

“Solomon: The Wise King!”

Who's the Boss? – A series on the Kings

1 Kings 1-10

Congregational Prayer:

- We praise you as the giver and sustainer of life. We see this in the abundant rain and we see this through your daily provision for our needs, and we see this through your protection and safety that you grant each day.
- We praise you most of all for providing for us life that goes beyond this life. We praise you that through Jesus Christ we do not have to live simply for this physical and earthly life, but by your grace we can live today in light of eternal life. We praise you that through the foolishness of the Cross you have secured for us the eternal wisdom found only in a right relationship with you.
- We pray for those who are suffering through trial and tragedy that you would turn their hearts to depend upon you who alone can sustain them and give them all that they need for these moments of pain. Draw their hearts to your comfort, teach them of your steadfast love, draw them into a deeper trust and a more pure worship of you, strengthen them to persevere in this time of intense testing, help them to count it a privilege to suffer for the sake of your name.
- We pray especially for Colonial Hills Baptist Church that you would draw them to your sufficient grace that meets them in their time of need. As they face inexplicable tragedy, help them to find peace in the face of trouble, hope in the face of pain, answers in the face of the unanswerable, and deep joy in the face of deep difficulty. Settle their minds upon you. Turn their hearts to Your Word that is sufficient to instruct them in how they should proceed through this most difficult time. As the weight of this loss settles in on these families and on this church family we pray that you would enable them to bring glory to your name as they run to the faithful promises of the Gospel. As these lives that have been lost are remembered and honored we pray that they would be lightposts to your great glory!
- We pray also this morning for the work of the Gospel around the world. We praise you that you are doing so much more than we will ever be aware of. We praise you that your plan of saving a remnant from every tribe, tongue, language, and people is not yet completed, and so we pray for faithfulness for our brothers and sisters who have given their lives to take the Gospel to those who need to hear. We pray for John & Patty, Maurice & Liz, and Steve & Jessica, that you would prosper their efforts. That the seeds of the Gospel would fall from their mouths onto the good soil of a heart prepared by your grace, and that you would use our dear brothers and sisters to bring souls into eternal life. We pray that you would give them doors of opportunity and boldness of spirit so that they would plainly speak of your salvation. We pray that you would protect them today and provide for them so that the work they are committed to can continue as you see fit.
- We bring before you our brothers and sisters at Garden Community Church. We ask for you to bring a spirit of unity among the brethren that they with one heart and one voice would proclaim your praise and bring you glory. We pray that from this body of believers that you would stir up more laborers for the harvest field. That whether at home or on the mission field, these your people would be ambassadors for you, boldly proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.
- We turn our hearts now to your Word. We long for it to enter into our lives and bring light. We long for you to grow in us a deep desire and a high estimation for your Word. Holy Spirit we ask that you would powerfully work among us. That you would not be hindered or quenched, but that you would be

free to rid us of sin and grow us in Christ-likeness. We pray all of these things because we know that you hear and that you answer. We know that you are a God who wants to be asked, and so we have asked and we believe that you can answer each of these requests. So we pray that you will. In Jesus name, Amen.

Introduction:

