

Exegetical Notes – 1 Kings 3:1

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1 Kings 3:1

Verse 1

¹ Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt and married his daughter. He brought her to the City of David until he finished building his palace and the temple of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem.

- This verse records the first marriage of King Solomon. However, it needs to be read in light of 1 Kings 11:1-8. There, we are told that Solomon loved many women and married many women of foreign backgrounds. We are told that he had 700 wives and 300 concubines. We are told that he joined his wives in worshipping the gods they served and that they led him away from serving YHWH the God of his father, David. The passage concludes, “So Solomon did evil in the eyes of YHWH; he did not follow YHWH completely, as David his father had done” (1 Kings 11:6). In this matter, though he was wise in other things, Solomon acted foolishly, and it was his downfall and resulted in the division of the Kingdom of Israel.
- Solomon married Pharaoh’s daughter to seal an alliance with her father. By taking Pharaoh’s daughter as his wife, Pharaoh and Solomon agreed not to go to war with each other. This allowed them to follow other concerns and to be at peace with one another.
- Solomon brought Pharaoh’s daughter to Jerusalem to live with him there as his queen.
- In Genesis 2:23-24, the first marriage in history is recorded. It is between Adam and Eve. No fit companion can be found for Adam among all the creatures God created. So, God creates Eve to be Adam’s companion. The word used to describe the relationship is “helper.” Eve is created to be Adam’s “helper.” One is no longer complete without the other. They become “one flesh.” They complete each other. The text says “A man” is “UNITED” to his wife. Marriage involves one man and one woman. This concept is embraced by Jesus (Matthew 19:5-6 and Mark 10:7-9) and by the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 5:31).

- It is also understood throughout the Old Testament that Israelite men should not seek to marry women who are not Israelites. In 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, Paul declares that, as a universal principle, Christians should avoid any contract that binds them to non-Christians. In 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, Paul says that a Christian should not unite sexually with a woman who is impure. How can such a woman become his “completion, his “helper?”
- In marrying Pharaoh’s daughter, Solomon disregarded the laws of God related to marriage. In this, he followed the example of his father, David, and the kings of other kingdoms around him. He, apparently, did not know what God had said about marriage. Solomon’s failure went to the extreme. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines. His behavior led him away from God and ruined the Kingdom.

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