

## REFORMED CHURCH CLANWILLIAM : SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2014 MORNING SERVICE

**Sing before:** Psalm 91:7

*Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:*

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

Psalm 72:10

**Confession of faith:** Apostolic

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into Hell, the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, a holy universal Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting

**Amen.**

*After the reading of the Law we confess our guilt and pray for forgiveness and a new life before God with Psalm Scripture versification 9-1:11*

Law

Scripture Versification 9-1:11

**Prayer:**

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation of the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

**Amen**

Psalm 18:1

**Scripture reading:** 1 Kings 11

**Scripture text:** 1 Kings 11:10

**...and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded.**

(1Kings 11:10)

We receive gifts from the Lord and after a while we do not serve Him with it any longer!

- Even worse, we often pray something off from God that we later no longer use in service of God!
- This is not only relevant towards gifts we received but also responsibilities we are given.

Solomon became king. He is still a mere boy. He is between 18 and 20 years of age.

- He is given the responsibility by God to rule the children of God.
- Solomon realises his youth. He is very aware of his human inability.
- He knows that God can grant him grace so that his rule would succeed.

This young king starts his rule by having all his commanders and judges and monarchs and heads of families go to Gibeon.

- Hereby he accepts the responsibility to rule, in the Name of the Lord, over the children of the Lord
- He brings a thousand burnt offerings.
- He calls after the favour of God over his life task.

At Gibeon God favoured Solomon and appeared to him.

- In a dream the Lord told Solomon: **"Ask! What shall I give you?"** (1Kings 3:5)

Solomon is well aware about his youth and realised that he needed ripeness and knowledge to rule over all the people having different characters and problems

- Solomon requests wisdom from the Lord!
- This was good and the Lord promised to grant him a wise and knowledgeable heart.
- The Lord also promised to also grant him wealth and honour.

It was not just wisdom only! From that day onwards we hear God speaking to Solomon:

**4 "Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgements,**

**5 "then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.'**

(1Kings 9:4-5)

And chapter 6:12:

**"Concerning this temple which you are building, execute My judgements, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David.**

(1Kings 6:12)

Every time we hear the explicit condition:

- If you walk in My statutes...Then grace will be awaiting him.
- But should he not persevere in the will of God then he should certainly know that God would punish him.

You can feel the solemnity of the start of this youngster. He literary implores the blessing of God onto his work.

- But you also feel the big contrast at the end of this man's life.
- He starts his kingship in the Name of the Lord, but he ends with a fall worked by his wives.

In the Greek translation of the Old Testament many of the readings in this chapter start like this:

**Furthermore King Solomon was a lover of many women... Yes, he took many wives.**

The Hebrew Bible puts it like this:

**And king Solomon loved many alien women...**

So it came to pass that Solomon imported many alien faiths and alien elements under the cloak of wedlock into his palace.

This "many women" had two parts.

- Firstly there were the queens.
  - It was the queens and their sisters and other beautiful women the king married. There were 700 of them.
    - Solomon did not marry them because he loved them. Without a doubt there were those amongst them who he did love, but the majority of these weddings were business transactions.
    - Today we send our minister of foreign affairs to negotiate in another land and then he returns with a specific agreement.
    - In the times of Solomon the one king gave the other a wife from his kingdom to prove the goodwill of a specific matter.
  - Therefore Solomon had women of the Egyptian, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonian and Hittites people. These are people he did business with and with whom he had agreements.
- And there is the second group: He also had another 300 concubines.

On grounds of these matters the Bible clearly puts it very clearly.

- These nations are all the nations the Lord explicitly forbade Israel to mix with.
- The Lord also furnishes the reason: These nations are all heathens and are not converted, they would only estrange the children of God from their own religion!

- Solomon did not want to obey the command of God to not marry women from these nations, and he thus also harvested the bitter fruits thereof.

Solomon received the wisdom from God to know precisely what is right and wrong but still he does not differentiate like God commanded him to do!

- He does not use the gifts God granted him to glorify God!
- He does not practice the responsibility God placed upon him.

The advantages of his gifts became more important. It no longer dealt with ruling the children of God in the Name of the Lord.

- He harvested as much glory than possible for himself.
- He accrued as much wealth than possible for himself.
- He used the wisdom that God granted him for this instead of ruling the people.

The truth of this statement is also proven by the 300 concubines Solomon had. It was with the slave girls of his queens he had relations with. BUT it also was girls he bought!

- During these times the Greeks and the Phoenicians abducted girls from the West via Palestine to the East and then sold them there.
- Quite possibly Solomon also transgressed in this way.

Solomon did a lot for the foreign trade of Palestine.

