

Light to the Nations

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[0 : 00] First Kings in the Old Testament, we are studying together with Phil Copeland and we're coming this evening to chapter 10. So perhaps you turn there with me, we're going to read the whole of this chapter.

And you'll see that it's a very magnificent chapter, full of glory and full of immense amounts of gold. First Kings chapter 10 then at verse 1.

And when the Queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he'd built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cup bearers and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord.

There was no more breath in her. And she said to the king, the report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and your wisdom. But I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it.

And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpassed the report that I heard. Happy are your men. Happy are your servants who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom.

[1 : 46] Blessed be the Lord, your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel. Because the Lord loved Israel forever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness.

Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold. You'll see a talent weighs about 75 pounds, 34 kilograms.

Never again came such an abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a very great amount of almagwood and precious stones.

And the king made of the almagwood supports for the house of the Lord and for the king's house. Also lyres and harps for the singers. No such almagwood has come or been seen to this day.

And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired. Whatever she asked besides what was given to her by the bounty of the king Solomon. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.

[2 : 59] Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold.

Beside that, which came from the explorers and from the business of the merchants. And from all the kings of the west. And from the governors of the land. King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold.

600 shekels of gold went into each shield. And he made 300 shields of beaten gold. Three miners of gold went into each shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

The king also made a great ivory throne. And overlaid it with the finest gold. The throne had six steps. And at the back of the throne was a calf's head.

And on each side of the seat were armrests of two lions standing beside the armrests. While 12 lions stood there. One on each of a step of the six steps.

[4 : 03] And the like of it was never made in any kingdom. All King Solomon's drinking vessels were gold. All the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold.

None were of silver. Silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram.

Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold and silver, ivory, apes and peacocks. Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

And the whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom which God had put into his mind. Every one of them brought his present.

Articles of silver and gold, garments, myrrh, spices, horses and mules. So much year by year. And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen.

[5 : 09] He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen. And he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. And the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone.

And he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of Shepela. And Solomon's imports of horses was from Egypt and Q and the king's traders received them from Q at a price.

A chariot could be imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver and a horse for 150. And so through the king's traders they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria. Amen. And may God bless to us his word about this magnificent king. Who of course speaks of and foreshadows a far more magnificent king still.

Well on Wednesday night I was out at the church growth groups. And I got a lift home with two dear friends. And as we chatted in the car, it was maybe about 10 to 10 at night.

[6 : 26] Suddenly we saw this thing shooting across the night sky in front of us. It looked like a burning, glimmering jewel.

It was beautiful. And it soared through the darkness. And as it soared through the darkness, it left this hauntingly beautiful emerald glow behind it as it flew past us.

And for the briefest of moments, the car fell silent. It was breathtaking. It turns out, of course, it was a meteor. A meteor.

And you know, it came and went like that. It disappeared as quickly as it had come. But it was a glorious glimpse that we got.

It was a glimpse, but it was glorious. And friend, in the grand scheme of history, the golden days of ancient Israel under King Solomon were just like that meteor.

[7 : 22] Yes, things weren't perfect. Yes, it didn't last long. But for a moment in time, Solomon's kingdom was breathtaking.

And Israel really was a true light to the nations. And that is really what the author of Kings wants us to see in 1 Kings 10. So then, let's look at the chapter this evening under two points.

Two sections. Here's the first one. From verses 1 to 13. We see the splendor of Solomon's wisdom. The splendor of Solomon's wisdom.

Now, this section is all about the visit, the well-known visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon. We can't be certain about where Sheba was, its precise location in the ancient world.

Some historians believed it was down south by about a thousand miles below Israel, down in the area we know as Yemen today. And in verse 2, we're told that this queen didn't come on her own.

[8 : 24] She has brought with her a great retinue, that is her royal servants and advisors, a great party of her staff. And they brought camels. And the camels are all weighed down with precious jewels, with gold, and with every spice imaginable.

It must have been a really stirring sight to see. It must have been very inspiring. And indeed, this visit is so gripping that it's inspired a lot of wonderful art throughout the years, a lot of great music.

Just think about Handel's piece. I was listening to it in the office throughout this week on my headphones. And the arrival of the Queen of Sheba. It's also inspired many movie makers.

In the 1950s, for example, not that I've seen it, I've watched a trailer online. I don't recommend it, it doesn't look very good. But anyway, they produced a blockbuster called Solomon and Sheba.

