

Where blessing is found - 1 Kings 10v1-29

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Preacher: Jonny Grant

[0:00] 1 Kings chapter 10 verses 1 to 15. That's on page 348 of the Red Church Bible. That's 1 Kings chapter 10 verses 1 to 15.

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2 Kings chapter 13. 1 Kings chapter 11. 1 Kings chapter 11.

of his royal bounty. Then she left and returned with her retinue to her own country. The weight of gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents, not including the revenues from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the territories. Thank you Sam. Well this morning we're going to jump straight into the text and let me just outline very briefly the three things we're going to see from this this morning.

Here they are, life under God's king, blessings from God's king and gifts for God's king.

[4:11] So life under the king, blessings from the king and gifts for the king. So let's pray. Father would you please through your written word and by your spirit and through what I have to say, would you speak truth into our hearts, transform us and change us so that we can see the wonderful blessings there are in Christ and that he is all that we need. Teach us today we pray. Amen.

So first, life under God's king. Well life under God's king could really not have been better. Have a quick look back to chapter 4 verse 20.

We have a wonderful picture of what life was like under King Solomon. Chapter 4 verse 20. The people of Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They ate, they drank and they were happy. These people had everything that they needed. Verse 25.

During Solomon's lifetime, Judah and Israel from Dan to Beersheba from north to south lived in safety. Everyone under their own vine and under their own fig tree.

Nobody was in need or in want. Nobody was in need or in want. They are a blessed people. They are satisfied and fulfilled. It's life of peace and prosperity. It's really a picture of the world that we all long for.

[6:16] A picture of the true kingdom that God gives to all those who live under God's king. Now here's the good news for us. God's king is to be a king for all nations and all peoples.

Remember Solomon's prayer? Have a look at chapter 8 verse 41. Just flick on a little bit. Chapter 8 verse 41. This was part of Solomon's prayer.

Chapter 8 verse 41. As for the foreigner.

The anticipation is that people from other nations would come. That they wouldn't be excluded. But that God would welcome and accept them.

That they could come and enjoy life under God's king. Well it seems as if Solomon's prayer has been answered.

[7:51] Let's go to 1 Kings chapter 10 verse 23. 1 Kings chapter 10 verse 23.

1 Kings Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. Where did they come from? Verse 24.

2 Kings Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. 3 Kings chapter 13. The nations are coming to the king.

3 Kings. 3 Kings. They are coming to live under the king. Now this really shouldn't be a surprise to us. Because remember God's promise to Abraham all the way back in Genesis chapter 12.

I have it on the screen for you. In chapter 12, verse 3, it reads this. I will bless you, God says, and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

[8 : 57] You see, God had made this promise that there would be blessing for all peoples, no matter where you came from. And that blessing would come through God's King.

You see, whoever we are today, whatever our race or religion, whatever our background or experience in life, the invitation is to come, for we are called to live our life under God's King. You see, when we come to God's King, all our deepest longings are fulfilled and satisfied. So first, the call to live under God's King.

Second, blessings from God's King. Now in chapter 10 of 1 Kings, certainly the first half that we had read to us gives us an example of the nations or the kind of people that came to God's King.

We're introduced to her in verse 1, Queen Sheba. We don't know a lot about her or the nation of Sheba, wherever that was.

[10 : 14] Some think it's in modern day Yemen and it was about a thousand miles that she travelled. We don't really know, other than it was a long way away. But she does teach us some things that we can learn.

First, look at her searching and longing. The Queen of Sheba is a very, very wealthy woman. If you look at verse 2, arriving at Jerusalem with a very great caravan, not the wheeled variety, but a whole entourage of camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold and precious stones.

And look down at verse 10. And she gave the king 120 talents of gold. That's the equivalent of 125 million euro in today's money.

Worth of gold, all for the king. And large quantities of spices and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

But yet, despite her vast wealth, it seems she's not content. She is unsettled. Look at the end of verse 1.

[11 : 41] We're told that she came to test Solomon with hard questions. Now, I don't think she's trying to catch him out. No, this queen is seeking the truth and she knows she does not have it.

Look at the end of verse 2. She came to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind. Well, what was on her mind?

What's troubling her? Well, I think the clue comes for us in verse 1. When the Queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relationship to the Lord, she came to test Solomon with hard questions.

You see, news had spread far and right, right to the other nations of the world that Solomon, God's king, was in a special relationship with the Lord.