- “1 and 2 Kings . . . give a continuous narrative of the Hebrew monarchy from the time when David handed on a rich and extensive kingdom to the time of its final destruction. Four hundred years in little more than 50,000 words means a drastic reduction of detail.”¹
- In light of having to boil down 400 years into 50,000 words, we must understand that the narrator had to be very picky about what he included, and what he didn’t include. The things he includes communicates to us what he is seeking to tell us about this period of God’s people. In the first 10 chapters the focus is upon the establishing and ever expanding reign of Solomon. There is more detail given to Solomon’s life in these two books than to any other, so these ten chapters become critical in our understanding of what the point is of this book of Scripture.
- David had called Solomon to follow in his ways and to direct his life and his rule in line with the ways of God as explained in the Law of Moses.
- David finishes his life as a man after God’s own heart, and now he calls Solomon to be a man after David’s heart – seeking the Lord and seeking to follow His ways.
- This becomes the template for all of the kings of Israel. Will they be like their father David and follow after God and His ways, or will they go their own way and refuse to walk in the ways of David?
- Solomon’s reign is established through wise handling of David and Solomon’s enemies and by the end of chapter 2 the narrator tells us that “the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.”
- So now, the narrator is ready to tell us whether or not Solomon lived in accordance with David’s instruction back in chapter 2 or not.
- In 3:1-2 there is a foreshadowing of problems that will come, which will be our concern in next week’s sermon. Solomon makes a marriage alliance with Pharaoh of Egypt by marrying his daughter. This is a prelude to the many foreign women that Solomon will have in his life that will eventually turn his heart away from the Lord. We are also told in verse 2 that the people were sacrificing at the high places because there had not yet been a house built in Jerusalem for the Lord because the Lord himself had prevented David from building it.
- At this time in Israel’s history the Ark of the Covenant was in Jerusalem in a tent while it awaited the building of the Temple. But the Tabernacle, otherwise known as the Tent of Meeting, was at Gibeon, about 6-7 miles northwest of Jerusalem. So the people of Israel are living in a confusing time with the Tabernacle in one place and the Ark of the Covenant in another. Gibeon is described in verse 4 as the great high place where Solomon went to offer 1000 burnt offerings on a regular basis. The sister passage to this one in 2 Chronicles 1 tells us that he went there because this is where the bronze altar was located at the tent of meeting. But we also know from Deuteronomy 12 that God detested the high places and in fact commanded the people that they were to destroy these pagan places of worship.
- But it seems pretty obvious from 1 Kings 3 that they had not completely obeyed the Lord in this matter. They were to destroy the high places, but here they are several hundred years later using those high places to worship the God of Heaven. It was a confusing time with the Ark in one place and the Tent of meeting in another. They were to offer their sacrifices on the Altar outside the tent of meeting, but they were to destroy the high places where the tent of meeting was. The Ark of the Covenant was not there

¹ Charles Martin, ‘1 and 2 Kings,’ *The New Layman’s Bible Commentary*, as quoted in Dale Ralph Davis, *1 Kings*, pg. 9.

and the Ark was the expression of God's presence among his people, so maybe they should offer sacrifices in the presence of the Ark in Jerusalem. This riddle is not solved for us in the text because that is not the concern of the text. The concern of the text is to show us that these high places would later become a problem, just like this marriage covenant with Pharaoh's daughter would lead to other problems.

- And yet, in the midst of this foreshadowing we have this amazing encounter between Solomon and God. In this encounter we get a glimpse into Solomon's heart to see if his heart is like his father David's or not. Will Solomon be a man full of courage, keeping the charge of the Lord, walking in all his ways, keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses? Indeed, in this encounter with God we see that he is a man after his father's heart. He proves to be one who has listened to the wise words of his father David, and he is seeking to walk in all the ways of Jehovah God.

Let's read 1 Kings 3:1-15

I. He Feared the Lord – 1 Kings 3:3-9

- a. We see that Solomon was a man after David's own heart and seeking to walk in all of God's ways in that he feared the Lord. That is what is prominent in this interaction with God. Solomon makes it clear by his response to God that he fears the Lord. It would be helpful if we would define what it means to fear the Lord, and in doing this we run the risk of making it too simple. This concept of fearing the Lord is a pregnant concept that needs to be delivered into our understanding through the course of much deeper study, but I do think there is a nucleus of meaning when it comes to the fear of the Lord.
- b. *We rightly fear the Lord when we view all of life in relationship to Him.* We obviously don't have time to unpack that idea right now, but in simple form, what it means to fear the Lord is that I view all of life in relationship to God. In other words, the God of Heaven is the Greatest Reality that exists and so therefore all other realities are seen in relationship to this one Great Reality. So, nature does not just exist, but it exists as a signpost to the Creator God who is worthy of all of our praise. My life and my decisions and choices are not just my own, but they are now seen in relationship to the God who made me and who has clearly communicated how I must now live this life He has given. My satisfaction and joy are not pursued apart from God for my own selfish purposes, but rather they are pursued in God as a deer that pants for the water. The circumstances of my life are not seen simply as a chaotic mixture of bad and good, but rather in light of God's loving care for His children I now know that these events are tools of precision in my Father's hand. When I fear the Lord I am choosing in any given thing to view it as it relates to the Greatest Reality – the God of Heaven. We see this in Solomon in chapter 3.
- c. In that he offered abundant worship – vs. 4
 - i. We find him in verse 4 bringing abundant worship to God as he offers 1000 burnt offerings on the bronze altar at Gibeon. This verse as it is translated in the ESV makes it sound like he used to go and do this – like maybe he did this a few times before. But when you combine this verse with the sister passage in 2 Chronicles 1 you realize that he offered 1000 burnt offerings on this occasion, which means that 1 Kings 3 is telling us that this was a regular occurrence for Solomon. He regularly went to Gibeon and offered 1000 burnt offerings to the God of Heaven. The sheer volume of sacrifice here is overwhelming. According to the Law as it is written in Leviticus 1, he is bringing 1000