And according to that movie, this visit sparked off a romance, a deep romance between Solomon and the Queen. And in the end, it is actually the Queen of Sheba, according to this movie, that turns Solomon's heart away from the Lord to worship idols.

[9 : 35] And you know, there are actually some Bible commentators who think that that is a legitimate way to read this text. And friend, that is plain wrong.

The text does not say that at all. Quite the opposite, in fact. The result of this royal visit is not that this Queen turns Solomon's heart away from the Lord. Rather, I think the result of this visit is that Solomon's wisdom turns the heart of this Queen to the true God.

To the living God. The covenant God of Israel. And we'll see about that in just a moment. Excuse me. When we get to verses 6 to 9. But let's back up. Before then, just notice what it was that moved this Queen to travel to Jerusalem.

Verse 1. She journeyed to Jerusalem because she had heard of the fame of Solomon. Notice, concerning the name of the Lord. In other words, the Queen came because she'd heard of Solomon's wisdom.

That the Lord had given him. And I think verse 1 is probably also saying she'd heard about the glorious temple. That the King of Israel, King Solomon, built for the name of the Lord to dwell in. [10:50] But you know friends, this should not surprise us. Those of us who've been in this book so far. We've already seen that Solomon's wisdom was so splendid. It always attracts attention.

Please just turn back to chapter 3 verse 28. And as you do that, let me just tell you what's happened in this chapter. Chapter 3 verse 28. It comes after the Lord has graciously given Solomon wisdom.

And Solomon, what he does is he deals incredibly well, beautifully, with this almost impossible situation. With the two prostitutes and the little baby boy.

And there's an argument over whose son does the boy belong to. And anyway, Solomon exercises his God-given wisdom. And justice is done. He resolves a situation that is almost impossible to resolve.

Now just look at 3 verse 28. It says this. And all Israel heard of the judgment that the King had rendered. And they stood in awe of the King. Because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice.

[11:57] The splendor of Solomon's wisdom got people talking. Please flick on to chapter 4 verse 34. 4 verse 34. 4 verse 34.

This verse happens at the end of a chapter where Solomon carries out more incredibly wise acts. Bringing great order and infrastructure to his kingdom. Which causes the whole nation to flourish. And God's people to experience wonderful blessings. And look at what happens as a result. 4 verse 34. See Solomon's God-given wisdom.

It was such a beautiful, splendid thing. That it didn't take long for the news about it to spread beyond the borders of Israel. Out into the world. Solomon's wisdom.

This report about it has spread and spread and spread. Until one day the Queen of Sheba heard about it. Flick back to chapter 10 please.

[13:05] And so in verse 1. We're told at the end of 10 verse 1. She came with all sorts of hard questions. I mean this woman. By the size of the riches and the staff that she brings.

It's clear she was a very competent ruler. She was clearly not a simpleton. She was clearly very gifted as a queen. And yet she is full of hard questions.

She doesn't have all the answers to life. As she comes to Solomon to see really if the rumors are true about his wisdom. Could God's king have the answers for all the difficult things in my life?

And in verse 3 she asks Solomon these questions. And he delivers. Again and again. No question is too tricky. Every single one of them is answered impeccably and easily by God's wise king.

I just noticed a little phrase there that's used there. Verse 3. There was nothing hidden from the king. Friends that is a reminder again that Solomon's vast wisdom.

[14:09] It's not something that he's drummed up within himself. It is a complete gift from the Lord. He's able to answer these questions. He's got this knowledge. Because the Lord has gifted him the ability to answer such questions.

The Lord has revealed truths to Solomon. And given him the gift of wisdom. And in verse 4 and 5. Having heard the wisdom of Solomon. What she does is the queen looks around to see the fruits of Solomon's wisdom.

And she just looks at all of the things that Solomon has built. The temple. She sees also the national infrastructure. She sees the way the food supply was brought to Solomon's house.

Which remember at that time could have had up to about 70,000 people there. A lot of mouths to feed. Well Solomon had come up with a wonderful wise plan to feed everyone. She sees the orderly leadership structure.

She sees the appearance and the attire of Solomon's staff. She sees the faithful burnt offerings that Solomon offered in the temple to the Lord.

