

Sunday 10-July-22

The History that God Controls

1 Kings 11:14-43

Solomon's Adversaries

¹⁴ Then the LORD raised up against Solomon an adversary, Hadad the Edomite, from the royal line of Edom. ¹⁵ Earlier when David was fighting with Edom, Joab the commander of the army, who had gone up to bury the dead, had struck down all the men in Edom. ¹⁶ Joab and all the Israelites stayed there for six months, until they had destroyed all the men in Edom. ¹⁷ But Hadad, still only a boy, fled to Egypt with some Edomite officials who had served his father. ¹⁸ They set out from Midian and went to Paran. Then taking people from Paran with them, they went to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food.

¹⁹ Pharaoh was so pleased with Hadad that he gave him a sister of his own wife, Queen Tahpenes, in marriage. ²⁰ The sister of Tahpenes bore him a son named Genubath, whom Tahpenes brought up in the royal palace. There Genubath lived with Pharaoh's own children.

²¹ While he was in Egypt, Hadad heard that David rested with his ancestors and that Joab the commander of the army was also dead. Then Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me go, that I may return to my own country."

²² "What have you lacked here that you want to go back to your own country?" Pharaoh asked.

"Nothing," Hadad replied, "but do let me go!"

²³ And God raised up against Solomon another adversary, Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his master, Hadadezer king of Zobah. ²⁴ When David destroyed Zobah's army, Rezon gathered a band of men around him and became their leader; they went to Damascus, where they settled and took control. ²⁵ Rezon was Israel's adversary as long as Solomon lived,

adding to the trouble caused by Hadad. So, Rezon ruled in Aram and was hostile toward Israel.

Jeroboam Rebels Against Solomon

²⁶ Also, Jeroboam son of Nebat rebelled against the king. He was one of Solomon's officials, an Ephraimite from Zeredah, and his mother was a widow named Zeruah.

²⁷ Here is the account of how he rebelled against the king: Solomon had built the terraces and had filled in the gap in the wall of the city of David his father. ²⁸ Now Jeroboam was a man of standing, and when Solomon saw how well the young man did his work, he put him in charge of the whole labor force of the tribes of Joseph.

²⁹ About that time Jeroboam was going out of Jerusalem, and Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh met him on the way, wearing a new cloak. The two of them were alone out in the country, ³⁰ and Ahijah took hold of the new cloak he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. ³¹ Then he said to Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces for yourself, for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'See, I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you ten tribes. ³² But for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, he will have one tribe. ³³ I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Molek the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in obedience to me, nor done what is right in my eyes, nor kept my decrees and laws as David, Solomon's father, did.

³⁴ "'But I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand; I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant, whom I chose and who obeyed my commands and decrees. ³⁵ I will take the kingdom from his son's hands and give you ten tribes. ³⁶ I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name. ³⁷ However, as for you,

I will take you, and you will rule over all that your heart desires; you will be king over Israel. ³⁸ If you do whatever I command you and walk in obedience to me and do what is right in my eyes by obeying my decrees and commands, as David my servant did, I will be with you. I will build you a dynasty as enduring as the one I built for David and will give Israel to you. ³⁹ I will humble David's descendants because of this, but not forever."

⁴⁰ Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam fled to Egypt, to Shishak the king, and stayed there until Solomon's death.

Solomon's Death

⁴¹ As for the other events of Solomon's reign—all he did and the wisdom he displayed—are they not written in the book of the annals of Solomon? ⁴² Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ⁴³ Then he rested with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king.

John 5:16-24

The Authority of the Son

¹⁶ So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. ¹⁷ In his defense Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working." ¹⁸ For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

¹⁹ Jesus gave them this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. ²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give

it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him.

²⁴ “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

Sermon: The History that God Controls

We’re looking at **1 Kings Chapter 11 – verses 14 to 43.**

Let me **pray** before we take a look at this passage.

Let’s pray...

Intro/ Promise to David (2 Samuel 7:12-16)

[Slide 1-Dark]



When I was a **little boy** – probably **like most little children** – I was **afraid of the dark**? I would say to myself “*maybe there’s someone hiding in the dark or under my bed*”. At **first** my **parents left** my **door open** a little and I got the **light from** the **hallway**. **Eventually** mum and dad **bought me a little lantern** which I carried to bed – and I **felt so much safer**.

