

1 Kings Chapter 03 Commentary

1Ki 3:1 ¶ "And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about."

It is appalling, to recognize that after removing the sins from Israel to begin with a clean slate in the previous chapter: the first thing Solomon does is make a mistake of doing as the kings of the world did, instead of following the commandments of God. Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, meaning that Solomon entered into a contract to marry Pharaoh's daughter, which contract would be a contract of peace and support for each other. This was a political practice of kings to bring two nations to strengthen their nations in the eyes of those around them.

This will lead to a bad end, because God had instructed Israel in ***Ex 34:16; 14 "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: 15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; 16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods."*** God reiterated this in ***De 7:3-4; 2 "And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: 3 Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. 4 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so, will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. 5 But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. 6 For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."*** Do you believe, what God says will come to pass, will come to pass as he says it will?

God affirms that it will in ***1Ki 11:1-4; 1 ¶ "But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; 2 Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. 3 And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. 4 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."*** Thus, we see not only the affinity with Pharaoh's daughter, but many other idolatrous women whom Solomon took as wives, turned his heart away from God to idolatry, just as God said would happen.

We remind you here that there is an application for each child of God. When we are born again, we are to take up our cross of discipleship to Christ, and each day, we are to slay the urges of the old inherited sin nature upon that cross, that we may live by the new nature of Christ in us.

We remind the church that there is an application here for it also. The church of Jesus Christ is not to take into its body anything that is not in accordance with God's word of truth. If they do, it will do just what God declared to Israel, which we see happening in many denominations today.

2 "Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the LORD, until those days." We remember in ***2Sa 24:1 ¶ "And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah."*** Now, we see why God was angry with Israel. They were practicing idolatry by sacrificing in the high places.

We find in ***2Ch 1:3 "So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. 4 But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjathjearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem."*** Thus, Israel actually had two places where they should have been making sacrifices to God: one where the tabernacle was in Gibeon, and one where

the ark of God was in Jerusalem. Obviously, they have abandoned the tabernacle, and ark of the covenant, in Jerusalem, thus turning from God to idolatrous worship.

3 "And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places."

We are told that Solomon loved the Lord and walked in the statutes of David, his father. Apparently, King David, nor King Solomon, completely followed the commandments of God, or they would have not fell into the traps of sin they became entangled in. Specifically, as seen in ***De 17:18-20; 18 "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: 19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: 20 That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.***" Herein is a great warning to God's children to be daily in the word of God, for there is safety in keeping the word of God fresh in our hearts.

Though Solomon loved the Lord, his love for the Lord was not single eyed, for he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places, just as the idolaters did, because of what is said in "***only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.***" How do we know this? Because high places is plural, and the only high place, that was a proper place for sacrifice to God, was at Gibeon where the tabernacle and the brazen altar was. Since Jerusalem, where the mercy seat was, is not identified as a high place, there are not multiple high places of proper sacrifice. Therefore, we discern that some of his sacrifices were to the Lord, but obviously, from what is said here, some were not, because it is a charge of sin against him.

We are also reminded of what the prophet Samuel said to Saul in ***1Sa 15:22 "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.***" Solomon is definitely not obeying God by sacrificing in high places.

4 "And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. 5 ¶ In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. 6 And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. 7 And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. 8 And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. 9 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"

I would interject here: some of the sacrifices in the high places could have been to the Lord. We know that the prophet Samuel made a circuit, and offered sacrifices in several different places, but his offerings were upon altars prepared to sacrifice to the Lord. We have no mention of altars to the Lord in most of these high places.

Gibeon, where the tabernacle was, had the brazen altar to sacrifice to the Lord. We believe that Solomon sacrificed upon this altar. God appears to Solomon after he makes his sacrifices to the Lord on the altar, telling Solomon to ask what you will of me. Solomon, in great humility at being exalted to such a high position as king over Israel, asks of God an understanding heart to discern good and bad, that he may judge Israel with equity, and in accordance with the commandments of God. Adam Clarke's commentary states: Solomon asked to be given all wisdom, and knowledge, to know how to be a proper king, and how organize a proper government.