[15:19] She sees it all. And end of verse 5. She's breathless. It takes her breath away. I wonder if that's the first ever historical use of that phrase.

Ever. In the history of the world. Certainly maybe on the written page. She's left breathless. And when she finally recovers the power of speech.

When she gets her breath back. In verse 6. Look what she says to Solomon. She says, All the reports that I heard about the splendor of your wisdom. You know, all the reports that made me come to you.

To travel all these miles to see you. You know, for I had to come and see it for myself. With my own eyes. I had to come and witness your wisdom. And now that I have. I can see that all the reports are true.

In fact, although. I was only told half of it. In other words, she says, Solomon, your wisdom. It is twice as good as I've been told. She is absolutely blown away.

[16:25] By the Lord's anointed. And in verse 8. She bursts out with joy. Real joy. She says, Happy. Happy are your men. Happy are your servants.

Why? Because they get to stand and listen to your wisdom all day long. In your presence. And you know, friends. I can't help but think that when I read that.

I can't help but think what she's saying is. I wish I was one of your servants. Quite a thing for a queen to say, isn't it? I would quite happily be one of these servants and listen to your wisdom. It is so splendid. And then verse 9 comes. And here we have the climactic moment of this visit. The climactic moment in her response to the king.

She says this. Blessed be the Lord. That is Yahweh. The special covenant name for the God of Israel. The Lord your God.

[17:23] Who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel. Because the Lord loved Israel forever. He has made you king. That you may execute justice and righteousness.

Friends, here we have a pagan Gentile. One who was born outside of the covenant people. One who at one time would have been a stranger and alien to the Lord.

Totally ignorant of the true God. And look where she is now. She is praising the Lord of Israel.

That's what she's doing here. She's saying, blessed be this Lord.

Blessed be this God. And the thing that drew her there to the Lord is Solomon's splendid wisdom.

And in verse 10, she honors the Lord's anointed king.

Giving him some costly gifts. Loads of gold. Loads of spices. In fact, verse 10 says that she gave Solomon so many spices. No one ever again in the history of the ancient world had a spice supply like it.

[18:29] And look at how Solomon responds to this. Verse 13. And King Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all that she desired. Whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of King Solomon.

So in response to her praising the Lord and honoring his anointed, Solomon shows her colossal kindness. And having witnessed the splendor of this king's wisdom and received his gracious gifts, she departs.

And she goes back home to her nation. No doubt ready to spread the news about the full extent of the wisdom of the Lord's King. Friends, let me pull out three implications from what we've looked at from this scene for our lives today, for our understanding.

Let me draw you three things. Firstly, let me say this. This event is prophetic. In the sense that it gives us a glimpse of a far greater glory that is to come.

One commentator says this. The attraction that Solomon's wisdom and his kingdom held for the nations of his day, it is a foretaste, a foregleam of the destiny of the kingdom of God on earth.

[19:44] In other words, the Queen of Sheba is simply a sample of the future homage that the nations, all the nations, will bring to the Lord's ultimate covenant king.

Indeed, Solomon himself, if you know Solomon, wrote Psalm 72. And in that Psalm, Psalm 72, Solomon seems to preview this future of the coming ultimate covenant king.

Let me just read to you some words from Solomon in Psalm 72. This is what he says. May he, that is the Lord's ultimate king, may he have dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.

May desert tribes bow down before him and his enemies lick the dust. May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute.

May the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts. May all kings fall down before him. May all nations serve him. May the gold of Sheba be given to him.

[20:50] And if you come through the Bible just a little bit later to the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah seems to pick up on these words of Solomon, referring to the visit of the Queen of Sheba in chapter 60 of his book.

And listen to what Isaiah says in Isaiah 60, verse 5 and 6. He says this, Then you shall see and be radiant. Your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you.

The wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you. The young camels of Midian and Ephah, all those from Sheba shall come.

And they shall bring gold and frankincense and bring good news, the praises of the Lord. What does Isaiah describe in there? He's describing a future day when the kingdom of God will be glorious on earth.

And it will just be like the scene in 1 Kings 10, but much, much, much bigger. Isaiah is talking about a time when the Lord's kingdom will be glorious, fill in the earth, and all the Gentile nations, including Sheba, will surge towards the Lord's place in order to pay tribute, in order to lay down their all before the Lord.

