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**Day 147 – May 27**

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## ***Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)***

### ***Solomon's Glory Fades***

**Readings: *1 Kings 11:1-40***

#### ***Reflections:***

- At the height of Solomon's wisdom and glory, we now see how far he falls. Of the four major kings, Solomon is both the best and the worst combined. He builds the temple and possesses wisdom beyond measure. He also falls into idolatry unlike any other king because of his vast array of foreign wives (700) and concubines (300).
- What is fascinating about Solomon's inter-marriage is that it appears that his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter was blessed by God and would have been allowed even though it broke the law. It was all the other foreign wives and concubines that led him into idolatry and promoting idolatry in Israel.
- In God's judgment against Solomon we also see God's ongoing loyalty to David. It is fascinating that David, who in human terms, was the weakest of all the four kings, is the one that God is most loyal too. David's soft and humble heart, although also weak in many ways, resulted in God's ongoing devotion to him. Here we see once again that "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." In this case study of human leadership, God gives us four examples of great leaders who in the end all fail miserably. The only one that survives, not as a great leader but as a man after God's heart, is David. This is because of his humility. Once again as Israel is looking to a human leader to save them and have abandoned simply trusting God as their king, we discover that God turns our human intuition on its head. Strong leaders create huge problems. Weak and humble leaders, even though they can't really save people, can still be used by God because of their humility and dependence on him. This is a powerful lesson that will be repeated many times in the New Testament as the people God chooses to work through are not the strong and powerful, but the weak and foolish.
- God raises up adversaries to Solomon. Hadad receives a wife from Pharaoh just as Solomon had. God also raises up Rezon to be a rebel force. Finally God raises up Jeroboam to stand against Solomon. Jeroboam's story is told and this sets the stage for the fall of Solomon and the division of Israel. We have now passed the peak of Israel's story and begin our descent into division, sin and failure. The prophecy given to

Jeroboam makes this plain as the division of Israel is depicted as a robe being cut into pieces.

- The prophecy for Jeroboam has a fascinating conclusion pointing to Christ. "I will humble David's descendents because of this, but not forever." One day from the line of David will come a king, the true king of Israel and the world. He will be the Christ, the king of humility and weakness and the power of God.