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# Guarding Your Heart

## CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

### 153<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

- **TUESDAY @ 9:00 AM** in 450 CAP
- **TUESDAY @ 12 NOON** in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission Bible Studies are held every week on Tuesdays. *Two times are available this week for Bible study:* (1) a legislative Bible study from 9:00-9:30am in 450 CAP; and, (2) an open-to-all Bible study from 12:00-12:45pm in 123 CAP (*where we have ministry donors provide lunch*). The *weekly* Bible study is nonpartisan and non-denominational. **The study for the 2016 General Assembly is the book of First Kings.**

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. My sole intent is to serve you, and to be a resource to you for pastoral care, counsel, and prayer. **Please accept my study in the Word of God, as evidence of my desire to serve you.**

– Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

## Capitol Commission Bible Studies

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Tuesday, 26 January 2016

### I Kings 3 – “Guarding Your Heart”

At a time shortly prior to the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, a guest in the White House reported to have heard low tones coming from the private room near President Lincoln’s sleeping quarters. Although the time was past midnight, the door was partly open and the guest saw Lincoln kneeling in prayer, and heard the President’s pleading and sorrowful words.

Oh, Thou God that heard Solomon in the night when he prayed for wisdom, hear me. I cannot lead this people; I cannot guide the affairs of this nation without Thy help. I am poor and weak and sinful. Oh, God, Who didst hear Solomon when he cried for wisdom, hear me and save this nation [John Wesley Hill, *Abraham Lincoln: Man of God* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1920) 283].

As he wrestled with the tremendous issues that our nation was experiencing, Lincoln recognized his need for divine wisdom in order to lead during the extraordinarily challenging times. Often we encounter circumstances and situations in our lives that should

make us realize our own desperate need for God’s wisdom. Whether we are an elected official or leader serving within state government, or a person struggling with the daily issues of life, we must all perceive our need for wisdom, and equally recognize that true wisdom comes from God.

*James 3:13, 17 – Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. . . . But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.*

First Kings 3 depicts a government leader who realized his own need for wisdom in order to fulfill the responsibilities that God had granted to him. Solomon was the third king of Israel, who was a tremendous son of an even more noteworthy father; he was chosen by the will of God and appointed as the king of Israel by his father David. Solomon began his office well for he “loved the LORD” (v. 3).

## THE HEART DETERMINES ISSUES OF LIFE

(1 Kgs 3:1-3) Solomon’s life was characterized by several incredible achievements. Verse 1 begins with a description of the political and social prominence that God brought into Solomon’s life. For instance, his marriage to Pharaoh’s daughter indicated Solomon’s international distinction. A descendant of former Egyptian slaves was now able to become Pharaoh’s son-in-law! The writer of 1 Kings refer to this marriage on five occasions, in order to emphasize the significance of it (3:1; 7:8; 9:16, 24; 11:1), which was not so much a romantic arrangement as it would be more political in aligning royal families and nations.

Marriage to an Egyptian princess was not necessarily in violation to the biblical commands (cf. Exod 23:31-33; 34:12-16; Deut 7:1-4; 17:17), yet it was not necessarily wise because the alliance would potentially compromise the uniqueness of God’s people (cf. 2 Cor 6:14). Moreover, as will be evident later in our Bible study, Pharaoh’s daughter never became a worshipper of the true God. The only deviation from God’s law that is ascribed to Solomon (at this early time in his reign) is his worship “on the high places” (1 Kgs 3:3).

Another notable achievement of Solomon’s reign was his building projects: “his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem” (v. 1). War was never specifically a task that Solomon bore, which necessitated his development of a resolute administrative, religious, and military capitol. Wisdom is knowing whether you should be involved in campaigns or strengthening what you have inherited.

Solomon’s third achievement was to centralize and regularize national worship, thus he devoted his energies to making the worship of God most important (cf. 5:1–9:9). At this point in his reign, Solomon was following the example of his father David.



## Capitol Commission Bible Studies

Tuesday (26 January) @ 9:00am - 9:30am, 450 CAP  
Tuesday (26 January) @ 12 Noon - 12:45pm, 123 CAP  
lunch provided from sponsorship by Oglethorpe Power



Unfortunately, his devotion to the Lord was not unqualified: note again the “except” in verse 3.

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**... A RESOLUTE BEGINNING DOES NOT GUARANTEE A GOOD ENDING. MANY OF THE KINGS WILL BEGIN OFFICE WELL. ...**

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Throughout the book of 1 Kings, leaders are judged by their attitude toward “the high places” (open-air sanctuaries throughout the land, which were taken control from the Canaanites by the Israelites, and converted into locales for worshipping God, despite the fact that God’s Law forbade worship at places that He did not approve, Deut 12:1-21; 2 Chron 7:12; cf. Gen 12:7-8; 22:2-4; 31:54). Evidently, the people justified their disobedience based upon convenience, that is, not possessing a permanent palace (Temple) for worship. Good kings abolish the high places, whereas moderate kings tolerate them, and evil kings patronize them.

