

A Queen's Tribute To King Solomon

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 11 June 2023

Preacher: Rev James Maciver

- [0 : 00] We're going to begin our praise of God singing in Psalm 145, 145 in the Scottish Psalter. That's the Long Meter version on page 444, and the tune is Finart.
- O Lord, thou art my God and King, thee will I magnify and praise. I will thee bless and gladly sing unto thy holy name always. Each day I rise, I will thee bless and praise thy name time without end.
- Much to be praised and great God is, his greatness none can comprehend. We're singing verses 1 to 6 on page 444.
- O Lord, thou art my God and King. O Lord, thou art my God and King.
- Thee will I magnify and praise. I will thee bless and gladly sing unto thy holy name always.
- [1 : 29] Each day I rise, I will thee bless and praise thy name time without end.
- Much to be praised and great God is, his greatness none can comprehend.
- I will thee bless and praise and praise. Grace shall thy works praise unto race.
- The mighty earth shew done by thee. Thy will speak of thy glorious grace.
- Thy will speak of thy glorious grace. Thy will speak of thy glorious grace. And honor of thy majesty.
- [2 : 43] Thy wondrous works I will recall. Thy wondrous works I will record.
- Thy men the might shall be extolled. Of all thy dreadful acts.
- And I thy greatness will unfold.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- [3 : 49] Amen. Amen. Amen. in your lordship over all your creation. And we thank you that you have given us again the privilege of coming before you as our King in heaven to worship you tonight in this place of worship.
- And we bless you for your remembrance of us to give us so many things that cause us to come before you with thankfulness. And especially, Lord, we are thankful for the gospel itself, the revelation you have given us and indication of the lot of your people as they are saved by you.
- We pray, Lord, that all of those issues may tonight be precious to us again. And we thank you that as we come together, we are guided by your word in our consideration of these things so that we may have our minds enlightened, our understanding increased of those wonderful truths that belong to God and to his salvation.
- And we thank you, Lord, tonight for the way in which we belong to a people who worship you regularly from week to week. And for the many benefits that you give us in being together, the benefits we have, O Lord, of sharing together in the things of the gospel and sharing together in the knowledge of God and in communion with God.

We thank you that our fellowship, one with another, and our fellowship that we are, emanates from that wonderful divine fellowship within the depths of the Trinity itself, where the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit share together as one God in that mysterious fellowship that we find described in your word.

[5 : 34] And we thank you, Lord, that it is such a wonderful and great mystery, that we know it is true and we can understand only in part. Yet we thank you, Lord, for the amount of it that we are yet unable to comprehend as much as what we are.

We thank you for that greatness that belongs to you. And we pray as we come to worship you tonight that that greatness will once again be impressed upon our souls by the ministry of your Holy Spirit.

Lord, we give thanks again for this congregation, for the witness that we bear to you, and for the way that we seek to make you known in our community. We pray that every way in which we seek to do this may be blessed and owned by you.

Lord, we confess that we do come so far short in everything we do, in our very inmost thoughts as well as our actions. There are so many things that we need to confess before you are wrong with our lives, things which your word highlights as defects and deficiencies and sins in our lives.

But we thank you, Lord, that your promise is that if we come and confess our sins, you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[6 : 52] So we do confess our sins to you tonight. And we come to you, Lord, with thankfulness, as a God who has revealed himself, as one who is abundant in pardon.

And so we pray that as we seek you tonight that we may know that pardon and cleansing for ourselves. Lord, forbid that we should know things only formally or in an outward fashion.

Give us, Lord, in our familiarity with your word to truly know in our inmost souls to know yourself in communion, in fellowship, in friendship. And we pray that you would draw us even tonight, Lord, anew to experience that for ourselves.

Forbid that we should know the gospel so well and yet be outside of your salvation. Grant, Lord, as we come before you that any of us this evening who are yet not saved, who have not come to bend our knee obediently to Christ, who have not come fully to avail ourselves of that redemption that is in him, we ask that you would bless us tonight, that you would come, Lord, and show us your love and compassion and your power in drawing us to yourself.

