

The title of this morning's sermon is, "*A Greater Kingdom.*"

Go ahead and open your Bibles to **1 Kings 10**.

We spent the last two weeks looking at how Jesus is greater than Solomon, and we'll continue that this morning.

In our first sermon we saw how Jesus built the greater house of God:

- Solomon built the earthly, physical temple, or house for God.
- Jesus built the greater heavenly, spiritual temple, or house of God, known as the church.

In our second sermon we saw how Jesus is the greater Son:

- Solomon is the son of David, but Jesus is the true and greater Son of David
- In **2 Samuel 7:14** God said to David about Solomon, "**I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son**"
 - So Solomon is a son of God
 - But Jesus is the true and greater Son of God

This morning and next Sunday we'll see how Jesus rules over a greater kingdom.

We spent the last two weeks studying the Davidic Covenant in **2 Samuel 7**. I didn't read the last verse of it because I wanted to share it at the beginning of this sermon. Listen to it...

2 Samuel 7:16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever."

We know this looks past Solomon because of the repeated use of the word **forever**. Solomon didn't live or reign forever.

Now I want to ask you to think about something...

When did it look like this covenant was not fulfilled? In other words, when did it look like there was no king sitting on the throne as God promised?

The answer is when the Jews went into exile. Zedekiah was their last king around 600 BC.

You could say, "What about when the Jews returned from exile, back to their land?"

Then they only had governors, not kings.

From the time of Zedekiah, their last king, forward, the Jews didn't have a king.

So what were they forced to do? If you put yourself in their place, what would you do?

You would look forward in faith for God to keep his covenant with David and provide a king to sit on his throne. Or another way to say it is you would look forward to the true and greater Son of David coming.

We know that King was Jesus, and we know when he came.

When the angel Gabriel announced Jesus's birth it sounded like he was quoting **2 Samuel 7:16**. Listen to what Gabriel said to Mary...

Luke 1:30 “Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him **THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID** (He'll be that long-awaited king), **33** and he will reign over the house of Jacob **FOREVER**, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

This sounds like a quote of the Davidic covenant, showing Jesus was fulfilling it.

The long-awaited King arrived, and what did he bring with him...which you can answer from Gabriel's announcement?

He brought what every king needs to have to be a king. He brought his kingdom, the kingdom of God...and this brings us to lesson one...

Lesson one: Jesus brought the kingdom of God with him.

Let me ask you a question, that is one of the more common ones I have received as a pastor...

What did the gospel look like in the Old Testament?

Here's why people regularly ask this...

If I said, “Tell me the Gospel,” you'd probably say something along the lines of:

- *“Jesus died for my sins, was buried, and three days later God raised Him from the dead.”*
- *“Jesus was crucified to take the punishment I deserve.”*

There are a few things you're going to mention:

- You're going to mention Jesus.
- You're going to mention His death, burial, and resurrection.
- You're going to mention Him taking the punishment for your sins.

We know these are the essentials of any Gospel presentation.

The apostle Paul said:

- **1 Corinthians 1:23** we preach Christ **CRUCIFIED**
- **1 Corinthians 2:2** I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and **HIM CRUCIFIED**

If Paul determined to know anything except Christ crucified, “What did they preach BEFORE Christ was crucified?”

You can tell by the way the disciples responded when Jesus was crucified that they didn’t expect Him to die.

So they clearly weren’t preaching His death, burial, and resurrection because they didn’t think there would be a death, burial, and resurrection.

So what was preached?

If you’ve read the Gospels even once, I bet you know the answer!

They preached the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven, which are the same:

- John the Baptist said **Matthew 3:22** “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- When Jesus began his ministry **Matthew 4:17** From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
- When Jesus sent out the twelve: **Matthew 10:7** “Proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’
- When Jesus sent out the seventy-two: **Luke 10:9** Say to them, “**THE KINGDOM OF GOD has come near to you.**” **10** But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, **11** ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that **THE KINGDOM OF GOD has come near.**”

They preached the kingdom of God, but was it the same as preaching the Gospel?

Listen to this...

Luke 9:2 [Jesus] sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God...6 They departed...PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

So preaching the kingdom of God was preaching the Gospel.

When people preached the kingdom of God, they preached the revelation they had at the time:

- God become a Man in the Person of Jesus Christ.
- He came from heaven to earth.
- He brought the kingdom with Him.

He was on the earth near the people: they could see Him, hear Him, and even touch Him...which is why they said the kingdom is “NEAR or “AT HAND.”

Preaching the kingdom of God was the primary message in the Gospels, but when you move out of the Gospels, which is to say past Christ's death burial and resurrection, there's a very abrupt and sudden change in the message. You notice they don't preach the kingdom of God in Acts.

The gospel in Acts and the epistles is Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and return to establish His kingdom physically.

Because Jesus was rejected in his first coming, the kingdom was not physically established on the earth. It was only spiritually established. Jesus clearly is not physically ruling and reigning on the earth from Jerusalem at this time.

At his second coming the kingdom will be physically established on the earth, where he will physically rule and reign from Jerusalem.

Listen to something Jesus said about His First Coming...