[22 : 15] And friends, that is exactly what will happen when the Lord Jesus comes. One greater than Solomon, when he appears on that day, he will come to judge the living and the dead.

And on that day, he will draw out all of his people from all the nations throughout all of history. They will come to him just by his command. And they will lay their all before him and praise him.

That is what's coming. If you're a Christian here this evening, that is your future. That's my future. And actually, friends, that is what the Lord Jesus is already doing now in this present age, isn't he? Already in this age, our king is drawing Gentiles to himself.

Every day. How so? Through the proclamation of the gospel. That is what Jesus is doing right this very second as I stand up and preach here. He's not just doing it here.

[23 : 15] He's doing it all over the world. All over the countries of the earth. God's ultimate covenant king is drawing lost souls to himself. An integral part of that work is his church being the witness that they're called to be.

The church reaching out with the gospel of God. So, friends, I think 1 Kings 10, it should really excite us. Not only about the future that's to come, but also about our role now.

The great privilege that we've been called to. As we've been called to reach out and share the momentous news about Jesus. About who he is. Why he came. What it means to follow him. As we share that message with the world around us. We should do it with great expectation. And great joy. Because that is precisely what our king uses. To draw in his chosen people to himself. No matter what nation you come from. No matter what background you're from. Let's let this wonderful scene in 1 Kings 10 spur us on and excite us for mission.

[24 : 23] Let's let it embolden us to invite our friends, families, any contacts we have to the next life course. So that they might come and encounter one who has even greater wisdom than Solomon.

Praying that the Lord would reveal himself to these people. And as a result they would be left breathless. Well the second implication of 1 Kings 10.

I think is that it should make us want to be wise. Want to live wise lives for the Lord. So that we too as the Lord's servants today.

Will attract others to him. Simply by the way we live our lives. Now I've said this to you before in the series. But let me say it to you again. One of the reasons that the Lord gave Solomon this wisdom. Was so that he would be a powerful witness to the world. And I think that's very challenging for us today. As people who by God's grace belong to this kingdom. If we want to reach Glasgow in the nations.

[25 : 26] If we want to reach our uni mates. Our mates at school. Mates in the staff room. Our people round about us that we know. Our neighbours etc. Then of course we share the gospel with people.

But we also display the gospel in our lives. And a key part of that is turning to the Lord. And asking to give us wisdom. Now remember here's this phrase.

And again I've said this before. But I want to say it again. We are not Solomon. But we have Solomon's God. And we also have Solomon's Proverbs.

A lot of Solomon's wisdom literature. And we have also received the precious gift. Of all of the other wisdom literature books. In the Bible that Solomon hasn't written. And also the spirit of the Lord Jesus.

The spirit of the Lord Jesus. Lives in you and me. If you're a Christian. The spirit that Isaiah described as. The spirit of wisdom. And so friends today.

[26 : 24] We really have all that we need. To grow as wise people. To grow as a wise church. To let wisdom shape and master our everyday lives. How we see the world.

How we conduct ourselves. And when we the church walk in wisdom. It will not go unnoticed. By the unbelieving world round about us.

Often people are drawn to Christ. By the wisdom of his people. I remember a few years ago. We had a guest preacher from Australia come.

Called Peter Adam. I wonder if you remember him. But he also took a few classes. At the pastor's training course. That I was studying at the time. And we had a residential week.

With Peter Adam. And I remember over lunch one day. Somebody just asked him. How did you become a Christian? And Peter Adam said this. I was absolutely bawled over by this. He said.

[27 : 18] One day as a boy in school. He was in his class. And his teacher. Started to tell the class. About his father. That is the teacher's father.

And he started to describe. His dad. What he was like. His character. His conduct. And the teacher summed up to say. Basically what I'm saying class. Is my father. Is so wise.

And then he said. And that's because he's a Christian. It's because he loves Jesus. And Peter Adam said. I want to be like that. I want to be like that man.

The wisdom. The character. The behavior of this man. Was so attractive to him. And you know. Right after that. He went and sought out. A good bible teaching church.

To attend. One Kings 10. Should inspire us. To walk in wisdom's ways. By the help of the Lord. Of course.

[28 : 15] So that. We might cause people. To put their hope. In Christ. The third implication. Of first Kings 10. Is that there is actually. A word of warning here.