males from his flocks and herds and these males had to be without blemish. He is bringing them to the entrance to the tent of meeting and he is placing his hand on their head and slitting their throat as they symbolically take the punishment of his own sin.

- ii. To make atonement for sins – Lev. 1:4
 1. ⁴ He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. (Lev. 1:4)
 2. Solomon would regularly obey this command from the Lord in that it was his habit, according to the text, to go to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting at Gibeon and offer the burnt offering of a male without blemish to make atonement for his sins. This male without blemish would then be rightly processed according to the Law and then completely burned upon the Altar. There was not to be anything taken or kept from the sacrifice. This was a sacrifice that was completely to the Lord. Other sacrifices made were offered and then eaten by the offerer or the priests, but the burnt offering was fully consumed by the fire of the Altar.
- iii. To please the Lord – Lev. 1:9, 13, 17
 1. We are also told in Leviticus one that this burnt offering was a food offering to the Lord that sent up a pleasing aroma to Him. Three different times in chapter 1 alone, we are given this postlude comment to the commandment – “And the priest shall burn all of it on the altar, as a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.” (Lev. 1:9)
 2. In other words, this offering to the Lord was not just about atonement for sin, but it was also about pleasing the Lord. In the text then in 1 Kings 3 we have Solomon offering 1000 of these burnt offerings to the Lord, which screams to me that Solomon was not just interested in making atonement for sins, but he was interested in pleasing the Lord. He so valued the Lord that he regularly made abundant sacrifice to the Lord. In this way, Solomon rightly feared the Lord. He knew what pleased the Lord and as he looked at his apparently abundant supply of livestock he did not view that livestock through how they could serve him and make him happy, but rather he viewed that livestock in relationship to the God of Heaven. He knew that a burnt offering of a male without blemish was pleasing to the Lord and so he made it his regular practice to completely sacrifice 1000 of them as a burnt offering that was pleasing to the Lord. Solomon thought much of God and abundantly worshiped him through sacrifice.
 3. You do realize that sacrifice and worship go hand in hand with a proper fear of the Lord? If you don't value God, if you don't see his worth, if you aren't awed by his surpassing beauty, then you will not abundantly sacrifice for him. The pattern of the believer who sees the surpassing worth of God, otherwise referred to as the glory of God, will be the believer who is making a regular practice of offering abundant sacrificial worship to God.
- d. In that he viewed current blessing in light of steadfast love – vs. 6-8
 - i. We also see that Solomon feared the Lord in that he viewed current blessing in light of steadfast love. In verse 5 we read about God appearing to Solomon the night after he has offered these 1000 burnt offerings, and God says to Solomon, “Ask what I shall give you.” Can you imagine this! God appearing to you in a dream and saying to you, Ask what I shall give you! What would you ask for? You could ask for anything in the world. What

would be the first thing out of your mouth? An endless supply of money, restored relationships, good looks, more requests, an end to all wars, a new house . . . what would you ask for? Well, Solomon's response is astounding and instructive. He responds to God's offer by rehearsing God's own goodness to him.