Remember our young people, we pray at this time. Lord, remember them tonight here in the service. Remember the Bible class as they meet later on after the service.

[8 : 19] We ask, Lord, that your blessing will be with them as they learn the things of God. We pray that as they continue to develop in their lives, that they will do so spiritually and morally as well in a way that we will meet that which you require of them and require of us all, that we will live lives of obedience to Christ, lives that are pleased to serve you, Lord, in this world, lives that take up the service of Christ as something that is honorable and places honor upon us so that we come, Lord, to be in the world as light to your truth.

Remember, we pray tonight all your people as they gather wherever that is throughout the world. We pray for them and we give thanks, Lord, that we here are but a tiny fragment of the church of Christ throughout the world who meet today to worship Him as we do here.

And in places sometimes, Lord, where your people cannot be gathered together as they would desire, we pray that you would bless them whether in their houses or individually or whatever other circumstances, Lord, may be theirs.

We pray that all who are your people will know tonight of your blessing. And we ask that you would bless all that we plan to do, Lord, in these weeks and months ahead.

We pray that as we bring these things to you so you would bless us in our planning for the holiday club, for other activities, oh Lord, over the coming weeks and months.

[9 : 53] we pray for the camps that meet in the summer. We pray that you would bless them, bless those who are preparing to lead the camps, those who will come as campers themselves.

We pray that you would bless all who help practically. We pray that you would grant, Lord, that the need for transport, the need for chaperones, the need for help practically will be met by those offering themselves to that work.

And we pray especially that you would bless the young folk themselves, that you would bless the message of your truth to them and the witness of those who lead them in the camps.

We ask, Lord, for thankful hearts as we consider the work of camps over many years. And we do pray that you would bless this batch of camps as well in this coming year.

And Lord, we pray that they may continue to bear much fruit and that from them may emanate those who will yet lead your cause and come to be living witnesses to you in the world.

[10 : 56] Remember tonight those who have difficulties and trials in their lives. We pray for those who are ill and unable to come to be in church anymore. We pray, Lord, that you bless them in hospital and care homes, in their own homes.

Remember them, Lord, we pray. Remember those whose faculties have begun to fail, especially those with mental health issues and memory issues. Remember those with dementia.

Remember those, Lord, who look after them, those who give up their time to help with various agencies as well as in the NHS. Remember the work of Marie Curie and of Crossroads and all other agencies, Lord, who help so many families from time to time.

Remember the work of safe families. We thank you for the way that they are encouraged, Lord, as they have set up safe families here in the town. We pray that you bless, Catherine, and all the others who lead the work, and we pray that they may continue to be encouraged and that many families, oh, Lord, in the difficulties at this time will find much help through the work of safe families.

And so continue, we pray, to bless us with resources, Lord, that would seek to serve you in this life, that would seek to reach out in the love of Christ to those in our community who need that help.

[12 : 15] Continue to bless those who work with those who have addictions of various kinds. Remember them, we pray. We pray that you'd remember those tonight who mourn the passing of loved ones in the congregation and beyond.

Console their hearts, we pray, and give them of your peace. We ask all of these things, oh, Lord, seeking that you would guide us now further into your truth. Receive us graciously, for Jesus' sake.

Amen. Amen. Our second psalm of praise tonight is Psalm 2, the second psalm in the Psalter. Again, we're singing from the Scottish Psalter on page 200.

The tune this time is Kilmarnock, singing verses 1 to 8. The focus tonight is on the kingship of Jesus.

We're going to be looking at that from the way in which the Queen of Sheba came to visit Solomon and we'll see how that relates to the kingship of Jesus. Our psalms all have references in them to God as our King or Jesus fulfilled in Jesus as our King.

[13 : 22] So Psalm 2, Why rage the heathen and vain things why do the people mind? Kings of the earth do set themselves and princes are combined to plot against the Lord and His anointed, saying thus, Let us asunder, break their bands and cast their cords from us.