A God who not only spoke personally, but a God who came to dwell with his people intimately.

Those were the preceding verse chapters about the temple as God came to meet with his people.

[12 : 56] Now, this queen has wealth. She has everything she needs, but she is longing for something far greater and more eternal than just wealth.

She's longing to know something of Solomon's God, a God who has blessed the king and has blessed all those who live under the king.

Verse 3. So Solomon answered all her questions. Nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her. So in her searching and longing, she is satisfied and fulfilled.

She's not disappointed by what she hears and sees. Verse 4. When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, look at all the food on his table, the servants and the officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was overwhelmed.

She was staggering in the amazement of all that she could see. It's far more than she could have possibly imagined. It's beyond her wildest expectations.

[14 : 15] Verse 7. But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me.

In wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard. And look at the people. Verse 8. How happy your people must be.

How happy your officials who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom. You see, this queen has travelled a long, long distance and here she is, all her longing and searching and she is now in the midst of a blessed people.

They are wonderfully happy people, satisfied and fulfilled, content, not lacking anything, wisdom and wealth in abundance all through the king.

But what is even more amazing, Queen Sheba gets to share in the blessings too. We see this in her confession of verse 9.

[15:24] Praise be to the Lord your God who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord's eternal love for Israel he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness.

It's like Queen Sheba has burst into song. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. she's come to see and now she tastes that God is good.

In God we experience blessing. In God we find eternal love. In God we find justice and righteousness. Now I don't think it's too much to say that Queen Sheba has come to see that under God's king we find far more than we could possibly dare to ask or imagine.

Look at verse 13. King Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba all that she desired and asked for besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty.

Then she left and returned with her retinue all that she received to her own country. The point is the Queen leaves more blessed than she did when she arrived.

[16:53] She gave lots but she received far more than she could ever give. You see under God's king means a life of blessing from God's king.

So she comes searching and longing she's satisfied and fulfilled. Things are better and greater. So let us ask the question for ourselves.

What can we expect under God's king? Well life under Solomon the material blessings that were enjoyed by the people well they were a foretaste a picture of the spiritual and eternal blessings that would come through God's ultimate king Jesus Christ.

You see under Solomon all the blessings well they were primarily material and partial and as we'll see next week they were all dependent on the faithfulness and obedience of the king.

If the king failed then the blessings stopped. so they were material and they were partial they never lasted but in Christ the blessings we receive from the true king they are spiritual and eternal.

[18:26] Have a look at Ephesians chapter 1 keep your finger if you can in 1 Kings chapter 10 we're going to come back there and have a look at Ephesians chapter 1 I know you were looking at Ephesians 2 last week well let's have a look at Ephesians 1 and verse 3 as we think about the better and greater blessings we receive through God's king Jesus Christ verse 3 praise be to the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ not some of the blessings not just a little bit of the blessing but everything all the spiritual blessings that are available are ours in

Christ what are those blessings well read on verse 4 for he that is God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight if you are in Christ today God is looking at you today as holy and blameless he treats you as he does his very own son let's read on verse 5 in love he predestined us to be adopted to sonship through Jesus Christ we are now no longer outsiders but we can talk to God as father brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus verse 7 in Christ we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of his sins in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us this is all ours today these are the blessings that we can enjoy chosen loved treasured adopted redeemed forgiven we're not short changed by his grace he has poured out his riches upon us but that's not all look at what is to come down at verse 13 and you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth the gospel of salvation when you believed when you trusted in Christ you were marked in him with a seal the promised Holy Spirit who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory we we now have the presence of the Holy Spirit a reminder to tell us that we are looking forward to an eternal kingdom that is guaranteed that is ours not because of our faithfulness but because of the obedience and faithfulness of Jesus Christ one day we will experience our full redemption filled with joy eternal pleasures to enjoy forever and forever Jesus is the better and greater king he will not fail you or let you down he is infinitely wise and abundantly wealthy in Jesus all our longings are satisfied and fulfilled he is God's chosen king through whom all nations and all peoples will be blessed so life under