Not specifically in. First Kings 10. But actually a word of warning. From the mouth of the Lord Jesus. Jesus. You see later on in the Bible. Jesus refers to this very passage.

And friends. I didn't feel I could neglect this. Or miss this out. I felt we must turn to this passage. Or at least let me read it to you. Because Jesus says. In Matthew chapter 12.

No need to turn to it. Forgive me. Just listen to it. You can look at it later. But in Matthew 12. Jesus says. We haven't seen the last. Of the Queen of Sheba. Listen to what he says.

He says. The Queen of the South. That's the Queen of Sheba. Will rise up. At the judgment. With this generation. And condemn it.

[29 : 14] For she came from the ends of the earth. To hear the wisdom of Solomon. And behold. Something greater than Solomon. Is here. At this point in Matthew's gospel.

Jesus is really highlighting. The unbelief of Israel. And their leadership. The latter. Of which. Has flat out. Refused. To repent.

Refused to turn to the Lord. And follow him. By the obedience of faith. Despite all of the breathtaking. Revelation. That they've seen. I mean. These people.

They saw. The word of God. The father. In the flesh. In front of them. They heard him speaking. They heard his greater wisdom. His greater teaching. With greater authority. Than Solomon.

They heard God's ultimate Davidic king. They also saw him carry out. Many mighty works. By the power of the spirit. The religious leaders.

[30 : 09] As they saw Jesus. Healing people. Casting out demons. What they were seeing is. The kingdom of God. Breaking in. Roll round about them. What a privilege.

A massive amount of revelation. Has been given to them. But. Despite that privilege. They refused. To repent. They still refused.

And refused. And refused. And that's why Jesus says to them. The queen of the south. The queen of Sheba. Will rise up at the day of judgment. With this generation. And condemn it. For she came from the ends of the earth.

To hear the wisdom of Solomon. And behold. Something greater than Solomon. Is here. In other words friends. If you have received. Lots of revelation from God.

If you've heard about Jesus. Heard his teaching. Heard about his mighty works of salvation. And if you refuse to repent. Then on the day of judgment.

[31 : 08] At the last. The queen of Sheba. Will be there. And she will condemn you. Because she had. Both less privilege. And less truth than you.

She didn't hear about Jesus. She didn't hear about the greater wisdom. Of him. Or his teachings. She only had Solomon. And yet she traveled. All the way to go and hear him.

And he took her breath away. And even with just that little bit. Of the light of God's revelation. That she received. She turned to the Lord. And prays.

So friends. What that means for us today. Is this. If you've been coming to church. And if you sat under the preaching. Of God's word today. Hearing about Jesus. Week in and week out. Hearing about who he is.

And what he has done. Then you. Are someone. Who has received. Much more. Than the queen of Sheba. And friend.

[32 : 04] With that great privilege. Comes great responsibility. If we refuse to repent. In response to the revelation. We've received.

And Jesus is clear. On the day of judgment. The queen of Sheba. Will be there. And she will condemn us. For she had far less. Light. From the Lord.

And yet it changed her. And pulled her. To praise. The Lord. So friends. Let's take Jesus. Warning seriously. Let's take it seriously.

And move us to repent. And to turn to the Lord. Lord. Well that's the first main point. This evening. The splendor. Of Solomon's wisdom.

Secondly. And much more briefly. Verse 14 to 29. We see. The size of Solomon's. Wealth. The size. Of Solomon's.

[33 : 01] Wealth. So in these verses. Verse 14 onwards. The author. Is really driving home to us. The colossal scale. Of Solomon's wealth.

And as Willie mentioned before. There's one word. That comes up again. And again. And again. It's repeated again. And again. And again. It dominates this section. It's the word gold. Gold. Gold. Gold.

Gold. Gold. Gold. Gold. This was a kingdom. Dripping. In gold. Verse 14. If you just look at that. Please. Run your eye over that. It says that Solomon's. Annual income.

Was. 666 talents. Of gold. And if you look at the footnote. Again. As Willie said earlier. You will see. That the ESV translators. Reckoned. That one talent. Was the equivalent.

Of 75 pounds. That is in weight. Excuse me. Or 34 kilos. Or kilograms. Kilograms. Kilograms. And if I've done my sums correctly.

[33 : 57] Which my wife will tell you. I'm horrible at maths. But I wanted to make sure. I didn't get this wrong. For I would look like a fool. For doing this wrongly. But. Solomon's annual income.