- ii. He knew the past covenant promises that God had made to his father, David, and he knew the past blessing of steadfast love that God had brought to David's life. Therefore, he saw his current position of sitting on the throne of David as an act of God's steadfast love. Before he is going to request anything further from the Lord, he reminds himself of the wonderful blessings that he has already known through the steadfast love of God.
 - iii. We are prone to not think like this. We are prone to think about life as it relates primarily to us and any blessing of position or privilege as something that we have attained. But, as Matthew Henry has said, "Duty is ours, events are the Lord's." The events of life are in the hands of the Sovereign God of Heaven, and Solomon understood this. He knew that he was not king because of anything he had done. He knew that he was only in this position as king because God had placed him there on account of his steadfast love, and in light of this he was shaped in what he would ask of the Lord. In this way Solomon feared the Lord. He knew that the present blessing of his position was the fruit of the steadfast love of God. Therefore he was shaped in what he asked for because he had a right view of himself, of his situation, and of his God. He knew that he was an inept leader apart from the steadfast love of the Lord. He knew that he would not even have this position as king if it wasn't for the steadfast love of the Lord. In other words, he saw God rightly, and he saw himself rightly, and in this he feared the Lord.
- e. In that he viewed his position through his purpose – vs. 9
- i. Coinciding with this thought is that he also feared the Lord in that he viewed his position through his purpose. In verse 9 he asks the Lord for an understanding, or a listening mind so that he can govern God's people, discerning between good and evil. Solomon was asking for the very thing that he knew was most needful for him to fulfill his role within the kingdom of God. He had to rule God's innumerable people and he was fraught with the conviction that he was unable to rule over God's people in a way that God intended. And so, in light of his position in God's kingdom, he asks of the Lord the thing that was most needful to fill this role well.
 - ii. So, what is the alternative to this? Well, it is to see your position as a means to fulfilling your own purpose. This is so natural for us to do. To look at any given position and view it through the lens of how it can accomplish a self-serving purpose. So, the political leader is often tempted to use the power and prestige of his position to serve himself rather than the people that he leads. The father of children still in the home is tempted to use his position as authority figure to manipulate his children to serve his own selfish desires. The manager in the workplace is often tempted to use his position as a means to overwork others and underwork themselves. Our sinful tendency with any position, whether it is leadership or not, is to use that position as leverage to get whatever it is that we think we want most.
 - iii. But this is not what Solomon did. Rather than seeing his position as a means to fulfill his own purpose, he saw his position through his purpose. His purpose was to serve as God's vice-regent, and this is what the position of King of Israel was all about. He was God's appointed king over God's innumerable people in God's Promised Land. He did not look at his position and think about how it could be used to serve his own self-

pleasing purposes. Rather he saw that the greatest pleasure in life would be found by using his position for the purpose ordained by God. He wanted to rule God's people well because that is what his position was all about, and yet he knew that he couldn't rule well without God's help, so he asked God for an understanding mind so that he could discern good and evil and therefore rule God's innumerable people.

- iv. Solomon has proven in these first few verses that he is man that is walking in the ways of his father David because he fears the Lord. He views all of life through the lens of how it relates to Jehovah God. He operates with crystal clarity about his role in God's kingdom and the purpose for his position, and this leads him to ask the Lord for wisdom.

II. He Pleas'd the Lord – 1 Kings 3:10-14

- a. We see then in God's response that this request pleased the Lord, and in this way Solomon is very much like his father David.
- b. Because he feared the Lord – vs. 10-11
 - i. The text says that it pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked for an understanding mind. He did not ask for the things that were self-serving in his position, but rather he asked for the thing that would enable him to better fulfill the role he had been given in God's Kingdom. This pleased the Lord because it showed God that Solomon valued the Lord more than he valued himself. He was more concerned about doing what God had placed him there to do than he was about getting everything he wanted out of the position he had been given. Having been asked of the Lord what he wanted he could have asked for great riches or long life or victory over his enemies. He even could have asked for those things in a way that would have presumably been for the good of the Kingdom of Israel. If he were richer then the people would be richer as well. If his enemies were defeated then Israel's enemies would be defeated as well. If he lived a long time then he could provide stability to the rule of God's people. But he didn't ask for any of these things because he saw his position through his purpose and he knew that he needed something greater than wealth or long life or victory over foes – he needed wisdom!
 - ii. We must notice some things about the Lord here. God appears to Solomon and tells Solomon to ask for what he wants God to give him. This is just like God to want us to ask. This is one of the foundational realities in our relationship with Him. God wants to be at work in our lives, and he is, but he also wants to be asked to be at work in our lives. We also see that God is pleased with his servant. Solomon pleased the Lord by what he asked for. This is instructive for us in that we know that we too can please, or displease the Lord in how we live in this life. Because Solomon feared the Lord Solomon also pleased the Lord. The quickest way to ensure that you please God is to live life in light of Him. Walking daily in a fear of the Lord will certainly produce a life that is pleasing to the Lord. God was pleased with Solomon because of what he did and didn't ask for because in this Solomon showed what was most important to him. He not only worshiped the Lord through the 1000 burnt offerings, but he also worshiped the Lord by viewing his position through his purpose and asking something of the Lord in accord with that purpose. Solomon pleased the Lord because Solomon feared the Lord.
- c. Therefore he was abundantly blessed by the Lord – vs. 12-14
 - i. Therefore, God wrought upon Solomon abundant blessing. Before we look at this we must understand that God answers prayer that is prayed according to His will. God's will was that Solomon be a wise vice-regent over his people and lead them to live in such