Light conquers darkness – as soon as you turn a light on – **darkness disappears**

There are **two types of darkness** – **physical** darkness and **spiritual** darkness.

Just like turning on a light get's rid of physical darkness – perhaps there's an **answer to spiritual darkness?** We'll get to that **shortly!**

But first...

From last week we saw **Solomon walking in spiritual darkness.**

He married **700 wives** and **300 concubines** and they **turned his heart away from the one true God**, the Lord God of Israel, and he **followed** and **worshipped** the **false gods** of his foreign wives.

God decided that He would **punish Solomon** – and **tear away his Kingdom.**

Should we be surprised about this?

Well – **no!**

God made this promise to **Solomon's father, King David**, in 2 Samuel 7:12-16

[Slide 2-The Promise]

¹² When your [David's] days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring [Solomon] to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house [Solomon built the Temple] for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he [Solomon] does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men [That's what's going to happen in 1 Kings 11:14-43],

[Slide 3-The Promise]

with floggings inflicted by human hands [And this also happened to Jesus but He did no wrong!]. ¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will endure forever [Because Jesus as a descendant of David is the Forever King] before me; your throne will be established forever.”

Despite what people might have thought back then and despite what people think even today ...

God is in sovereign control of ALL of history.

It's like **God's will and purposes** run in parallel to human being's free will – and **God knows all that will happen before it happens** – yet at the same time – humans have free choice.

God can use our good, bad and ugly – and other peoples' good, bad and ugly – to accomplish His promises and purposes.

In **1 Kings 11:14-43**

God allows 3 adversaries to bring His judgment on **Solomon** and punish Solomon for his sin and rebellion.

Two foreign adversaries and one adversary from **within Israel**.

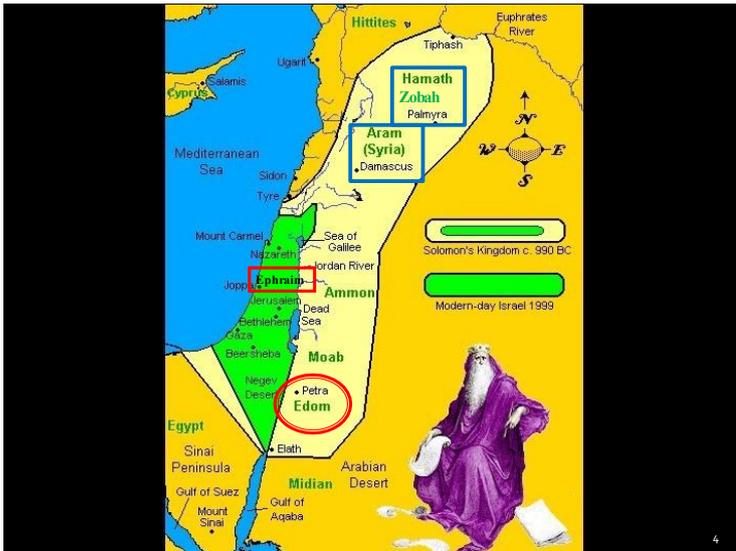
Let's take a look...

Three Adversaries of Solomon (1 Kings 11:14-28)

Two Foreign Adversaries – Hadad and Rezon (1 Kings 11:14-25)

The first foreign adversary God allows to come on the scene is a guy called Hadad from **Edom** – we see this in **verses 14 to 22**.

[Slide 4-Map]



Edom is the red circle on the map – south east of Israel.

Hadad as a **boy** had **survived** an **attack** from King **David's** army led by Joab – some years earlier (this story is recorded in **2 Samuel 8**)

Hadad was taken to **Egypt** by some of his **father's officials** – and not killed – like the rest of the Edomites.

Whilst in **Egypt**, **Hadad** is well **cared for** by the **Pharaoh** and when Hadad grows up, Pharaoh even gives Hadad, a sister of his own wife, Queen Tahpenes, in marriage.