And the psalm goes on to speak of God being not in any way changed or altered from His lordship despite all the opposition that takes place even today in the world.

God's purposes are never thwarted and God's King, the Lord Jesus Christ, continues to reign supremely in heaven. So let's sing these verses from Psalm 2, verses 1 to 8 to God's praise.

Psalm 2, Psalm 2, Psalm 2, Psalm 2, Why rage the heathen and faint things?

Why do the people mind? Kings of the earth do set themselves and princes are combined to fought against the Lord and his anointed, and his anointed, saying thus, Let us asunder, break their bands, and cast their cords from us.

[15 : 14] He that in heaven says, Shall I? The Lord shall storm them all.

Then shall he speak to them in wrath, in which he vexed them shall.

Yet notwithstanding I have him to be my King appointed, and over the earth and over the earth of the earth of the earth of the earth I have him to be my King anointed.

The sure decree I will declare the Lord hath said to me, Thou art my only Son, yet I have begotten thee.

Ask of me and for heritage and even humbly kind, and for possession I do thee shall give birth at both mine.

[17 : 30] Now we're going to read a portion of God's Word from the Old Testament in the first book of Kings, the first book of the Kings, and chapter 10. And we'll read down as far as verse 13.

So 1 Kings, chapter 10 from the beginning of the chapter. 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.

She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels, bearing spices, and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind.

And Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. And when the Queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and 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.

Then she said to the king, The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom. But I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it.

[19 : 00] 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.

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 a hundred and twenty talents of gold and a very great quantity of spices and precious stones. 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 her by the bounty of King Solomon.

[20 : 19] So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants. And may God follow with His blessing reading that portion of His Word.

Before we turn to look at some of the teaching of that passage, let's sing again. And we're singing in Psalm 45, 45a in Sing Psalms. That's on page 56.

Tune this time in Gainsborough, singing verses 1 to 6. A noble theme inspires my heart with verses for the king.

My tongue's a skillful writer's pen composing lines to sing. You far excel the best of men. Your lips are full of grace. For God has blessed you evermore.

His light shines on your face. That's Psalm 45a, verses 1 to 6 to tune Gainsborough to God's praise. A noble theme inspires my heart with verses for the king.

[21 : 38] My tongue's a skillful writer's pen, composing lines to sing.

You far excel the best of men. Your lips are full of grace.

For God has blessed you evermore. His light shines on your face.

O mighty one, take up your sword and find it on your thigh.

With glorious splendor clothe yourself and with your majesty.

[23 : 07] right forth in state, victory. Right forth in state, victory. For meekness, truth and right.

righteousness, truth and right. Let your right hand display your deeds of awesome power and might.

Let your sharp arrows pierce the hearts of those who hate the king.

and all the nations of the earth into subjection bring.

your royal throne, O God, will last throughout eternity.

[24 : 37] your kingdom scepter will be one of truth and equity.

Well, let's turn for a short time now together to 1 Kings chapter 10, especially verses 6 to 9 of this chapter, where the Queen of Sheba said to the king, the report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of 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. 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. Well, sometimes, as you very well know, reality does not always match up to hype.

[26 : 01] You might have read about something that you were going to buy. You might have looked into the various items like that. You might have looked into the price of it.

You might have looked at the quality of it described. You might have looked at the number of stars given by those who were giving a review of them. And you might have said, Well, yeah, okay, I think I quite like that review.

I think I'll send for that. And I'll send for it there. And then it comes. And when you open it, you think, Hmm, it's not really what I expected. It's not really as good as it was described.

It's not really something that matches the hype or the descriptions that were given about it. We've all been, I'm sure, in that situation, whether we're young or middle-aged or old.

But it's actually the opposite in what you find in this passage. Because the Queen of Sheba had heard so much about Solomon in her own land.

[27 : 00] And she heard so much especially about his ability, his wisdom. The way that he was not just a king who had so many riches, so many things that really fitted with his majesty and his position.

But also his wisdom especially had come to her notice. And so she came deliberately to Solomon to see him, but to ask him questions and to find out for herself if the reports were actually true.