Matthew 12:42 The queen of the South...came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, SOMETHING GREATER THAN SOLOMON IS HERE.

I've read this verse a few times over the last two Sundays. It's not really worded the way we'd expect!

Wouldn't you expect Jesus to say...

The queen of the South came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, SOMEONE WISER than Solomon is here.

Why did He say **something**?

He said **something** because He's referring to more than just Himself. He's also referring to the kingdom He brought with Him.

In the rest of the sermon we are going to focus on this kingdom, and how it's greater than Solomon's kingdom.

You know I love types of Christ, and people serve as types in different ways:

- When Isaac was willing to be sacrificed by his father he served as a type of Jesus being willing to be sacrificed by His Father.
- When Joseph was rejected by his brothers, and then later revealed to them, he served as a type of Jesus being rejected by His brethren, the Jews, and later revealed to them,
- Jonah serves as a type, or it might be better to say a sign, of Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection.

Now what about Solomon?

Solomon serves as a type of Christ, not primarily in his first coming, but in his second coming...and this brings us to Lesson 2...

Lesson two: Solomon prefigures the glory of Christ's future kingdom.

The splendor and majesty of Solomon's kingdom prefigures the splendor and majesty of Christ's future Kingdom.

Why did the Jews reject Christ?

They were looking for the Christ we'll see at His Second Coming...they were looking for Solomon's kingdom.

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If you want to know what Christ's future kingdom looks like you can read **Revelation 20** and **Isaiah 11**.

But to be honest with you, and I mean this sincerely, I think the best way to see the glory of Christ's future kingdom is to read **1 Kings 10**.

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Let me tell you the main reason I want us to see Christ in this chapter...

Basically, I don't want to make the mistake the religious leaders made in Jesus' day...

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.

So the religious leaders studied the scriptures diligently, but they failed to see Jesus in them...and we don't want to make the same mistake.

Because here's the thing, and I can't say this strongly enough:

- If you learned everything the Old Testament could teach...
- If you could recount every story...
- If you memorized countless verses...

But you didn't see Christ, then you haven't let the Old Testament be the tutor, or teacher, Galatians says it's supposed to be that brings you to Christ.

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This past week I read an interesting quote related to Jesus...

"The furniture has not moved. It's just that the light is on now."

Christ has always been in Old Testament, but now the light, referring to the New Testament's illumination, is on to see him.

Let's try to see Him in **1 Kings 10!**

Look with me at verse 1...

1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions.ⁱ

Did anyone come to test Jesus with hard questions?

Many times in the gospels we read almost these exact same words that people, usually religious leaders, came to **test [Jesus] with hard questions.**

He was always able to answer those questions as easily as Solomon was able to answer the Queen of Sheba's questions.

Look at verse two...

1 Kings 10:2 She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones.ⁱⁱ And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. 3 And Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her.

This brings us to one of the ways that Jesus is greater than Solomon...

Lesson three: Jesus is greater than Solomon in (part one) his knowledge of people.

Verse 2 says the queen told Solomon all that was on her mind. He knew her well, but it was only because she revealed herself to him.

John 2:24 says Jesus **knew all people**...without them sharing their hearts with Him.

He knows our hearts and motives even if we tried to hide them from him. He knows our hearts better than we do.

If you write in your bible, circle the words **there was nothing hidden from the king** and write **Hebrews 4:13...**

No creature is hidden from his sight (referring to Jesus), **but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.**

Imagine a king who rules and reigns over his subjects, and knows everything about them including all of their thoughts and desires. That's what it will be like when Christ reigns.

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We all want people who know and understand us well. Hopefully we're blessed to have some friends like that.

But Jesus is the only One who knows us perfectly.

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Look at verse four...

1 Kings 10:4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 5 the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord, there was no more breath in her.

She was a queen from a nation known for its wealth. She was used to glamour, but when she saw the splendor of Solomon's kingdom she was breathless.

But Jesus's kingdom will be even greater.

The one thing I want you to notice is the meal he provides for his servants...and this brings us to the next part of lesson three...

Lesson three: Jesus is greater than Solomon in (part two) the supper he prepares.

Whatever table Solomon prepared for the Queen and his servants pales in comparison to the Marriage Supper Jesus has prepared for us...

Revelation 19:9 The angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

This marriage supper takes place when the groom, Christ, is united with His bride, us. This is what we're all waiting for when we will finally be united with our Savior.

Christ will prepare a supper for us, his servants, and I'm sure it will be even more magnificent than anything we can imagine.

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The Book of Revelation is basically a record of the things John saw and then recorded.

Three times toward the end of the book John was told, **"These are the true words of God."** It's almost like what John saw was too good to be true, so the angel had to tell him this is true!

This is one of those instances!

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Do you sometimes feel like what God has in store for us is too good to be true?

I do!

It seems like that's what the Queen thought too before she experienced all of it. Look at verse 6...

1 Kings 10:6 And she said to the king, “The **REPORT WAS** true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, **7** 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 surpass the report that I heard. **8** Happy are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!