a way that spread the glory of the Lord throughout the earth. Therefore, when Solomon prays and asks for this understanding heart, God is happy to answer that request.

ii. Surpassing wisdom

1. And so Solomon is given surpassing wisdom by God. Verse 12 describes this wise and discerning mind as being one that is completely unique. There has never been someone as wise as Solomon and there will never again be someone as wise as Solomon. This is played out then over the next 7 chapters as Solomon proves himself to be abundantly wise. In fact, right after this account of Solomon's encounter with God we are told about a weird and unique case between two women who are both claiming to be the mom of the same baby. You remember the famous story as Solomon asks for a sword to cut the baby in half knowing that the real mother will relent and say that the other lady can have the baby. All of Israel heard of Solomon's wise ruling and they all marveled at the fact that he truly had the wisdom of God.
2. But the abundant blessing of the Lord does not simply stop with surpassing wisdom. God promises in verses 13-14 to bless Solomon with surprising riches.

iii. Surprising riches

1. Because he has pleased the Lord with what he has not asked for he will be given the things that he has not asked for. His surpassing wisdom will be coupled with surprising riches and honor. These surprising riches and honor will surpass all other kings all of his days.
2. At the pinnacle of Solomon's kingdom reign we see these very promises coming true. In chapter 10 Solomon's wealth is described in almost unbelievable terms. He brought in billions of dollars a year in gold through taxes and trade. He had so much gold that he made 200 large shields of beaten gold and 600 small shields of beaten gold to hang as ornaments in the house of Lebanon. He also had so much gold that he made a throne that was inlaid with ivory and overlaid with gold, such the like had never been made in any kingdom. The cups and all the vessels for food were made of pure gold. In fact, the text makes the point of saying that none of these things were made out of silver because silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. God's words of bringing surprising riches to Solomon were indeed fulfilled in unimaginable ways.
3. I can't help but wonder why God did this. God does not always work this way. Just because God's servants please him, it does not mean that he then blesses them with unimaginable riches. In fact, often the opposite is true. Like Job, or the 11 apostles, those who please God are often met with difficult trials and hard roads of discipleship. So Solomon does not stand in the text as the mold for how God works with those who please Him. Rather, Solomon is an exceptional case. No one will have his wisdom, and no one will surpass his riches and honor. But why? Why is Solomon so exceptional? He is so exceptional because there is more at stake here than Solomon's reign or even God's people. There is a promise at stake that is awaiting complete fulfillment. God had made clear to David that one of his sons would eternally sit on his throne. Solomon's reign point us to that coming King, this Son of David whose kingdom will truly have unimaginable wealth as not just the throne is made out of gold, but the very streets and walls of the city will be made out of gold. Solomon is blessed with surprising riches

because Solomon foreshadows a greater Son of David whose kingdom will far surpass that of the current king.