Of gold. It weighed around. 50,000 pounds. Worth of gold. Or 20. The weight of his annual income. Was also 23,000.

Kilograms. Of gold. How big is that? If you're trying to get your head around it. And think about it in size wise. Well when you type into Google. What weighs. 50,000 pounds.

Uh. Google says. That the average adult hump. Backed whale. Weighs around that. In pounds. Or. Your average fire engine.

With a full crew. And all of the tools. And all of the hoses. Packed in. That also weighs about. 50,000 pounds. In weight. And Willie told me.

[34 : 52] Really helpfully. Which I should have just texted Willie. Before all this. To work this out. But Willie said. In monetary value terms. You're talking. That the equivalent of gold. That Solomon had. In monetary terms.

Was worth. Billions. Billions. He had billions. Coming in. His economy. Was so strong. That's how much gold.

Solomon brought in. In just one year. There's a lot of gold. And in verse 16 to 17. We're told. That he used it. To decorate some 200 shields. Which don't seem to be.

For. Military action. They seem to be more. For decoration. Because he took the shields. And placed them. In his great big hall. Then in verses. 18 to 20. He used more gold.

To decorate. His own throne. His own throne. Was absolutely enormous. And just look at verse 20. Verse 20 says. That it was. The most. Brilliant throne.

[35 : 47] Ever to be seen. In the ancient world. Go home and read this chapter later. You'll see that little idea. That little theme. Repeat again. And again. And again. Through the chapter. We said it about Solomon's.

Spice storage. After the queen of Sheba. The text says. There was never. Any other country. Any other spice storage. Like this. In the history of the world. And then this throne.

Also. There was no other throne. Like this. In the history of the ancient world. It was all covered in gold. And just look at verse 21. Verse 21 is astonishing.

Isn't it? Verse 21. Let me read it to you. All King Solomon's drinking vessels. Were of gold. And all the vessels.

Of the house of the forest of Lebanon. Were of pure gold. None were of silver. Silver was not considered. As anything. In the days of Solomon.

[36 : 41] I mean. It's almost comical. You just think about. Someone coming along. Desperate for a drink. At the king's table. And they're in a quick rush. And they grab a glass.

And then they quickly spit out the water. And goes. What is this? Oh. It's silver. And they toss it away. It's useless. It's worthless. As common as plastic. Gold. Gold. Gold.

Gold. Gold. Look on to verse 27. It says the same thing. In Solomon's day. Israel was so wealthy. That silver. Was as common. As stone. This was a kingdom.

Of great wealth. And gold. It was also a kingdom. Of great military power. And might. Verse 26. We're told that Solomon.

Amassed a huge amount of chariots. And horsemen. Who were all stationed. In military cities. Whole cities. Dedicated to housing. Military men.

[37 : 37] And weaponry. And in verse 28. And 29. We're told about yet more. Major trading ventures. That Solomon set up. And this time.

He established trade with. Egypt. We'll think more about that. In just a second. Solomon. Regularly imported chariots. And horses. From the Egyptians. And then it seems to be.

Well it's not quite clear. But it seems to be. That Solomon. Would take. The horses. And the chariots. That he bought from Egypt. And he would sell them on. To other nations. Presumably. At a price.

That brought in. Good profits. What is the scale. Of Solomon's wealth. Well. It is massive. It is also. Breathtaking.

Breathtaking. Well friends. What are we to make of it all? What are we to make of it? Well. At the end of chapter 9. I do think.

[38 : 33] There are some details. In here. That should actually. Make us. Incredibly nervous. About the future. Of Solomon's kingdom. For remember. The amassing of gold.

The amassing of horses. And chariots. The mention as well. Of kings. The king of Israel. Doing business with Egypt. I think these. If you know your bible. These little details.

They should make your toes. Curl just a little bit. For these are all things. That Deuteronomy 17. Warns. Israelite kings. To stay away from. And yet.

Look at verse 23 to 25. For these. These verses. They prevent us. From really. Ripping Solomon. Apart here.

Actually. The author of kings. I take it. He wants us to be excited. About all of. This wealth. Look at what it says there. Thus king Solomon. Excelled. All. Sorry. I'll read it on the notes.

[39 : 30] Forgive me. King Solomon excelled. All the kings of the earth. In riches and wisdom. And the whole earth. Sought the presence of Solomon. To hear. His wisdom. Which God had put into his mind.

