

BIBLE STUDY NOTES  
All Nations Bible Study Groups, Term 2 2020

1 Kings 11  
**THE DANGER OF SIN**  
For the week starting June 7, Study 7

**Introduction**

1 Kings 11 is a terribly sad chapter, detailed the things that led to the fall of Solomon from faithful following God to worship other gods.

The aim of this study is for us to think about the nature of sin so that we can learn from Solomon's mistakes rather than falling into them ourselves.

**To get you thinking**

- When you think of high-profile Christians or perhaps friends of yours who have wandered from God, what factors tend to be most prevalent? Why do you think that is?
  - Christians should put God first, to love him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. How would you know, in practice, what you love most? How could you tell if someone loved God first or whether they loved something else more?
  - What do you think influences what we want to the greatest degree? Make a list of the significant influences on your wants and desires.

**Context**

1 Kings 9-10 outlines the majesty of Solomon's kingdom and his influence on other nations. We focussed in the last study on the Queen of Sheba and her response to the people of God and their king. Today we see the other side of things: Solomon the sinner who turned from God.

We'll read 1 Kings 11:1-10 and then move to the questions.

## 1 Kings 11:1-10 questions

- Why did King Solomon have so many wives?
  - Where did they come from? Why are these nations, in particular, a problem?
  - We're told that Solomon loved them, and clung to them. What does that mean?
  - Define 'love'. Is it a feeling, is it an action or an attitude? How might you know if two people loved one another?
  
- How many wives did Solomon have? What is a concubine?
  - The Bible consistently teaches that marriage should be between one man and one woman. Yet Solomon, like David, had many. Does that mean that we shouldn't limit ourselves to one spouse? Discuss.
  
- A significant focus in this section is on the word 'heart'. What is the 'heart' that is referred to in these verses?
  - What does it mean that his heart turned away from God (v4)? How would you tell this by observing his actions and attitudes?
  - Why did Solomon turn to other gods?
  
- This has to raise the issue of Christians marrying non-Christians, a touchy but essential topic.
  - Do you think it is OK for Christians to date those who are not yet Christian, in the hope that they will convert so they can get married? Why/why not?
  - What issues would you expect to come up over time in a relationship between a Christian and a non-Christian?
  - I assume that most non-Christian spouses will not insist on a shrine being built to Molech. What is the equivalent to this in our modern world?

- On a related note, do you think that it is a problem if all of your close friends are not Christian? Is that likely to be a problem for your faith or not?
  
- Solomon ended up doing some horrific things like building shrines to abominations, gods he knew were not the true God. This didn't happen in one step, but slowly, over time.
  - How can repeated small sins lead us to a place where we commit much greater sins?
  
  - Do you think we sin because we don't know any better? Discuss.
  
- If even small sins are a step away from faithfulness to God, what practical steps can we take when we are tempted to sin? What will help us to resist temptation at that moment?
  - What steps might be taken positively (to understand how wonderful Jesus is) and negatively (to understand how bad sin is)?
  
- Reading Solomon's fall from faithfulness should not make us feel superior but incredibly sad.
  - In what way are we like Solomon in this passage?
  
  - How does this passage help us to appreciate Jesus more?
  
- How does knowing that you have the gift of the Holy Spirit help you think about sin?

### Some case studies

- Grant is a new Christian. He understands that a lot of his old behaviours are not in line with what God wants, and it bothers him. He wants to live a life that pleases God in every way, but some parts of his life are not like that. His friends are the same, his habits don't change overnight, and he struggles to know how to deal with all of this. If you were helping to disciple Grant, how would you help him to think about his sin? What advice might you give him, and how would you make sure that you focussed on Jesus and not him doing the right things?
  
- Helen is a non-Christian friend of yours who loves to speak about the high profile Christian leader scandals that make the newspapers. She notes that so many pastors and celebrity Christians have fallen from grace, and she sees this as evidence that Christianity is not real and doesn't work. How might you talk to Helen honestly about these news items? How can you think humbly and realistically about the stories of these former Christian leaders?
  
- Are there any other questions on this topic we should discuss?

**Prayer:** Take time to pray. Get to know one another's situations so you can pray better when you are apart as well.