

1 Kings 3

Verses 1- 5

Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall around Jerusalem. ²The people were still sacrificing on the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the Lord until those days. ³Now Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. ⁴The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place; Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night; and God said, "Ask what *you wish* Me to give you."

Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall around Jerusalem.

According to the law marriage with the Canaanite tribes was forbidden, but there was no restriction for nations outside of Canaan. Joseph married an Egyptian, Moses married a daughter of Midian, and Boaz married Ruth a Moabite.

It is true that two of these marriages took place prior to the giving of the law but many of the laws given by God to Moses were well established customs (unwritten laws) prior to the giving of the written law. Consider the following:

1. The distinction between clean and unclean in the time of Noah.

See Genesis 7:2-3

2. The prohibition about not eating blood came long before the law was given

See Genesis 9:4

3. God instituted capital punishment for murder

See Genesis 9:6

4. Sacrificing to the lord.

Cain and Abel, Noah after the flood and Job in the land of Uz

5. Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek.

See Genesis 14

6. Abraham offered a burnt offering 430 years before the law.

See Genesis 22

7. A brother raising up a child for a deceased brother.

See Genesis 38:8

All of these unwritten laws (call them customs if you like) were followed long before they were codified into the law.

One final comment about verse 1 is that the Song of Solomon and Psalm 45 may have been composed in honor of his Egyptian wife.

² The people were still sacrificing on the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the Lord until those days.

Worshipping The Lord at the high places was sinful.

See Leviticus 17:9

⁸ “Then you shall say to them, ‘Anyone from the house of Israel, or from the strangers who reside among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, ⁹ and does not bring it to the doorway of the tent of meeting to offer it to the Lord, that person also shall be cut off from his people.

The excuse for this sin was that no house had been built for the name of The Lord in those days. However, the Tabernacle was in Gibeon and the people should have taken their sacrifices there.

³ Now Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

Many people say that Solomon started out good but then lost his way. There is no doubt that he made plenty of mistakes but the opinion that Solomon totally gave up the faith doesn't ring true. In the Book of Ecclesiastes Solomon reinforces some of the major lessons that are taught in the Book of Job. So if Solomon lost his faith then one must conclude the same about Job and we know that was not the case.

⁴ The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place; Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

The Tabernacle (with the bronze altar) was at Gibeon, the only proper place for the people of Israel to offer their sacrifices. However, the Ark was still in Jerusalem and one has to wonder why it was never brought to the Tabernacle.

⁵ In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night; and God said, “Ask what *you wish* Me to give you.”

Solomon’s act of worship (1000 burnt offerings) was rewarded with an appearance from the Lord.

Verses 6 - 9

⁶ Then Solomon said, “You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart toward You; and You have reserved for him this great lovingkindness, that 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 in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

⁸ Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted. ⁹ So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?”

⁶ Then Solomon said, “You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness

David was far from perfect, but in most cases he tried to do what was right. His grace toward Saul who mistreated him greatly demonstrated his desire to do what was right by keeping the law.

⁷ Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in.

His age when he became king seems to be somewhat of a mystery.

The Septuagint says he was 12 and Josephus thought he was 14. A popular scholarly guess is that he was about 20.

See chart 305

2nd Samuel Timeline

Ch.	Event	Year
2	David King over Judah	1010
2	Who is ruling Israel	1010 - 1005
2	Ish-bosheth king over Israel	1005
2	War between Abner and Joab	
3	Joab murders Abner	
4	Murder of Ish-bosheth	1003
5	David king over Israel	1003
6	Ark brought to Jerusalem	1000
8	David Defeats the Philistines	998
10	David defeats Ammon and Aram	995
11	David and Bathsheba	993
12	Nathan rebukes David	991
12	Solomon is born	990
13	Absalom kills Ammon	990
13	Absalom in Gesher	3 years 990 - 987
14	Absalom comes home to Jerusalem	2 years 987 - 985
15	Absalom's conspiracy	4 years 985 - 981
18	Absalom slain by Joab	981
20	Sheba Rebels	980
21	Gibeon famine	978 - 975
24	Census	974
	Solomon becomes king and David Dies	970

⁹ So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?"

God often appeared to Kings in dreams. The king of Egypt and Nebuchadnezzar received prophetic dreams from God.