God's king blessings from God's king and then third gifts for God's king let's go back to 1 kings chapter 10 you see those who came to the king people like queen sheba received wonderful blessings but look at how the nations treated the king look at their response to the king verse 10 remind ourselves that as the queen came she gave the king 120 talents of gold large quantities of spices and precious stones never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of sheba gave to king Solomon if we think that's a lot well look at verse 14 the weight of gold that [23 : 52] Solomon received yearly was 666 talents in today's money that's just a little under a billion euro worth of gold verse 15 and it doesn't include all the revenues from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the territories verse 25 year after year this doesn't want a one off year after year everyone who came brought a gift articles of silver and gold and robes and weapons and spices and horses and mules and everything else you could think of the extravagance of these gifts are just mind blowing it's wealth beyond comprehension his gifts are so great verse 16 king Solomon made 200 large shields of hammered gold 600 shekels of gold that's about 7 kilograms of gold in each shield he also made 300 small shields about one and a half kilos of gold in each of them 200 big ones and 300 small ones it's like us decorating our house in 500 euro notes just because we have it and making your foundation full of two euro coins or something is this not all a bit too much is this not too extravagant like come on guys would you just hold back on all the gifts here why do those who come bring such extravagant gifts because this is God's king the king from whom all blessings flow for such a king no gift is too much his fame and his wisdom commands it how much more then does the true king Jesus Christ who didn't come seeking any gift but lavished on us the riches of his grace who has blessed us with eternal blessings who satisfies us and fulfills us who sacrificed his life so that we might have life how much more does the true king deserve our gifts our life our all love the hymn writer poetically put it like this as he calls us to remember and to picture the cross when I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died look back to the cross look to Jesus see from his head his hands his feet sorrow and love flow mingle down did air such love and sorrow meet or thorns compose so rich a crown what's our response were the whole realm of nature mine that were an offering far too small love so amazing so divine demands my soul my life my all even if I were to own the whole of the universe if I were to be owner of the whole world that is an offering far too small he demands my soul my life my all we give our life to Jesus not to earn blessing but because he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing so I should have had that title up a bit earlier one more the Queen's warning now you may be thinking I'm not sure if I can do this can I give my whole life to Jesus I don't know if I can trust him with all that I have if I'm to believe this if I'm really to in response to give him my life well I need a little bit more than a story about a queen called Sheba and a visit to a king called Solomon what's going to convince me that God's king really does have every spiritual blessing and that he is worth giving my whole life to well Jesus has something to say to us have a look at Luke chapter 11 11 the whole context of chapter 11 Jesus has been in debate with the people and religious leaders about well that he is God's king but the people and the religious leaders refuse to believe him so Jesus has some very direct words to say verse 31 the queen of the south that's a reference to queen sheba will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom and now something greater than Solomon is here something greater than Solomon has come we now have Jesus the better and greater king why would we not trust him we have his words we can read all about him in the scriptures we can see the miracles that he did his resurrection from the grave how much more do we need what more evidence do we need to be able to believe and trust him you see there's no point any one of us standing before [30 : 34] God on judgment day and saying I didn't know nobody nobody told me I didn't quite understand look at what Jesus says verse 31 the queen of the south will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them the picture Jesus is painting is serious it's as if we are standing on the day of judgment before God and he turns and he says look can you see her queen sheba she's here she's she's received the inheritance now if this queen who had far less truth and less understanding and travelled all the way to listen to Solomon and believed and trusted God and was blessed how much more should we believe the true king who came to us and gave up his life for us who is abundantly wise and wealthy beyond our imagination salvation if queen sheba believed then there is no excuse for anyone else not to believe we have everything we need in

Christ will we trust him later in Luke Jesus reassures all those who do believe this is what he says in Luke 18 it's on the screen no one who has left home or wife or brothers or sisters or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom he's saying no one who has surrendered to king Jesus no one who has submitted their life to the true king will fail to receive many times as much in this age and in the age to come eternal life we will not be disappointed when we come to king Jesus why do we run after other things and other people it is a call to turn our hearts back afresh to the true king from whom all blessings flow you see one day

Jesus will come and for one it will be a time of blessing filled with joy eternal pleasures at his right hand for another it will be a time of judgment the call my friends is for all of us to live life under God's king and you will discover that you are blessed and you will know that you will be blessed beyond your wildest dreams thank God for our Jesus the king let's pray praise God praise God from whom all blessings flow thank you that in

Jesus we have the true faithful obedient king who blesses us as we trust in him who satisfies our deepest longing who fills us with joy today and the promise of eternal pleasures to come father help us not to turn to other things or to other people but to keep looking to you and trusting in you father we give our life in response my life my all we surrender to you and submit to you and say may your will be done in our life for your glory alone