

The Gospel Project® for Adults

Daily Discipleship Guide ESV, Unit 12, Session 4

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A Son Rejects Wisdom

Session in a Sentence: Sin against God has consequences that may impact others.

Main Passages: 1 Kings 11:1-13; 12:12-17

On an unusually cold Florida morning in January of 1986, the space shuttle *Challenger* lifted off from the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral to begin its tenth mission. Onboard was schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe, and her status as the first teacher in space ensured millions of school children were tuned in to watch the launch. Seventy-three seconds later, the *Challenger* exploded in a horrifying plume of smoke and fire.

The investigation into the disaster determined that the explosion was caused by the failure of a rubber gasket—an O-ring—that had become brittle and stiff due to the cold. As a result, flames escaped from the booster and ignited the fuel tank.

It's hard to believe that the failure of such a small ring of rubber could have such catastrophic consequences. What is even more tragic is that engineers were aware of the possibility of failure based on data from previous shuttle missions. Tragically, warnings were unheeded, and the shuttle blew apart, killing all seven onboard. ¹

Why are human beings prone to ignore warnings and the possibility of consequences?

Group Time

Point 1: Foolish choices compromise devotion to God (1 Kings 11:1-8).

1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, **2** from 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. **3** He had **700** wives, who were princesses, and **300** concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. **4** For 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. **5** For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. **6** So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done. **7** Then 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. **8** And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

In Deuteronomy 17:14-20, the Lord gave **instructions** to His people about how a king should behave. But looking at 1 Kings 10:14-29, it almost seems as though Solomon used these instructions as a checklist of “Things to do to disobey God.” And what he didn’t check off in chapter 10, he checked off in chapter 11: acquiring many wives.

How is our love for other people related to our love for God?

Solomon’s love for his many foreign wives led his heart astray, resulting in compromised, halfhearted devotion to the Lord. He didn’t merely indulge his foreign wives with their false gods, he followed these **false gods** himself. At some point, Solomon left his first love for the Lord (Rev. 2:4), and as goes the king, so goes the kingdom.

What wisdom and encouragement would you offer someone whose devotion to God is being compromised?

Point 2: Foolish choices come with consequences (1 Kings 11:9-13).

9 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 10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the LORD commanded. 11 Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, “Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. 12 Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13 However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen.”

If ever anyone were perfectly set up for success, it was *Solomon*. He had so much going for him, and yet, he still managed to rebel against God. The wisest man ever wasn't wise enough. So the Father deemed it time to discipline His son (2 Sam. 7:14). While God is infinitely patient with humanity (2 Pet. 3:9), He sets conditions on the exercise of His patience. Whenever He wants, for His timing is perfect, God is completely just to give *sinner*s what their rebellious hearts have earned and to give *sons and daughters* the discipline they need. We see a glimpse of God's righteous discipline here with Solomon.

How do you tend to view the consequences of your sin?

God's Judgment Natural Consequences God's Patient Discipline

Israel's long period of peace came to an end with Solomon's apostasy. God told Solomon that the kingdom would be torn from him and given to his servant. Yet even with this stunning consequence, the Lord sounded two *grace notes*.

1. The kingdom would not be divided until after Solomon's death (1 Kings 11:11-12).
2. The kingdom would not be torn away entirely from the house of David; God would allow one tribe to remain aligned with Solomon's son (v. 13).

How did preserving the house of David in spite of Solomon's sin fulfill God's purposes?

Point 3: Foolish choices create problems for others (1 Kings 12:12-17).

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king said, “Come to me again the third day.” 13 And the king answered the people harshly, and forsaking the counsel that the old men had given him, 14 he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.” 15 So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, “What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David.” So Israel went to their tents. 17 But Rehoboam reigned over the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah.

Rehoboam showed none of the humility his father had when he began to rule. Faced with a pressing decision, Rehoboam sought wisdom not from God but from other people. And rather than listening to the seasoned wisdom of his *elders*, he followed the advice of his *peers* to further burden his would-be subjects. Thus, the kingdom split.

Sin's Effects in the World: Sin does not only impact our relationship with God; it is also the root of our

_____ relationships with the people around us. Sin has infected and redirected the social structures of society, leading to _____ and _____.

Solomon's folly led to Israel's fracture, folly that was echoed in Rehoboam's choice to listen to the "wisdom" of his peers. Israel's subsequent history would be marked by division, downfall, and dissolution. But on God's timeline, the fall of the earthly kingdom of Israel paved the way for the spiritual restoration of Israel and the coming of the Son of David, the true wisdom of God.

What are some wise choices believers can make to bless others?

Voices from the Church

"Let us give humble thanks and joyful adoration to our perfect King, Jesus, who alleviates our burdens, provides for our greatest needs, and rules His kingdom with wisdom and justice." ²

-Tony Merida

My Mission

Because we have been forgiven of all our sin through Christ, we proclaim the foolishness of relying on our own wisdom for salvation and lift up Jesus as the only hope.

- **How will you trust that Jesus is God-given wisdom for you today?**
- **What are some ways your group can provide godly wisdom for those who are younger in our church?**
- **With whom will you share about Jesus, the wisdom of God for our salvation? Whom will you invite to be a part of your Bible study group to hear about God's wisdom in Christ weekly?**

Voices from Church History

"Now, I say, whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God." ³

-Martin Luther (1483-1546)