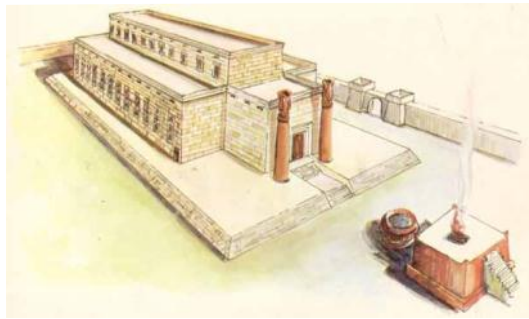


Meditation on 1 Kings 2-11

By Chantel Bink

At the beginning of his reign Solomon was thrilled to be following in his father's footsteps, even though the shoes of King David were very big. He seemed humbled by it, as well, and when God came to him and asked what Solomon wanted, he requested discernment. His answer was impressive to me, that was an incredible thing to ask for and I'm sure I wouldn't be that dedicate and humble. God was impressed too and gave him not only wisdom, but also the wealth and honor he didn't ask for. Solomon was a wise ruler and kept God's law...for a while. So what happened?

Solomon, it seems, got a bit too big for his britches. He got used to getting what he wanted when he wanted it and so he began to feel entitled. He was also self-reliant and felt he didn't need to depend on God.



He did build a temple for the Lord, but he also built a palace for himself. A big palace that took longer to build than the temple. He must have felt pretty important to have a house bigger than God's. He also began collecting things; he had plenty of food and livestock, hundreds of chariots, and thousands of horses, not to mention gold and silver. Solomon also collected women, over a thousand of them actually. His wisdom must have fled him momentarily there. Not only did he indulge in women, they were women of other nations who persuaded him to follow other gods and worship idols. The example he offered to his children was not one of a God-fearing man, but was one of self-entitlement. God was not happy, and while Solomon remained king until his death, God swore he would take most of his kingdom from his hand leaving him only one tribe. Solomon had already messed up, though, and his legacy thereafter would continue on the entitlement spree with only an occasional blip.



Are we the same way? You betcha. I know I am anyway. I don't have wealth and honor like Solomon and unlike some of today's youth, I don't feel like I deserve a place on the team or good grades even if I didn't work for them. I also don't feel like I should get the perfect job without climbing the ladder nor would I refuse a job if the pay did not measure up. I do, however, feel that I deserved to be treated kindly

and fairly. I get very upset when I don't move through the green light at the rate of sound and get berated by some man with an inconsiderate gesture or horn honking. I certainly feel I'm entitled to politeness and common courtesy. My hackles will go up when dealing with a rude bank teller and I will complain about it to my friends. I also feel my children and husband need to treat me well at all times, even when they are tired or having a bad day. It doesn't matter that I sometimes am irrational because of the very same reason. As long as I am not being grouched at, right?

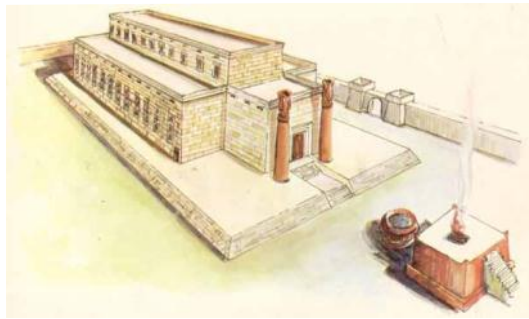
So what do I deserve? I am entitled to...nothing. All I have, and the kindness I have received, are gifts of grace. I certainly don't deserve it, because like all of us there are lots of times when I am a wretched person, a "nice" jerk. Unfortunately, like Solomon, I have lost sight of my capabilities versus God's. It is time to end the entitlement legacy I am leaving for my children. A bad day is just a bad day; they happen. People won't always be kind—myself, unfortunately, included. Change can only start with God. The only way I can truly see I am not entitled is by recognizing that all I have is a gift. None of us deserve to get what we want, and, in reality, if we got what we deserved we would all be in trouble. I am NOT entitled and it is time to start modeling that for future generations. After all, Solomon was a pretty intelligent and humble guy and he fell into the pit of self-Importance, so how much more likely am I, who was amazed that he asked for discernment, to do just that.

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