The “except” in Solomon’s life may appear minuscule, yet later in his life, it will reveal a wavering heart (cf. 1 Kgs 11:1). Solomon’s heart was divided, which indicates that a resolute beginning does not guarantee a good ending. Many of the kings will begin their office well, yet finish poorly. True wisdom is not merely intellectual; rather, it is a matter of the heart. Indeed, a “wise and discerning heart” (3:12) toward God involves “hearing” and “obeying.”

## THE HEART DETERMINES CRUCIAL CHOICES

(1 Kgs 3:4-15) God appeared to Solomon in a dream, and offered to grant any request that Solomon would ask. Solomon asked for wisdom so that he would be more sufficiently equipped to serve God as king. God was obviously pleased with Solomon’s attitude for the king recognized that the responsibilities of his office far exceeded his abilities; consequently, the king would be entirely dependent upon the wisdom of God. The request for wisdom was humble and unselfish, thus the Lord honored it.

Important principles concerning prayer are revealed in verses 4-14. God invited Solomon to request whatever he desired, yet the king did not make his petition hastily. First, he recollected God’s actions toward his father David, in a manner that quickly resulted in praise for God’s lovingkindness. Solomon then recognized his own limitations and needs by honestly confessing his weaknesses. He also reminded himself of the responsibility granted to him by God, in addition to expressing his solemn duties in prayer to the Lord.

God has a purpose for Solomon’s life, which the king was commissioned to achieve. Only when Solomon was mindful toward God’s calling for his life did he make his request. Only when he was focused upon God’s mission for his life was Solomon able to make a petition to the Lord that was unselfish and non-indulgent because the king was cognizant toward God’s purpose and will for his life.

## THE WISE HEART IS HONORED BY GOD

(1 Kgs 3:16-28) The account concerning the “two women” and the baby is one of the most well known narratives in the Bible; it proves

that Solomon was one of the wisest men in history. The women who approached Solomon were not reputable and respectable, yet the king granted a fair hearing to those who normally would be marginalized in Hebrew society.

Solomon’s ruling was heard by all Israel (v. 28), which resulted in all citizens reveling with tremendous awe concerning the wisdom of their king. Solomon adjudicated for the disreputable and marginal, not merely for the influential and wealthy. His actions were sufficient proof that he possessed the wisdom of God “to administer justice.” When we live in wisdom by having “a wise and discerning heart” before God, we too may experience God’s promises of blessing for us.

Solomon recognized that he did not possess the necessary wisdom to contend with his responsibilities. He knew only God was the source of wisdom that he needed. First Kings 3 should cause us all to contemplate our positions and responsibilities into which God has placed us. Your office as an elected official or government leader, or as those who assist and support them, certainly invites a willing application from this biblical Text. We could also include responsibilities that are more crucial in our lives, such as spouse, parent, or simply being a child of God. **What joy to know that the Lord God’s wisdom is available in our lives, as we ask and increase in knowledge, learning, and understanding, with a wise (“hearing” and “obeying”) heart toward Him and his Word, the Holy Bible.**

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*Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the nobility to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.*

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### About Capitol Commission

The mission of Capitol Commission is to accomplish the Great Commission in the capitol arena. Scripture calls the church to pray for the salvation of our leaders, resulting in them having knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:1-4). As churches are faithful in prayer and proclaiming the gospel of God’s grace, our society and government *will be impacted*. Capitol Commission, in partnership with the church, is committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ and promoting the biblical mandate to pray for those in authority in the Capitol communities throughout the United States and the world.

Romans 10:14-15 affirms, “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent. . . ?” Please notice the reverse progression. If we desire anyone, including our government leaders, to (5) *call* upon the Lord and to seek Him and his Word for life decisions, they must prior to that (4) *believe* in Him, which means they must previously have (3) *heard* the Word of God, which means prior to that someone needs to (2) *preach* to them, which requires that others have first (1) *sent* someone to preach.

Capitol Commission is committed to the second part: *preaching* (proclaiming) the good news of salvation. Of course, that cannot occur without someone doing the first part: *sending*. All funding and prayer for this work comes from people who want the light of the gospel of God’s grace brought into our State Capitol. As you do #1 and we do #2, we can rejoice together as the Lord accomplishes in the Capitol what only He can produce in someone: #3, #4, and #5.

What an exciting co-mission! Please join us in this ministry!

Bible study luncheon sponsored by:



Bible study copies made by:



**NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDIES:**

Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> of February @ 7:30am in 123 CAP;

also @ 9:00am in 417 CAP;

and again (with lunch) @ 12 NOON in 123 CAP