When Hadad hears that King David is now dead – he **wants to return** to his **homeland** of **Edom** – and cause trouble for Solomon

We're meant to see – that despite Hadad not being an Israelite – **God allows Hadad to be one of the people He will use to bring judgment on Solomon** for his sin and rebellion

The second foreign adversary, God allows to come on the scene is a guy called Rezon – we see this in **verses 23 to 25**.

Rezon had also fled during a time when King David had attacked Rezon's master, King Hadadezer of Zobah and destroyed the army of Zobah (again this story is in **2 Samuel 8**).

Rezon, in his escape gathered a band of men and **went to Damascus** – and **ruled Aram** (modern day Syria)

Zobah and Aram are on the map in [blue squares](#) – north east of Israel.

It's like **God allowed these two foreign adversaries** to survive so that they would be a constant thorn in the side of Solomon **during the remainder of his reign.**

As v25 says: *Rezon was Israel's adversary as long as Solomon lived, adding to the trouble caused by Hadad.*

God is in sovereign control of ALL of history.

[One Adversary from Within – Jeroboam \(1 Kings 11:26-28\)](#)

God also allowed one more adversary against Solomon– we see this in **verses 26 to 28** The adversary this time is from within Israel; one of Solomon's officials, **Jeroboam**, son of Nebat. Jeroboam was an Ephramite from Zeredah (**Ephraim** – is the [red rectangle](#) on map). The threat from within was the **greatest threat.**

It's like Solomon is **surrounded by adversaries** – north and south – and in the **middle of his own country!**

Jeroboam is **described** as '*a man of standing*'. It seems **Solomon** was so impressed with Jeroboam's work that he put Jeroboam in charge of the whole labour force that was building terraces to fill in the gap in the wall of the city of David (Jerusalem).

Jewish tradition says: that **Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon** because of **Solomon's oppressive use of forced labor in these building projects.**

Application

There will **always** be **consequences** for sin and rebellion.

Solomon found this out the **hard way**.

Back in 1 Kings 5:4 – Solomon said: “... *now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side, and there is no adversary (Hebrew word: *satan*) or disaster.*”

But now here in chapter 11 - **God has raised up (allowed) three adversaries (satans): Hadad, Rezon and Jeroboam.**

There will **always** be **consequences** for our sin and rebellion too!

(pause)

The Judgment on Solomon (1 Kings 11: 29-33, 35, 37-38, 40-43)

Ultimately though, it's Jeroboam whom God will use to bring about his judgment on Solomon – and bring about the downfall of **Solomon's kingdom**

That's in **verses 29 to 43**

V29 - **Jeroboam** is on his way out of Jerusalem – one day - when he **meets a prophet** from Shiloh called **Ahijah**; whom we have not come across before.

V30 - **Ahijah** is **wearing a new cloak** – but he **tears it into 12 pieces** – and **tells Jeroboam** – v31 - to **take 10 pieces** – not so Jeroboam can sew the garment back together!

Ahijah tells Jeroboam that these **10 pieces** are **symbolic of God's judgment** – that **God** is going to tear the Kingdom of Israel from Solomon's hand and **give 10 tribes** (out of 12) **to Jeroboam**.

[Slide 5-Divided Kingdom]



But for the sake of God's promise to King David – v32 – Solomon will be allowed to keep one tribe to rule over.

There might seem like a **mathematical problem here** – if there are 12 tribes – and **Jeroboam gets 10 and Solomon gets 1** – we are one short.

Mathematical **problem** is **solved** either by

- a) the prophecy meaning one tribe (Benjamin) besides Solomon's tribe of Judah
- b) or the **tribe of Benjamin being swallowed up by the tribe of Judah.**

So, the **10 pieces = 10 tribes** that will be given to Jeroboam = Northern Kingdom = aka Israel

2 pieces = 2 remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin = Southern Kingdom = aka Judah.

V33 - The reason for God's intended action is because they (the **people** of Israel as well as Solomon) have **forsaken the one true God of Israel** and worshipped Ashtoreth (goddess of Sidon), Chemosh (god of Moab) and Molek (god of Ammonites), and have not walked in obedience to God and not kept God's laws and decrees as Solomon's father, David, did.