- For every business agreement there was a woman from the land with which he entered into the agreement.
- In his own land he could not force the woman to stop her idolatry because then he would not be in good will towards the agreement he entered into
- In this way his heart was softened and he just had to learn to tolerate the idolatry.
- As time passed he became ripe for their convictions and the wrong matters in their culture.
  - Of course he sometimes had to accompany the women to their functions
  - At any rate where he entered into a foreign agreement he had to accompany that king to the heathen offer ceremony.
  - By this conduct he gave the evil a strong foothold into his innards.

This also explains why he built altars for Istar of the Babylonians.

- He wanted to give them the opportunity of practising their faith in his land.
  - That would mean that they would be more willing to undertake a business trip to his land.
  - More willingness to sell to him, but also to buy other products from him.
  - The same is true for Chemosh of the Moabites and the Molog service practised by the Ammonites.

These were the historical facts that helped bringing Solomon to a fall.

- This is why the Bible stresses that he women helped bringing this fall about.
- In his own palace he had a worshipper of every kind of idol. And these women were kind of like ambassadors for the people of their land.

- Because the political climate was favourable they gained a grasp onto Solomon and the fact that he regularly got to deal with idolaters made him even susceptible therefore.

The end of a great man is described by words that his women worked his undoing because he did not cling to the principles of God and eventually became also susceptible for false convictions.

We cannot blame Solomon.

- We often also live so that we entered into a compromise with the wrong.
- We accept many wrong matters because we got used to it.
- We learnt to like it or we obtain certain pleasure out of it.

Therefore moral and religious decay is more and more visible over the entire world: People no longer consequently and always ask about the principle involved. We no longer ask after the Will of God.

The moment this happens we have also reached the stage where we use our gifts to abandon God and stab Him in the back rather than worshipping Him therewith.

- Therefore the history of Solomon is so important: we must learn from this history what is expected from us.
- The Lord expects us to never relinquish the slightest of our principles.
- He demands from us to fully apply all our gifts to His Council.
- Do you note that the history of the time frame we are living in now is not much different to the times of Solomon. We will also have the same end should we not very carefully live and convert ourselves.

Notwithstanding the unchastely of Solomon (the idolatry towards the Ashtaroth is the proof) the money of Solomon spoke too loudly.

- Solomon offered up his godly wisdom and glory for more wealth.
  - So much so that the taxes he subjected the people to led to an uprising prior to his death.
  - The dissatisfaction of the people became clearly visible.
- For the sake of money he built altars on the high places.
  - These high places eventually were named “ the Mountain of Transgression”. As such Solomon was remembered.
  - Long after his death the Mountain of Transgression still bore witness that for the sake of his own wealth, he sold out the children of God!
  - In this way many of us will see ourselves the day we face God – people who, for the sakes of their own wealth or any other gain, condoned many wrong deeds.

The principle according to which we will then be punished is that we did not apply the gifts, that should have been for God, towards His glory.

We can say the same about our spiritual gifts. Through the cross and the following works of God the Holy Spirit we received the gift of faith. We are experienced Christians who are supposed to know the Bible and to build our entire life by prayer.

- Still many of us have weakened badly.
- Many of our children barely still know God any longer! Unluckily that is a truth that hurts! Many parents are shocked when they get to know the truth – but then it also so that there are many parents not wanting to know the truth about their children!
- In many instances the blame of the faltering of our children rests with our education. The gifts we have are no longer properly applied because we have learnt living with many wrong matters. Therefore we allow it like this in our education.

Come, let us together reflect upon how greatly God blesses us.

- So rich is His blessing that He even had His Son die in our place so that all our sins have been paid for.
- But every time the demand of God remains the same. As to Solomon the demand is also to us:
  - **Remain with God and His commandments – atonement means responsibility!**
  - Remain with the matters God expects you to comply with.

Christ also died so that we can have no excuse for our pigheadedness.

- He overcame the devil.
- He sent God the Holy Spirit to us.
  - **We can hence arrange our lives with godly wisdom; Our everything – literary every facet of our lives.**
  - **In such a way that we do not benefit thereby, but that God is glorified thereby.**

Should we not live like that or want to live like that, the cross-death of Christ ensures that we will be destroyed by God's judgement. Because Christ did not die for us to recklessly storm through life with His gifts.

Also not so that we must misuse the gifts He obtained for the kingdom of God in the world.

The life of Solomon clearly faces us. God uses it to speak to us:

- I have served you with spiritual and material gifts.
- Use it to My glory in My Kingdom and live till eternity.
- Or use it for yourself and die the death that lasts eternally in hell.

**Amen.**

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm 22;9

The Lord bless and keep you, the Lord make his face shine on you, the Lord turn His countenance to you and give peace.

**Amen**

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