And instead of saying, well, it wasn't really as good as was described, it was the opposite. She said, the report was true that I heard in my own land. I didn't believe the reports until I came.

And behold, the half was not told me. In other words, it just exceeded all the descriptions, all the reports that she'd heard. There were just nothing quite like the reality itself when she came to experience it for herself.

Now, of course, Solomon in the Old Testament, like David his father, is set before us as what theologians call a type of Christ. A representation of Jesus as King.

[28 : 12] And when we go to types in the Old Testament, the types that, like here, Solomon is a type or a representation, a foreshadowing of Jesus.

You mustn't actually go to the person themselves, like David or Solomon, because when you look at them as persons, as human beings, they're full of failures. But you look at what they are as kings set by God over his people, Israel.

And you look at the way in which, in terms of their office as king, they represent Jesus as the king of his people. And you find, when you combine both David and Solomon, that you can then get a complete picture of how that represents the kingship of Jesus.

David was the conquering king. David was the one who went out so often to conquer his enemies and to bring about a subjection of his enemies so that he established the kingdom.

And then that was followed by Solomon, whose reign was not one of conquering, but one of establishing peace. A settled reign. A reign in which was marked by peace and prosperity.

[29 : 22] And when you combine those two issues as types of Christ, you can see that they combine to tell us in a foreshadowing way that the kingship of Jesus is about bringing people to be conquered by him, whether we do so willingly, submit ourselves to him or not, or at the end of all things, those who are still hostile to him will still be conquered.

But it's the conquering king and also the following of that by the reign of Jesus as the king of peace. That's what you find represented in David and in Solomon together.

And when you look at this passage, not only do they represent Jesus as king, but the queen of Sheba in many ways represents the nations of the Gentile world outside of Israel coming actually into the kingdom of God.

The Old Testament is the Old Testament is the fulfillment of that. You find in the book of Acts especially, you find a reference to the gospel going out to the nations beyond Israel.

And you find people like the Ethiopian eunuch, for example, or the person of Cornelius. That both of these, as they came from a background outside of Israel, came to realize Jesus as the Messiah and the king.

[30 : 45] And so they themselves, in a sense, represent the incoming of the Gentile world. And that's what you and I are, most of us at least, we're not brought up as Jewish people. We're brought up as Gentiles, brought up as non-Jewish people.

But the gospel has come throughout the world to embrace the whole world, embrace Jew and Gentile alike. And as Paul says so often in his epistles, the Jews and Gentiles together make up the one church of God.

There's not a church of the Jews, the church of the Gentiles separately. They're both together, as Ephesians especially reminds us, that wonderful passage of chapter 2 of Ephesians, where you find the reconciliation not just of people to God, but of people to each other through the cross of Christ.

So if we take that with us tonight and look at this as a picture, a representation, a foreshadowing of the New Testament kingship of Jesus and coming to know him as our king, let's see what it's saying to us.

Two things I want to just bring out of the chapter briefly. First of all, the power behind the throne. The power behind the throne. And that is God himself.

[31 : 59] Because in verse 9 you find that she is saying to, the queen is saying to King Solomon, Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel.

In other words, the power behind the throne of Solomon is none less than God himself. And you see what she's saying here, because the Lord delighted in you, he has set you on the throne of Israel.

It was God's delight in Solomon that led to him being set by God as the king of Judah at this time. And so you transfer that spiritually to what you find in Jesus himself.

Why is it that Jesus is now set above the whole creation, as it were, and is seated at the right hand of God in heaven? Because God the Father delighted in him.

All the way through the New Testament you find references to God's, the Father's delight in Jesus. Right back to the time that he came to be baptized. You remember the way in which the voice came from heaven, along with the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.

[33 : 11] And the voice which said, this is my beloved son. This is my son, the beloved one, in whom I am well pleased. In whom I am delighted, is really what that word means as well.

So just like God delighted in Solomon, which led to his enthronement, so God's delight in Jesus led to his enthronement in heaven as well.