Note: the worship of these gods required **child and human sacrifices!**

So, **God promises** – v35 – that **Jeroboam will have ten tribes**

But this promise is conditional – see v37-38

Jeroboam will be king of Israel and rule over all that his heart desires.

But the conditions are: If Jeroboam obeys God’s decrees and commands, as King David did, God will be with him and Jeroboam will have a dynasty like King David. Which of course **begs the question:** will Jeroboam obey God’s decrees and commands; and what will happen if he doesn’t!

By the time we get to chapters 12 to 14, we will see that Jeroboam does not obey God’s decrees and commands. [Spoiler Alert!]

We then see in **v40** that **Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam** and **Jeroboam had to flee to Egypt for safety** – until Solomon died.

Why did Solomon try to kill Jeroboam?

EITHER – because God had told Solomon that his Kingdom would be torn away – and Solomon **thought he could stop this happening by killing Jeroboam**

OR – Jeroboam – on hearing Ahijah’s prophecy that God would tear Solomon’s kingdom away and give it to Jeroboam – **Jeroboam thought he would take matters into his own hands and rebel** – but God clearly said He would tear the kingdom away during the reign of Solomon’s son (v35).

The remaining verses 41 to 43 – **summarize Solomon’s reign**

Solomon **reigned 40 years.** We are not given an assessment of his reign, just a statement that other events involving Solomon are written in the book of the annals of Solomon.

Solomon’s son, Rehoboam succeeds him. Rehoboam means “he who enlarges the people”. Ironic name perhaps – **given the Kingdom is getting smaller!**

Application

- a. **God is in sovereign control of all of history; let's not ever forget it. Even with what is going on in the **Ukraine** right now!**
- b. When we reflect back on our lives – we **can see clearly God's sovereign hand on various incidents/events in our lives** and we can say ***"if God hadn't allowed this or that to happen – or if God hadn't have stopped this or that from happening – then this would not have happened"***.

God uses our good, bad and ugly to bring about His purposes.

- c. What happens to Solomon and what happens to Jeroboam later on in the next few chapters – is **because of their disobedience.**

Jesus says to us in John 14:15 ***"if you love me, keep my commands"***. That's one way, we can show we love Jesus!

God's Grace (1 Kings 11:34, 36, 39 and John 5:16-24)

But **in God's sovereignty** – as well as implementing His Divine justice

God always shows grace

We see this grace in verses 34, 36 and 39

[Slide 6-Grace]

In V34 – **There is hope** - in that it's not the whole kingdom being torn away.

In V36 – **There's hope** – in that **one tribe will remain.** Why? God says - **so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, where God's name dwells.**

This lamp of David is:

- a. Symbolic of: **continuing life.** To put out a lamp or brazier meant the **end** of the **family line.** To keep the lamp burning – meant the **family line continued**
- b. The lamp is symbolic of: **Continuous succession.** David's line to continue – **through to Jesus and into eternity.** (See 1 Kings 15:4).

- c. And the lamp is symbolic of: Divine guidance. The Bible says in a few places that - *God's Word is always a lamp to our feet* (Psalm 119:105; 2 Samuel 22:9; Proverbs 6:20, 22). But to forsake God's word is to walk in darkness.

Also, in V39 – There's hope - even though David's descendants – Solomon etc. – **are humbled** – it will not be forever!

The way that this hope plays out – is that because the kingdom is not completely torn away – and **David's family line continues with his light never going out** – means that one of David's descendants – **Jesus** – **is the Light for the World** (John 8:12)

God the Father – in control of all history – allows His Son – **Jesus** – to step into history Which is where our **NT reading from John 5:16-24** comes in [[Please turn there now](#)]

See v17 - Jesus says "*My Father is **ALWAYS** at work to this very day, and I (Jesus) am too working*". We see how God was working in the passage from 1 Kings 11:14-43; God raises adversaries to tackle Solomon's rebellion; yet He is also at work making sure His promise to David is kept, in that one of David's descendants, will be that forever King that He promised.