iv. Sure Promise

1. Along with the surpassing wisdom and the surprising riches, Solomon is given a sure promise in verse 14. God tells Solomon that if he will walk in his ways by keeping his statutes and his commandments, as David did, then God will lengthen his life and therefore his reign. This reiterates what God promised to David about David's sons. If they will walk in His ways then they will have long life and will continue to reign on David's throne.
 2. This promise is repeated to Solomon in chapter 9, where Solomon has just completed the building of the Temple and his own house and all the other things that Solomon built and God appeared to Solomon a second time. He told him that he has heard his plea and he has come to dwell among his people by placing his name on the Temple. He promises to Solomon once again that if he and his sons and the people of Israel will live in obedience to God's ways and walk according to His statutes and commandments that Solomon's throne will be established forever over the nation of Israel. But he is also promised the opposite, that if he does not walk according to the ways of the Lord and turns aside to worship idols his throne will be destroyed and the people will be separated from the land and the Temple they have just built will become a heap of ruins. This part of God's abundant blessing upon Solomon was related to his future actions. If he remained faithful then God would continue to bless him with the position and world renown, but if he was unfaithful, then he and his descendants would know the judgment of God and the loss of the throne. Why this sure promise? This is similar to the surprising riches. God is at work in Solomon to proclaim in living color the glory of His own name. These were His people who were called by His name. This was his king and His kingdom and they were directly identified with Yahweh God. Therefore, the patterns and practices of the nation and of the nation's king reflected upon the nation's God. If they were faithful and obedient, then God's glory would continue to be spread around the world, but if they were unfaithful and disobedient, then God's name would be besmirched and dishonored and therefore He would deal with them through judgment for the sake of His own name.
- d. This encounter with God tests Solomon to see if he is made of the same cloth as his father David. Will he fear the Lord by keeping his statutes and obeying his commands? Will he rule the people of God like his father David did? At the end of chapter three, the answer to these questions is yes. Solomon proved through his response to God's that Solomon loved and valued God more than anything else. Solomon proved that he was very aware of God's steadfast love and that his current state of blessedness was a result of this steadfast love of the Lord. Solomon proved that he viewed his position as king through the purpose for which God had made him king. Solomon proved that he indeed feared the Lord and so he asked for wisdom rather than abundant riches, victory over his enemies, or long life. Solomon wanted what was most needful for the position he had been given in God's Kingdom. And since Solomon feared the Lord, God was pleased with Solomon. So much so that God blessed Solomon with surpassing wisdom in answer to his request, and surprising riches and honor, and a sure promise of future blessing. Because of this we see that Solomon and his rule over God's people glorifies God. Because Solomon valued and

treasured God more than anything else, and because Solomon saw all of life as it related to God, Solomon's life now becomes one that proclaims the infinite worth of God to others. Because he has been blessed with surpassing wisdom and surprising riches we see from chapter 4-10 that Solomon glorified the Lord.

III. He Glorified the Lord

a. Through Increased Blessing to others

- i. This is seen in chapter 4 as an increase in blessing to others. Chapter 4 is filled with summary statements about Solomon's reign and how God is using Solomon and his wisdom to be a blessing to others.
- ii. God's People were blessed – 4:20; 24-25
 1. In verses 20 and 24-25 we see that God's people were blessed by Solomon's wise reign. All the days of Solomon were filled with peace and security and an ever increase dominion over the Promised Land and beyond. The people were innumerable and happy! Things were good in the Land of Israel during the reign of Solomon and this was to the glory of the Lord. God was using this wise king to establish His people in His land. They were as many as the sand on the seashore and they were at peace and blessed. God's leader was blessed by God and this blessing was carried through to God's people as he wisely led them with surpassing wisdom.
- iii. God's Dominion was expanded – 4:21; 5:1-18
 1. The people were blessed and God's dominion was expanded. Verse 21 points us to the reality that Solomon was used by God to establish dominion over all of the kingdoms from the Euphrates to Philistia to Egypt. This dominion over them was not just a wink and a nod kind of dominion, but this was real authority as we are told that they brought tribute and served Solomon all of his days.
 2. There is an example of this given in chapter 5 as Solomon prepares to build the Temple for the Lord. Hiram, king of Tyre, was enlisted by Solomon to provide special materials and special workers for the build. The region of Tyre was apparently rich with cedar and cypress wood and so Solomon enlists Hiram in a peaceful trade agreement to supply the wood necessary for the building of the Temple. In this we see an example of the ever expanding dominion of God's kingdom through the reign of Solomon.
- iv. God's Gift was sought – 4:29-34
 1. Then in verses 29-34 we have this astounding summary of Solomon's reign given. People of all the nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon. All the kings of the earth sent people to Solomon to hear of this surpassing wisdom. This gift that God had given to His king was a gift that was desirable to the whole world. This was a good and practical gift. This wisdom helped people to know how to live and how to navigate the most difficult decisions of life. God's glory was being seen through Solomon in that all the people of the Earth were drawn to this King who was given this surpassing wisdom.
 2. Notice it does not say that they came to see his surprising wealth. Certainly they saw it and certainly it captured their attention, like we will see with the Queen of Sheba in chapter 10, but they came to hear his wisdom.