Jesus, of course, being the Son of God, God himself, coming, taking our nature, coming into this world, becoming human in order to accomplish all the work that he came into the world to accomplish as the servant of the Father.

But that's what you find consistently in the Old and New Testaments. And there's one marvelous psalm. We didn't sing it tonight. There are quite a number of psalms to do with the kingship of God and of Christ, obviously.

Psalms 21. O Lord, in your strength the king rejoices. In your salvation how greatly he exults. You have given him his heart's desire.

[34 : 17] You have not withheld the request of his lips. For you meet him with rich blessings. You set a crown of fine gold upon his head. He asked life of you. You gave it to him.

Length of days, forever and ever. His glory is great through your salvation. Splendor and majesty you bestow upon him. For you make him most blessed forever.

You make him glad with the joy of your presence. And you see the fulfillment of that in Christ is God the Father delighting in him. Every single thing that Jesus did as the servant of the Father, the Father took delight in.

Including the cross. Including the cross. Including the death that Jesus died. Which satisfied divine justice. Which provided for God the atonement that he sought and required for us to be saved.

For us to have our sin forgiven and brought to become children of God. And you see in verse 9 here in 1 Kings 10 how it goes on to say, He, because he loved you, he set you as a king that you may execute justice and righteousness.

[35 : 33] These are two of the foundational pillars of the kingdom of God. And they're here foreshadowed in what's said about Solomon. When you think of Jesus, the one who reigns now from the throne of heaven, these are two of the great principles or pillars of his kingdom.

Justice and righteousness. You know, people ask about or say to us, I don't believe God exists. And it's not easy to respond to that because they're not prepared very often to listen to what you have to say anyway.

But one of the things that you can say to them is, Well, what is going to happen then if there's no such thing as justice? If there's no such thing as God, then there's no perfect justice.

And if there's no perfect justice, then people are going to live like, whether it's a Hitler or a Pol Pot or a Stalin or whoever, who were responsible for murdering and killing so many millions of people, they don't answer to anyone.

There's no throne of judgment for them. There's no justice for those that they came to slaughter. Justice. You know, many people may say, Well, some of these people who were wicked in this world and died in their wickedness, they escaped justice.

[36 : 53] Well, they did in the sense of human justice, but they did not escape justice because they had to meet with God. And when you meet with God, you meet with justice.

You meet with the justice that says about his people, I am right in saying that they are my people, that they are free from their sin, that they are justified, that they are righteous, that they are my children.

And you meet justice as well on the other side. The justice which says to the wicked, I don't know you, depart from me. The justice of God is so essential, not just to you thinking about God and the existence of God, but to think about human society.

You take out the justice of God from that. What are you left with? You're left with sheer chaos. Everybody just does what's right for themselves, and they're not accountable to anyone else.

So, their justice and righteousness as the basis of Solomon's throne, set by God to administer these two elements of justice and righteousness, and that was always required of the kings in Israel.

[38 : 03] Some of them didn't do that. Some of them are unashamedly revealed in Scripture as being unjust, as being interested not in justice or righteousness, but just in pursuing their own aims.

But Jesus is the King of justice and the King of righteousness. And God delighted in Jesus and delights in Jesus.

Indeed, that's the basis of our salvation as well, the Lord's, God's delight in Jesus, His Son. I'll remind you of what it says, just to pick up one verse in Colossians.

Paul's letter to the Colossians, chapter 1, verse 19, where it speaks all the way through these previous verses about Jesus, about the Son of God and who He is, in Him, by Him were all things created, and so on, all the way down through there.

He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. And He is the head of the body, the church. He's the beginning, the firstborn from the dead. For in Him the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, making peace by the blood of His cross.

[39 : 20] And I'm not personally terribly happy with that translation compared to the older translation, because I think it's better saying as it was in the older translation. It pleased God that in Him, the Son, all fullness, all the fullness of divinity, of deity, should dwell.

And the word pleased then covers the rest of the verse as well. It pleased God that in Him should all fullness dwell, and that all things be reconciled in Him. You see, God took delight in Him, and He took delight in reconciling all things through the work of the Son.