Solomon’s servants served him happily, but their happiness pales in comparison to the joy we will have serving Christ for eternity...and this brings us to the next part of Lesson 3...

Lesson three: Jesus is greater than Solomon in (part three) his servants’ joy.

There’s a saying: *“Do what you love and you’ll never have to work another day in your life.”*

This will be the case when we serve Christ for eternity. We will work, but it will be a joy.

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Think about this...

It was always God’s plan for us to work, even before the curse...

Genesis 2:15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden **TO WORK** it and keep it.

Then after the curse, it was still God’s plan for us to work, but it wouldn’t be as enjoyable...

Genesis 3:17 [God said to Adam], “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; **18** thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. **19** By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

So this is what work is like in a cursed world.

But in the future the curse will be removed...

Revelation 22:3 **NO LONGER WILL THERE BE ANYTHING ACCURSED,** but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and **HIS SERVANTS WILL WORSHIP HIM.**

So we will serve God in the future without the curse, and the joy of it is prefigured in the way Solomon’s servants served him.

Let me say it like this...

If it was a blessed thing to serve King Solomon, but imagine how much more blessed it will be to serve King Jesus.

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Look at verse nine...

1 Kings 10:9 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.”

If you pulled this verse up out of the chapter, you could read it word-for-word as though it is about Christ.

I want to focus on the end of the verse, which Solomon [executed] **justice and righteousness**...and this brings us to the last part of lesson three for this morning's sermon...

Lesson three: Jesus is greater than Solomon in (part four) his execution of justice.

Because it won't involve much work because we are in **1 Kings 10**, turn a few chapters to the left to **1 Kings 3**.

We're familiar with this chapter because I preached on it a few months ago. It's split into two sections:

- Verses 1-15 is when God gave Solomon wisdom
- Verses 16-28 is the demonstration of Solomon's wisdom when the two women bring the child to him to determine who is the mother.

On September 27 I preached a sermon on the second half of the chapter titled, "A Glimpse of Jesus's Wisdom," because the account with the two women prefigures, or foreshadows, Christ's wisdom when he rules and reigns. Look at **verse 28**...

1 Kings 3:28 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.

This is about Solomon, but it prefigures Christ, who according to **1 Corinthians 1:24 is the wisdom of God**.

Solomon resolved situations – like this one – quickly, brilliantly, and with perfect justice.

This prefigures what will happen when Christ rules and reigns and difficult situations are brought to him...

Isaiah 11:3 His delight (speaking of Christ) **shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, 4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.**

The Queen of Sheba observed that Solomon executed justice and righteousness, but there's only one King who perfectly executes justice and righteousness, and that's Christ.

Now when I look at Solomon resolve the situation between these two women, I see something he has in common with Jesus, but I also see something that reveals how much greater Jesus is...

First, because Solomon was king I can't imagine how busy he was. One of the things that surprises me about the account is he had the time to let harlots approach him? Didn't he have someone a little lower that could handle situations like this?"

But this is what allowed Solomon to look like Jesus. This is what they have in common.

Jesus welcomed anyone that would approach him, be it sinners, tax collectors, and even harlots.

Probably the most famous account is in **Luke 7:36-40** when He let a well-known harlot anoint him. That's pretty welcoming! One of the Pharisees who was present even criticized him for letting her touch him...

Luke 7:39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner.

So Solomon and Jesus have in common that they welcomed harlots.

But let me ask you this...

Even though Solomon resolved their situation, how did they leave his presence?

I'd say they left the same way they came.

They were still sinners who were unforgiven and unchanged.

And this is a major difference from the sinners Jesus met...

Jesus did more than solve people's physical problems:

- He forgave them.
- He changed their hearts.
- He saved them.
- They left differently than they met him.

How do I know this?

Matthew 21:31 Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God.

Jesus ushered into His kingdom the lowliest of society.

I've spent a lot of time talking about the kingdom Jesus brought, but what specifically is the kingdom of God?

- The **kingdom of God** is the spiritual kingdom every believer is part of...are you part of it?
- It's the Kingdom for those who have submitted to Christ...have you submitted to Christ?
- When people are saved they pass from the devil's kingdom to God's Kingdom: **Col 1:13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.** Have you passed from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God?
- You can be close but have not entered: **Mark 12:34 34 And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."**

So have you entered?

If not, or you have any questions about anything I've discussed, I'd love to talk to you after service.

Let's pray.

ⁱ She wants to see if he's as wise as she's heard, and the only way to do that is to ask him hard questions! She came from what is modern day Yemen, a trip of about 1,500 miles, which is no small feat in a day without plans, trains, or automobiles.

She had plenty of servants. She easily could've sent one of them. Instead she made the long journey herself to see if what she heard was true, and this is a lot more than can be said about the people in Jesus's day who couldn't care less about what he was saying...even though he was greater than Solomon.

This is one of the reasons Jesus applauded her in the Gospels...

Matthew 12:42 The queen of the South will rise up at the 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.

ⁱⁱ This is an interesting reversal of the situation with the three wise men:

- She brings Solomon gifts that are reminiscent of the gifts the Wiseman brought Jesus
- But Solomon is the wise man she goes to for wisdom