

Heart attack

*For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father.
I Kings 11:4*

This commentary on the latter end of Solomon is reminiscent of a few chapters before, when the young king Solomon had finished his public prayer in dedicating the newly constructed temple to the LORD his God, and then exhorted the people of Israel who were present: “The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers... Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day” (I Kings 8:57-61). Although the LORD had personally appeared to Solomon twice in those beginning days, each time with a promise of blessing, both were also tied to a conditional warning (see I Kings 9:6-7). Yet the multitude of wives who turned his old heart away were amassed during his younger days of riches and wisdom. Along his way of apparent success, the younger Solomon had evidently thought himself impervious to the impact that his heathen wives’ idols could have on him. After all, look at all that he had done in the name of the LORD. Surely a man like that could not be swayed to worship any other god but Jehovah. However, the sad commentary in chapter eleven describing the downfall of Solomon illustrates how the heart of man can become more susceptible to attack with age. Just as it is with the physical heart of man, the spiritual heart (i.e., the will and desire) may lose the strength and resolve of its youth after many years of repeated fatigue. For Solomon, he even forgot his own exhortation to the people those many years before, and did not let his own heart therefore be perfect with the LORD his God. Let us apply our hearts to this wisdom and learn the lesson from the experience of Solomon. If we be young, let us avoid or remove those obstacles that may attack our hearts either now or later. Whether young or old, we must continually guard our hearts – our will, desire, and resolve – to test them in the sight of the LORD our God, that they may be upright before Him, especially now in this day of grace, when He will supply through the power of His indwelling Spirit both the cleansing and enabling power to perfect them before Him.