And so tonight, God's delight in His Son, the exalted Jesus Christ, is set before us for our consideration. Why should we delight in Jesus?

Not just because He becomes our Savior, of course, that's part of it, a very important part, but we should delight in Jesus because the Father delights in Him. And whatever the Father delights in should be delightful to us as well.

So there's the God's delight in the King. But then in verse 9 also you have the power behind the throne also involves God's love for His people.

[40 : 37] There's verse 9 again. You see, that's coming at it from another angle.

It's saying, because the Lord's delight was in His people, because He loved His people, He made Solomon their king. And if you transfer that now to Jesus that this foreshadows, then that becomes so true as well in a much higher sense.

Because it is the case that God loved His people forever, He has made Christ to be king over them. That's interesting, isn't it, that it wasn't the king's love that caused God to love His people.

It wasn't Solomon's love for God or love for His people that caused God to love them. It was God's love for them that caused or lay behind the provision of Solomon as a king for them.

Same in the New Testament. It wasn't anything in us that caused God to provide salvation. What is it? It wasn't because God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.

[41 : 56] That whoever believes in Him should not perish. It wasn't because He foresaw that we would believe. It wasn't because we're good people already. It was because He loved us.

And because He loved us, He set a king over us. He provided a king for us. He provided the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Father's love is indeed the cause of the cross. It lies behind the death of Jesus, the obedience of Jesus, the ministry of Jesus.

Because God so loved His people. And there isn't really anything more amazing than that. That He should love and set His love on the kind of person that you and I am by nature.

Because you know you're not perfect. And I know I'm far from perfect. And you know and I know that we rebel against God. That by nature in our hearts, we're not actually open to have God as our King or Jesus as our King.

[42 : 58] And yet, these are the kind of people, sinners, that God loved. And God loved to the extent that He sent His Son into the world to die the death of the cross.

Because, just to go back to this statement by the Queen of Sheba. Because the Lord loved Israel forever, He has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness.

Because God loved His people, He set Jesus as King over them to execute righteousness and justice.

There's the power behind the throne. God's delight in the King. And God's love for His people.

The power behind the throne. Secondly, the people before the throne. Because she describes here, or she described here in the passage, the kind of people and how she saw the people who were servants of King Solomon.

[44 : 10] You find there, blessed, she said, happy are your men happy, are your servants who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom.

And there are two things, I think, that come across from that. First of all, those people who are before the throne of God are His servants.

They're standing before the throne, not just to hear His wisdom, but standing ready to serve Him, to hear His word, to carry out His bidding, to do what His will is.

They are His servants. They are His servants. Their posture is one of waiting for a word from the King. They are there ready to act. And in that wonderful passage in Romans chapter 6, I'll leave you to read it through for yourselves afterwards.

We very often refer to it in any case where Paul is dealing with the translation that takes place from being servants or bond slaves of sin to becoming bond servants of God.

[45 : 14] We come to be taken by God away from serving sin as we are by nature ourselves and turned into servants of God. I remember how he puts it there.

Just as you once presented your member slaves to impurity, so now present your member slaves to righteousness. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed?

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves or bond servants to God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and the end is eternal life.

And as you read through that passage, Paul deals in a wonderful way with the grace of God, the power of God, by which we are taken from being joined in our natural relation to Adam, and then being joined to Jesus by union with him, coming to be saved.

We come to leave by God's grace our service of sin, and we come to be bond servants of God.

[46 : 28] Blessed, she says, happy are your servants. Happy are those who continually stand before you. You know, being a servant of Jesus is a position of great honor.

The world out there will not think so. The world out there will say to you young people here tonight, don't actually think of becoming a Christian in your young days. You can easily leave that and put it off until you're older.

Be yourself. Do what you want to do. Be what you want to be. That's fine as far as a career is concerned. And I hope you develop in your career in a way that's wonderful in your own situation.

But don't listen to the voice that tells you just leave your salvation, leave being a servant of Jesus until later in life. Why would you? Why would you? Why would any of us do that?