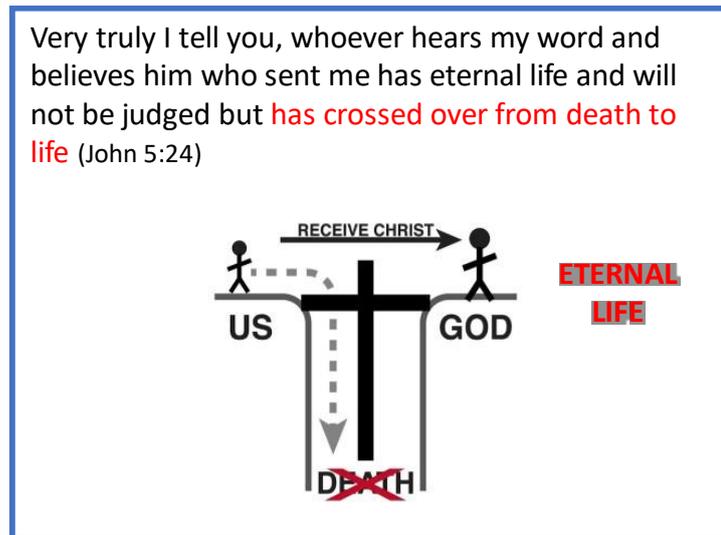
Also, in this passage from John, we see that unlike the people of Israel and their kings, Jesus can only do "*what He sees the Father do*" (v19) – and we see – that **the Father has entrusted Jesus, the Son, with the judgment of all people** (v22).

We can also see – **a way to avoid judgment on our sins!**

You see - just like the Israelites - we also fail to fully obey God's rules and commands; and just like there was grace in 1 Kings 11; there is grace here in John v24 for us.

In v24 – **Jesus is like a bridge** – a bridge from sin and death – to forgiveness and eternal life.

[Slide 7-Bridge]



Jesus says: ²⁴ *“Very truly I tell you, **whoever hears my word and believes him** who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has **crossed over from death to life**”.*

Application

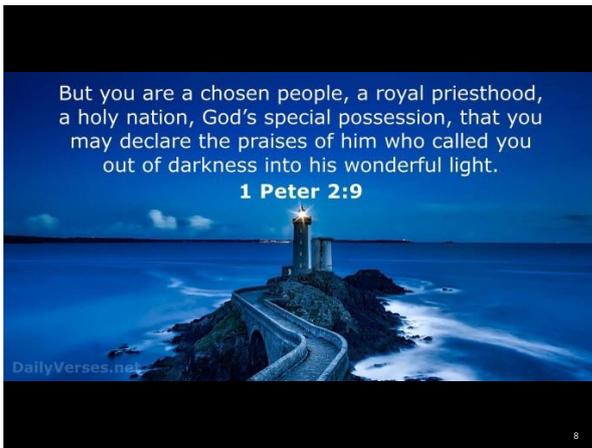
- a. **God afflicts but He does not abandon; there is always a way back if we repent.**
There is a **ray of hope** behind the **clouds of judgment**. That ray of hope is Jesus.
- b. It was **no fun for Israel to go from** the **Golden Age of Solomon to the Torn Kingdom**; but the people of Judah can endure because it's not forever (1 Kings 11:39).
Whatever we are going through right now – in a world of turmoil with Covid, wars, protests, strikes, financial crisis, floods, droughts and bushfires. **We can endure, because it's not forever; Jesus has saved us for eternity in Heaven** – if we care to believe in Him!

Conclusion (The Answer to Spiritual Darkness is the Light of Jesus)

The answer to Solomon's spiritual darkness and our spiritual darkness is the light of Jesus

You see - because of Jesus – the **Apostle Peter** tells us in 1 Peter 2:9 – which we will finish with

Slide 8-1 Peter 2:9



But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

This means we are **God's chosen people** and **special possession** – and we are meant to **shine that wonderful light of Jesus into other people's lives...**

Let's pray...

Father God, we thank you that you are in sovereign control of all history.

You use our good, bad and ugly to achieve your purposes.

Thank you that you operate with both divine justice and divine grace.

Thank you that you sent Jesus – the Light for the World – and that He is the bridge – for all who care to believe in Him – to cross over from death to eternal life.

Help us to shine the light of Jesus in others' lives.

In Jesus' precious name. Amen.

Benediction (Ephesians 6:10-13)

*“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, **against the powers of this dark world** and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore, put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”*