Solomon asked God for wisdom that he might properly govern the people. Judging from Solomon's request it seems he was already somewhat wise. But God would supercharge that gift and make Solomon the wisest person to ever live on this earth (except for Christ of course).

Verses 10 - 15

¹⁰ It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing.

¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice, ¹² behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you. ¹³ I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days. ¹⁴ If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days."

¹⁵ Then 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 burnt offerings and made peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you.

The Queen of Egypt was very impressed by the Wisdom of Solomon and stated that the half of it had not been told to her.

See 1 Kings 10:6 -7

⁶ She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. ⁷ But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard.

¹³ I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.

Solomon's time as king was the glory days of Israel; however the taxation to support it led to the splitting of the kingdom.

¹⁴ **If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days."**

Long life was conditional based on Solomon being faithful to God. If Solomon was 20 when he took the throne then he died at the age of sixty. 10 years less than David.

¹⁵ Then 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 burnt offerings and made peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

Solomon had offered 1000 burnt offerings at Gibeon and then after having this dream, in which The Lord blesses him, he then goes to Jerusalem where the Ark was stationed. He then offered burnt offerings and peace offerings but The Lord did not appear to him in a dream.

Verses 16 - 22

¹⁶ Then two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. ¹⁷ The one woman said, "Pardon me, my lord: this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. ¹⁸ And it happened on the third day after I gave birth, that this woman also gave birth to a child, and we were together. There was no stranger with us in the house, only the two of us in the house. ¹⁹ Then this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. ²⁰ So she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your servant was asleep, and she laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. ²¹ When I got up in the morning to nurse my son, behold, he was dead! But when I examined him closely in the morning, behold, he was not my son, whom I had borne!" ²² Then the other woman said, "No! For the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." But the first woman said, "No! For the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son." So they spoke before the king.

17 The one woman said, “Pardon me, my lord: this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. 18 And it happened on the third day after I gave birth, that this woman also gave birth to a child, and we were together.

The woman who is telling this story to Solomon is telling the truth, but as is typical of most cases in court, the judge does not know who is telling the truth, so he or she must examine all the facts before making a decision in the case. In our time the judge would simply request a DNA test and the matter would be resolved. Solomon used wisdom to reveal the truth and came to a quicker decision.

Verses 23 - 28

23 Then the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son who is living, and your son is the dead one’; and the other says, ‘No! For your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.’” 24 And the king said, “Get me a sword.” So they brought a sword before the king. 25 And the king said, “Cut the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.” 26 But the woman whose child was the living one spoke to the king, for she was deeply stirred over her son, and she said, “Pardon me, my lord! Give her the living child, and by no means kill him!” But the other *woman* was saying, “He shall be neither mine nor yours; cut *him!*” 27 Then the king replied, “Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother.” 28 When all Israel heard about the judgment which the king had handed down, they feared the king, because they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.

26 But the woman whose child was the living one spoke to the king, for she was deeply stirred over her son, and she said, “Pardon me, my lord! Give her the living child, and by no means kill him!” But the other *woman* was saying, “He shall be neither mine nor yours; cut *him!*”

Solomon made this case look simple by revealing their hearts. One woman loved the child the other one did not. The obvious tell here was the lack of compassion.

Jesus revealed the heart of some lawyers and Pharisees in a similar manor. Jesus asked a simple question. Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?

Their motives were revealed in the blink of an eye and their silence condemned them.

See Luke 14:1-6

It happened that when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on *the* Sabbath to eat bread, they were watching Him closely. ² And there in front of Him was a man suffering from edema. ³ And Jesus responded and said to the lawyers and Pharisees, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?” ⁴ But they kept silent. And He took hold of him and healed him, and sent him away. ⁵ And He said to them, “Which one of you will have a son or an ox fall into a well, and will not immediately pull him out on a Sabbath day?” ⁶ And they could offer no reply to this.

These religious leaders revealed the hardness of their hearts by not showing any compassion for the man with edema.

As we can see from these two examples the one prostitute and these religious leaders had the same problem. Their hearts were numb to the suffering of others. The woman was probably hardened by the hardships of life, but the religious leaders were hardened by a misunderstanding of God’s Word.

We all need to ask ourselves the following questions: To what degree is our heart hardened? And why is our heart hardened? For religious people it could be both the hardships of life and a misunderstanding of God’s word.