b. By Leading Israel to Proper Worship – 6:1-8:53

- i. This surpassing wisdom is put on display then in chapters 6-8 as Solomon leads the people of Israel in the building of and the commitment of the Temple. The construction of the building and the materials used and the labor involved in the project are overwhelming. But what is most overwhelming about chapters 6-8 is the account in chapter 8 of the coming of the Ark of the Covenant into the Temple for the first time. Solomon leads the people into abundant worship of God.
- ii. Just to give you a flavor of this proper worship that Solomon leads the people to listen to these descriptions:
 1. ⁵ And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. (1 Kings 8:5)
 2. ⁶² Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. ⁶³ Solomon offered as peace offerings to the LORD 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. (1 Kings 8:62-63)
 3. ⁶⁶ On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king and went to their homes joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had shown to David his servant and to Israel his people. (1 Kings 8:66)
- iii. Solomon glorified God by making much of God. This was a big deal and Solomon made that clear by how he acted. I know it is not en vogue to talk about outward actions in Christianity anymore lest you get tagged immediately with legalism, but I will tread on thin ice for a moment. As you look on Solomon's public display of worship you see actions that clearly display how much he valued the Lord and therefore how much he worshiped the Lord. There was a direct correlation between his estimation of God and his actions before God. Just think what it would have been like if Solomon showed up at the dedication of the Temple and prayed a trite prayer of blessing and then went home to his palace to take a nap! He would have clearly communicated by his actions to God and to his people that God was not all that important. So, I wonder what your outward actions say about how important God is to you. Do you bless him with your mouth and then disclaim him with your actions? Do you pay him lip service by simply doing the mandatory Sunday morning Christian thing, but then the rest of your life is absent of outward action that displays his worth? Can you make a direct connection between what you think about God and how you live each day? Can you look at this action or that and say that you do this because of how much you fear the Lord and want to please Him?
- iv. Solomon's outward actions displayed God's glory and in this he led God's people to proper worship of God which made much of God and therefore brought him glory.
- c. By Invoking God's praise from others – 5:7; 10:1; 10:9-10; 10:23-25
 - i. But Solomon's life and reign did not just show the people of Israel how valuable and glorious the God of Heaven is, but he also impressed others outside of the Kingdom with this very great and glorious Jehovah God. While I am sure there were many kings, or representatives of kings who interacted with Solomon and were invoked to praise the God of Heaven for what they saw in him, there are two specific examples given in the text.
 - ii. The first is found in Hiram in chapter 5 after Solomon tells him that he needs his help in building the Temple of the Lord. The text says in verse 7 . . .

- iii. This wise son of David invoked praise of God from the lips of this pagan king. He had loved David and he is very aware of the rising greatness of the people of Israel, and now he sees the wisdom of Solomon on display and he gives praise to God for providing for David such a wise son to sit on his throne.
- iv. The most prominent example of this is found in chapter 10. Please turn there with me. In chapter 10, we are told of a skeptical, gotta see it for herself kind of queen from a southern nation known as Sheba. This queen of Sheba brings with her all kinds of exotic spice from her land and a caravan of camels carrying very much gold and precious stones. She came to Solomon and told him all that she was wrestling with and tested his supposed wisdom and found it to indeed be wisdom from above. The Queen of Sheba saw all of Solomon's wisdom as he skillfully answered all of her questions and expounded God's universe to her. She also saw all of his surprising wealth, his multitude of servants, the seating of his officials, the worship that he offered to the Lord, and after seeing all of this she is described in verse 5 as having no breath left in her. She is shocked into amazement by the glorious display Solomon's surpassing wisdom and his surprising wealth.
- v. So much so that in verses 9 her lips are compelled to give praise to God, and in verse 10 she is compelled to give an enormous gift to God's king. *Read verses 9-10.*
- vi. These gifts of surpassing wisdom and great riches that were given to Solomon invoke the praise of God from the lips of those who serve other gods. The unsurpassed glory of God is seen through the wise reign of his king. This is how God works in this world. Yes, he has made his glory known through creation, and he has made his glory known through His Word, but he also makes his glory known through his people. People who are captured by His surpassing worth and who live each moment in light of His existence and His command are the kind of people that put on display the surpassing glory of God. People who run their lives according to God's word find that wisdom is the greatest treasure to be found and in living in wise ways they become beacons of God's glory on earth.
- vii. Lest you think that God's glory was noticed in Solomon just by the Queen of Sheba, verses 23-25 tell us differently.
- viii. God's glory was being reported throughout the world as God's king was wisely ruling over God's people!