Every one of them. Brought his. Present. Articles of silver. And gold. Garments. Myrrh. Spices. Horses. Mules. So much. Year. By.

Year. So friends. Despite the fact. That this section. There are. Worrying details. In here. I think it's clear. From these verses. That the author. Wants us.

To read these details. And just to be. Amazed. To be full of wonder. To take. If you like. One. Last. Glimpse. Of this glorious kingdom.

That has ultimately. Come about. By the Lord's kindness. Before. The heartbreak. Of chapter 11. The heartbreak. Which we'll see. God willing. Next Sunday night.

[40 : 27] But friends. Just especially. If you're not convinced. By that. Look at the text. Especially notice. The little detail. In verse 24. What does it say? It says that Solomon's wisdom. Which humanly speaking.

Is really the thing. That produced all the wealth. And the prosperity. In the land. His wisdom. Came from the Lord God. The Lord is the one. Who enabled Solomon.

To do all of this. The Lord is the one. Ultimately. Who has made this kingdom. Flourish. And I take it. That's a key lesson. For us. In this. It is true.

That these things. Listed here. Could easily become. Idolatrous. For Israel. And the king. But it is also true. That this prosperity. It is a gracious gift. Of the Lord. And reveals his heart.

His heart. That truly. Always wants to bless. His faithful people. The O. F. Davis puts it like this. These riches. They are. A word of testimony.

[41 : 24] They proclaim to us. The lavish. Generosity. Of the Lord. To his faithful covenant people. And friends. I've said this before. But maybe you're here this evening.

And you're not a Christian. And maybe you're just inquiring about. Who our God is. And who. What he's like. Well this is what he's like. He's a God. Who delights to bless.

His people. To those who love him. And stay faithful to him. And turn to him. And friends. Again. When we look at this section. In Solomon's kingdom. With all of these blessings.

Again. It should absolutely. Thrill our hearts. Because. We are getting a glimpse. Of what the kingdom of God. Will be like. When Jesus. Establish it. Establishes it.

In all its fullness. On the earth. What. Is to come. Will be glorious. Glorious. A perfect. New creation. Paradise.

[42 : 19] Where all of the Lord's people. Will dwell with him forever. And they will only ever. Experience. Blessings from the Lord. Forever. Unlike Solomon's kingdom. The kingdom that is to come.

Will be incorruptible. There will never again. Be any chance. Of any one of us. Taking these blessings. From the Lord. And abusing them. And turning them.

Into idols. We will only ever. Be able to live perfectly. Glorifying. And enjoying the Lord. Forever. And we will treat his good gifts. As they're meant to be.

Treated. As good gifts. Nothing more. There is a breathtaking future. One that will be completely guilt free. And sin free. One that should constantly fill our minds.

And move us to keep on loving the Lord. And living for him. Amen. So for the last time. In the book of 1 Kings. As the meteor.

[43 : 17] The glorious meteor. Of Solomon's glory days. Passes us by. Let's take one last look. And let it delight our souls. And let's humbly come back next Sunday.

Ready. For a crash. Well amen. Let's be quiet for a moment. And then I'll pray for us. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Oh our gracious heavenly father.

We praise you. That one greater than Solomon. Has come into this world. We praise you for the Lord Jesus. And that in him we have been saved out of the world.

And you have given us in him. A breathtaking and glorious future. When we will live and reign in eternity with you. In glory.

[44 : 26] Always. Always. Under your blessing. Never again shall we know sin and curse. Never again shall we suffer. We will live. We will live loving you.

We will live loving you perfectly. Loving one another perfectly. Enjoying all the good things that you give to us. The countless blessings that will flow forever. And father in this present age.

We ask that you will. Help us to walk in a manner worthy of that great calling you've called us to by grace. The great calling we've received in Christ. Would you help us to live wisely.

So that we as your church will reflect your beauty. And might attract others to see the goodness of your son. And that they might come and acquire of him.

And hear his teaching. And be left breathless. Help us to do this by the power of your spirit. The spirit of wisdom. And understanding who dwells in us.

[45 : 28] And we dare to ask that through us. Through our wise living. Many would turn to you. Many would bow the knee. Many will praise Jesus.

And we pray this in his name and for his sake. Amen.