

## 1 Kings 3 - Thursday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

- Last week, David died at about the age of 70, and appointed his son Solomon as the king, when he was about 16 years of age.
- About three or four years have gone by, which we know from the end of the last chapter when Shimei defied Solomon's order.
- As such, we can conclude that Solomon is now about 19 or 20 years old as he begins his reign as the king over all of Israel.

1 Now Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; then he brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall all around Jerusalem.

- Here in just the first verse, we have somewhat of a difficulty with what Solomon does here by marrying the Pharaoh's daughter.
- In a sense, this is wise because in that culture, it was the custom to marry royalty in order to avoid conflict any between nations.
- Actually this was a very common practice back then as well as today by virtue of the fact that it's a politically beneficial strategy.

- Solomon hasn't actually sinned by marrying an Egyptian wife because God didn't forbid it. God did forbid marrying a Canaanite.
- However, Solomon has sinned by multiplying wives, and we know from 1 Kings chapters 11 and 14, that this isn't his first wife.
- The reason I mention this is Solomon multiplying wives Egyptian and otherwise ultimately leads to greatly sinning against God.

Nehemiah 13:23-27 (NKJV) — 23 In those days I also saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. 24 And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke according to the language of one or the other people. 25 So I contended with them and cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters as wives to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons or yourselves. 26 Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him, who was beloved of his God; and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. 27 Should we then hear of your doing all this great evil, transgressing against our God by marrying pagan women?"

2 Meanwhile the people sacrificed at the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. 3 And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. 4 Now the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place: Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

- Here again we seem to have a paradox of sorts such that Solomon loved the Lord yet offered the sacrifices at the high places.
- The high places were Canaanite groves and altars for the worship of false gods, yet the Israelites used them for their worship.
- I suppose for us today it would be like worshipping God in a building that was originally used for very evil and wicked purposes.

- The question becomes one of whether or not doing this was a sin against God, and the answer to that is basically, yes and no.
- No in the sense that this was taking place because there was no temple to worship in and their worship was to the true God.
- Yes it was a sin when they still did it after the temple was built and as a result their worshipping had been to that of a false God.

5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" 6 And Solomon said: "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. 7 Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. 9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

- Couple of thoughts here on what would be deemed a well-known account in scripture, the first of which has to do with dreams.
- God still speaks to us in dreams today; however, those dreams have to be first and foremost in accordance with God's word.
- We must both possess and use spiritual discernment when it comes to dreams or we can be in danger of misinterpreting them.

- The second thought on this has to do with Solomon's humility as evidenced by what he says concerning his own inadequacies.
- In other words, Solomon knows that in and of himself he is unable to do that which God has called him to, namely, be the king.
- To me this is a quintessential component when it comes to humility, which is the catalyst for wisdom that comes from above.

Proverbs 11:2 (NKJV) — 2 When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

James 3:13-18 (NIV) — 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. 17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

- A third thought on this has to do with how that Solomon simply asked for wisdom, which to me indicates he had some wisdom.
- By that I mean it would stand to reason that he had to possess a degree of wisdom, to see the wisdom, of asking for wisdom.
- More specifically, Solomon had the wisdom to know he lacked the wisdom he needed, which is why he would ask God for it.

James 1:5–8 (NIV) — 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

- A final thought on this is concerning the fact that of all the things he could have asked God for, he would seek first His wisdom.
- To me, this speaks to the paramount importance of seeking first God's kingdom, God's righteousness, and God's wisdom too.
- We err greatly when we first seek other things instead of seeking God. Consider what Jesus said in his sermon on the mount.

Matthew 6:33 (NIV) — 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

10 The speech pleased the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing. 11 Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, 12 behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. 13 And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. 14 So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days." 15 Then Solomon awoke; and indeed it had been a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

- This is certainly a grand and glorious example of how God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.
- However, in spite of all this, we know from Solomon's life, especially at the end of his life, that he had in effect, wasted all of it.
- Sadly, his wealth and his wisdom, which exceeded that of anyone before him or after him, would be of no real benefit to him.

Adam Clarke of Solomon wrote, "Instead of being the wisest of men, did he not become more brutish than any man? Did he not even lose the knowledge of his Creator, and worship the abominations of the Moabites, Zidonians, and [so forth]? And was not such idolatry a proof of the grossest stupidity? How few proofs does his life give that the gracious purpose of God was fulfilled in him! He received much; but he would have received much more, had he been faithful to the grace given. No character in the sacred writings disappoints us more than the character of Solomon."

16 Now two women who were harlots came to the king, and stood before him. 17 And one woman said, "O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. 18 Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we were together; no one was with us in the house, except the two of us in the house. 19 And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. 20 So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. 21 And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne." 22 Then the other woman said, "No! But the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." And the first woman said, "No! But the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son." Thus they spoke before the king. 23 And the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son, who lives, and your son is the dead one'; and the other says, 'No! But your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'" 24 Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. 25 And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other." 26 Then the woman whose son was living spoke to the king, for she yearned with compassion for her son; and she said, "O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!" But the other said, "Let him be neither mine nor yours, but divide him." 27 So the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him; she is his mother." 28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

- There are a couple of observations that I would like to point out from this most fascinating account here of Solomon's wisdom.
- First, notice the hint of typology with what we're told happened on the third day after one of the women had given birth to a son.
- More specifically, one-son dies, the second son lives. This to me speaks of the first and second birth via Christ's resurrection.

- Another interesting type is found in verse 24, where we're told that in judging this case Solomon first said, "Bring me the sword."
- The sword is a type of the Word of God, which is exactly what we need before we judge any decision that is brought before us.
- Also, I would suggest that these harlots having access to the king's throne, is a picture of us as sinners having access to Christ.

- Lastly, notice the mother who was telling the truth, so loved her son that she was willing to sacrifice, by giving him to another.
- This because, she wanted him to live, whereas the mother who lied, was willing to let the son die, which is a type of the devil.
- Jesus referred to the devil as the "father of lies," who seeks to kill and destroy and he can do this by dividing and conquering.

John 8:43–44 (NIV) — 43 Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. 44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.