Application:

- Fear God – Prov. 1:7
 - Fearing the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Solomon tells us that in Proverbs 1:7, and in 1 Kings 3 we see that lived out in his life. The fear of the Lord is the avenue to gaining wisdom. You will not be wise without a right estimation of God that increasingly impacts every area of your life.
 - So, is your view of life consumed with God? Do you see all things as directly relating to Him? Your job, your family relationships and responsibilities, your involvement with other believers, your use of time, your entertainment – do you live in these areas in light of the God of Heaven? Does he dominate your thinking in these areas?
- Pursue Wisdom (it is most needful)
 - In the Scriptures – Prov. 4:7-9; 2 Timothy 3:14-17
 - There is no greater possession than wisdom. You may long to have riches or honor or long life, but none of those things are things that you can actually get. You can spend your life

trying to get them and then in a moment they can be gone. Therefore, like Solomon I say to you – Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. ⁸ Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. ⁹ She will place on your head a graceful garland; she will bestow on you a beautiful crown." (Prov. 4:7-9)

- Where do you get this? You get this wisdom in the Scriptures. Like Paul said to Timothy – do not forget the teachings of the sacred writings because they will make you wise unto salvation and they will fully equip you for every good work. Pursue wisdom in the Scriptures.
- In the Person of Jesus Christ – Lk. 11:29-32; 1 Cor. 1:23-24; Col. 2:1-3
 - There one that is greater than Solomon. Don't be condemned on the last day along with the multitudes that followed Jesus. Luke 11 says that the Queen of Sheba will rise on the Day of Judgment and condemn these crowds because she came from the ends of the earth to get wisdom from Solomon, but these crowds were refusing the wisdom of Jesus. Jesus is greater than Solomon. Don't be impressed by Solomon and miss his heir. Jesus far surpasses the far surpassing wisdom, riches, and honor of Solomon. Don't be in the crowd on the Day of Judgment that will be condemned for denying the wisdom of Christ!
 - This wisdom of God in Christ is seen most explicitly in the Gospel. In 1 Corinthians it is described as foolishness to the Gentiles and a stumbling block to the Jews, but God in the flesh dying on the cross and rising the third day is described as the wisdom of God to those who believe. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, and find ultimate wisdom.
 - As it says in Colossians 2 all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ. Therefore pursue wisdom in the person of Jesus Christ!
- In the work of the Holy Spirit – Gal. 5:16
 - Those who have believed have the work of the Spirit of God in their lives. In Christ's physical absence we have been given the Helper – the Paraclete. Don't deny his ministry to you, don't quench his work by disregarding his Word. Don't refuse His leading by shirking the application of truth to your life. Rather, pursue wisdom by walking in the Spirit as you submit yourself to his application of His Word to your specific situation. His Word truly has the answers for how to spend your money, how to use your time, how to talk to others, how to function in the workplace, and how to invest in relationships. The Spirit is actively at work in your life as a believer to bring this truth to bear on every situation. Are you listening to Him? Are you obeying Him? Pursue wisdom in the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Glorify God – 1 Cor. 6:19-20
 - And lastly, glorify God! You have been bought through the wise action of the Wisest King. His blood has purchased your freedom, therefore daily bring your life back to Him and lay it on the altar before Him as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to the Lord.

Let's pray! *(Please leave last slide up until after the service is over. Thanks!)*