as king throughout his lifetime.

READ: I Kings 11:11-13

Solomon's actions produce consequences, and they will come. But the same is true of David's actions. And David's actions also produced consequences, and those consequences will prove of great benefit to his son. The greatest heritage we can pass on to our children (and grandchildren) is that we follow the Lord with all our heart! We cannot predict what the consequences might be, but this story gives us every confidence that they will matter, and matter greatly, and matter for eternity. Be faithful, my friend, for He is faithful!

WEDNESDAY

Although most of Solomon's long reign was peaceful, an enemy arises. He is Hadad the Edomite. A brief history lesson gives us some background on the story behind Hadad rising up against Solomon.

READ: I Kings 11:14-17

David had fought against, and defeated Edom, a neighboring country to the southeast, on the other side of the Dead Sea. David's generals, Abishai and Joab, directed the fighting. (check out the sub-title for Psalm 60) A few Edomites escaped, and one of these, a member of the royal family, was Hadad. So, about 30 or 40 years ago, God put into place, all the pieces in a puzzle that will not come together until this moment in Solomon's life! Are not God's ways astounding! I wonder how He has prepared the path ahead of you today? We may not figure that all out, but we know that He has.

THURSDAY

Continuing the background for the revolt of Hadad, we are told that some Edomites escaped death and fled to Egypt, where the Pharaoh welcomed them big time. He even let Hadad marry his sister-in-law! They had a baby boy and he was raised along side of the children of the Pharaoh himself.

READ: I Kings 11:18-20

Trouble can always find a home. Hadad represents trouble (he will harass Solomon) and he's found a home in Egypt. Though not an active enemy of Israel at this moment (remember: Solomon married one of Pharaoh's daughters!), Egypt will become an enemy. Perhaps Hadad is laying the groundwork for that. There's an unspoken warning in all this: be sure that trouble does not find a home in your life. Stay awake and stand guard against it. Keep yourself pure. Give no room to Satan or his whisperings or devices.

FRIDAY

Years went by. Then, one day, Hadad heard that David was dead. He asked the Pharaoh to allow him to return home to Edom. The Pharaoh is surprised: *What could you find there that I have not given you?* he asked him. The answer we know: a chance to seek revenge on David's family.

READ: I Kings 11:21-22

The time frame is not exact, but we're probably looking at the passing of 20 to 30 years before Hadad decides to return. That's a long time to wait to get even. He must have thought David too strong an enemy to attempt such a thing. But now, with his son on the throne, perhaps... Isn't it amazing how powerful a fuel hatred is? It can keep us waiting for revenge for years. It can take us from the place God has for us - a place where He gives us all things in Christ Jesus - and drive us to a place of anger, jealousy, and even rage.

Or (a better choice) it can be given to the Lord.

SATURDAY

Solomon had another adversary: Rezon was his name, and he was from Aram (or Assyria). From his home base in Damascus, he apparently led forays into Israel to raid, attack, and rob.

READ: I Kings 11:23-25

Rezon, himself a fugitive from his own king, became an outlaw leader. He moved into Damascus and reigned there. Solomon has grown careless to the dangers around him and the responsibilities of being king. In the same way that Samson's great strength left him when he ignored his vow to God, so too does Solomon's wisdom seem to leave him as he drifts away from the Lord. The blessings of God are for those who follow Him whole-heartedly.