

Solomon's Demise

1 Kings 11

2 Chronicles 9:29-31

Psalm 127

by Don Falkos

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The Lord had clearly instructed the people of Israel not to marry non-Israelites. "They will turn your hearts toward their own gods." Still Solomon married seven hundred women; most were daughters of foreign potentates. He also had three hundred concubines. In his old age, they did indeed turn his heart away from the Lord. He built shrines to every one of the gods his wives worshiped, and he worshiped with them. But unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

The Lord said to Solomon, "Since you have disobeyed me by worshiping other gods, I will tear the kingdom away from you and give it to someone else. But for the sake of your father, David, I won't do this while you're alive. I will tear the kingdom away from your son."

The Lord began to raise up adversaries to Solomon, including Jeroboam, a very capable young man and one of Solomon's own officials. One day Jeroboam encountered a prophet who was wearing a new cloak. The prophet took off the cloak and tore it into twelve pieces. He gave ten of these pieces to Jeroboam saying, "The Lord, the God of Israel, has a message for you: I am about to tear the kingdom away from Solomon. You will rule over the northern ten tribes of Israel. But Solomon's son will continue to rule over Judah and Benjamin in the south. If you follow me and obey my commands, I will be with you and will give you lasting rule over the Northern Kingdom of Israel."

Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but he fled to Egypt and stayed there until Solomon died.