

Grace

Read I Kings 3

I Kings 3:3 says that “Solomon loved the Lord and followed all the decrees of his father, David, *except...*” Even though Solomon was fully committed to living a godly life as he began his reign, we are given this reminder that the king, the one beloved of God (II Sam. 11:24-25), was not perfect. He loved the Lord, but it appears there was a recurring sin in his life that he did not immediately rectify. He offered sacrifices on the “high places” (local areas appointed for worship by the people) instead of at the one specific location chosen by God, as directed in Deuteronomy 12:13-14. Nevertheless, God still appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you” (I Kings 3:5). It’s comforting to be reminded that God, in His infinite forbearance and mercy, looks at the heart and extends grace.

Having received grace from God, Solomon responds by walking in humility and extending that grace to others. He admits his lack of knowledge and his complete dependence on God in verses 7-9 (which, by the way, is an essential attitude to possess—not only for every leader, but for every servant of God). He shows grace by apparently placing a high value on all people, even those who would be considered the dregs of society. Verse 16 says, “Now two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him”. I marvel at this verse, and wonder how it was possible for two prostitutes to have access to a great king like Solomon! Pondering this question brings me right back to the key element not only in Solomon’s life, but in my life today: God’s grace. It strikes me that I am no different from those women. Dressed in my “filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6), I am nevertheless shown grace and invited into the presence of the King of the universe, my rags covered by His own robe of righteousness.

**“See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you”
(Zechariah 3:4).**