Another thing that gives us a prophetic picture is that God appeared to King Solomon in the night. How is this a prophetic picture for us today? When did God appear to you, born again Child of God? He appeared in the night of your depravity in sin in the new birth. Where is the first place Solomon went, when God appeared to him in the night? He went to the ark of the covenant where the mercy seat was. Where is the first place the

newborn Christian goes? To the mercy seat, our King Jesus, with thanksgiving and praise for the free gift of eternal life and the eternal remission of sins.

10 "And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. 11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; 12 Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. 13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. 14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days."

When we truly desire something and it comes to pass, we often say "*this is a dream come true.*" This is the case with Solomon. God basically tells Solomon I have answered your prayer, and because it was pleasing in my sight, I have added all that your heart could desire to it. Notice, all these blessing from God were sure promises except one, which was conditional, which was length of days, conditioned upon total obedience to God. If Solomon failed to serve God faithfully, his days would not be lengthened.

We have a similar promise in *Mt 6:33; 29 "And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* However, our promise is better than serving God faithfully and receiving earthly blessing, because our promise extends into eternity and being in the presence of God forever.

We point out that in his later years as king, Solomon will turn from serving God to idolatry. Thus, Solomon does not receive all the abundance of blessings he could have had. Is not the same thing true of us today? Because we sometimes forget God, and serve our own lust, therefore, we do not receive the fullness of the blessings of God, that we may have, if we had served God faithfully, and continually, as our Saviour did.

I have often said that there was none so wise, and knowledgeable, as Solomon, upon earth until Christ came. However, that is not what God said in "**so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.**" God said: no king like thee in all thy days, which is in Solomon's lifetime.

15 "And Solomon awoke; and behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants."

Solomon awoke from the dream, and he went from the tabernacle to the ark of the covenant of the Lord, where he continued to offer sacrifices to God, and made a feast for his servants. Why would Solomon go back to Jerusalem and make sacrifices before the Ark of the covenant of God? We believe there are two reasons: one is it is "**the ark of the covenant of the LORD.**" Thus, we see Solomon confirming the covenant promises of God, before the ark of the covenant. The second: the ark had the mercy seat, which showed that Solomon was acknowledging the mercy of God on his behalf. For now, Solomon is on the right track.

Herein, we see the prophetic promises, of God's covenant to us for eternal life, and eternal remission of sins, and we give thanks and praise to God through Jesus Christ, our mercy seat. We really see this happening when we gather in an assembly to worship God, and especially, when we observe the Lord's Supper, which is a feast for the disciples of King Jesus.

16 ¶ "Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto the king, and stood before him. 17 And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. 18 And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. 19 And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. 20 And she arose at midnight, and took my son from

beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. 21 And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. 22 And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus, they spake before the king. 23 Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. 24 And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. 25 And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. 26 Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. 27 Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof."

Almost immediately the wisdom and understanding of Solomon is tried, in judging who the mother of the living child was. When he told them to divide the child, the child's real mother said to give it to her and in no wise slay it. Thus, Solomon knew who the real mother was.

The people heard of this great judgement that Solomon had done, and they feared Solomon, because they knew the spirit of God was in him to do judgment.

This reminds us of another who was the very wisdom and mind of God, Jesus the Christ, who knows exactly who every one of God's people are. When we are tired and tempted in this life, we cry unto God, to spare the life of the Child of God, which He has implanted in us. Jesus knows that we are his betrothed bride and belong to God the Father, who chose us before the foundations of the earth were laid. We thank you, King Jesus, for recognizing us, even when we fail to recognize you. Please give us hearts, minds, souls, and bodies, that are focused solely upon you, and living true lives of discipleship to you, we pray in your holy name, Amen!

28 "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment."

Why did the people fear King Solomon? Because they saw that the Spirit of God was in him to do judgment. Thus, they would not want to bring an unjust case before the king to be judged.

The child of God is told many times, in the Old and New Testaments, to fear God. Fear of the Lord is often connected with wisdom. Here, Israel feared a natural king, who was indwelt with the wisdom of God. Today, we fear a Spiritual King, Jesus Christ, who has instilled in us the wisdom to know that He is our Saviour: He is our King, and He is our God. In Him is all wisdom and understanding to discern judgement. Wherefore, we should fear God, with reverential fear, understanding that He has the power to save our souls, or to cast us into the eternal lake of fire.

However, this reverential fear of God is an indication, that King Jesus has saved us from that eternal doom, and given us a home in the eternal place, which Jesus has gone to prepare for us. Hallelujah! Praise, ye the Lord!