When the Bible calls us to become servants of God right through from our youngest days. And although the world tells you, you know, it would be far better for you just to please yourself.

[47 : 36] Far better for you just to fit in with what most people think. Why would you want to tie yourself down, as the world will put it, to being servants of God? Why would you want to tie yourself down to follow the teaching of the Bible when there's a whole world out there waiting for you to explore free from the Bible, free from the teaching of the church, free from the gospel?

Well, you know where that voice is from. It's not from God. It's from the evil one, from the enemy of your soul. And here's this passage telling us that in a much higher sense, being a servant of God places us on the highest level of privilege.

You can't be more privileged than to be a servant of Jesus. To have that position given you and accepted willingly by you.

Just as these servants of Solomon were described by the Queen of Sheba as happy are your servants, blessed are your servants, blessed are those who continually stand before you.

She's envious of these servants. She's a queen. She has so many people serving herself. And yet here she is saying to Solomon, blessed are these people that I'm seeing as your servants, almost saying, I wish I was one of them.

[49 : 00] And don't imagine that what you hear in the world is what's best for you. You trust yourself to Jesus. Give yourself to him to be his servants.

And as you do so, you'll become those, you'll join those who have this great honor of serving Christ in this world. Because when God's servants leave this world, when they enter into heaven, when Jesus receives them, what does he say?

He says, well done, good and faithful servant. Good and faithful servant.

You cannot have a better master, a better employer than the Lord Jesus Christ. And you cannot have a better position in life than to be his servants.

It doesn't matter what age we are tonight. From the youngest here to the oldest. This is our great privilege to be servants of God, servants of Christ, to be under the kingship of Jesus, to serve him all our days.

[50 : 10] So the people before the throne are firstly servants. But secondly, they're also students. Because you notice what it's saying here in verse 8.

Happy are your men, happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom. They're not just servants of King Solomon.

They're actually hearing the wisdom of King Solomon. They're being taught by King Solomon. They're actually taking in all the time what wisdom really is. Because Solomon, this wise king, is able to teach them wisdom.

They can see wisdom in him. They can hear wisdom from him. How much more is that the case with the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, you remember the book of Ecclesiastes.

We looked at its teaching some time ago now. But as we did so, we went through it and saw that it was in all likelihood, although Solomon's name isn't mentioned as such as the author, but nevertheless it is a book that's associated with Solomon's authorship as the one who is eminently wise.

[51 : 20] And he's known here in the book of Ecclesiastes as the preacher, the words of the preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. And as we saw going through that, so many times in the book of Ecclesiastes the word vanity is used.

And vanity is not just what you find in the common use of the word where people are really proud and vain. Vanity in this context means emptiness, futility, meaninglessness.

In other words, what it's really saying to us is you take Jesus out of human existence. You take Jesus out of the world. You take Jesus out of things altogether and you just leave human beings by themselves.

And what do you have? You have meaninglessness. You have futility. There's no meaning to it all. It's Jesus, as we saw, as we read there in one of the verses in Colossians, that holds all things together.

And without Jesus, you've got vanity and meaninglessness. He is, as 1 Corinthians tells us, in the cross and his death that he died especially, he's the power of God and the wisdom of God.

[52 : 29] And that's why in all of these references to Queen of Sheba giving to Solomon, you apply them to Jesus in the higher sense. Look at verse 3 of this chapter in 1 Kings.

Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. Now, that doesn't mean when you go to Jesus with a question that he's going to explain to you every single detail in a way that you can understand.

There are things in this world that we simply cannot fully understand. And sometimes Jesus will say to us, or God will say to us, Well, yes, you can bring that to me, but you're not in a position at the moment to actually be able to understand it all.

And yet, what you have to remember is that there is no question in your mind, in your heart, in your life for which Jesus himself is not the answer.

It's not just that he has the answer to all our questions, even if he doesn't tell us in all detail what the answer is, but he is the answer. The answer to every question that exists for human life.

[53 : 44] How can I be right with God? How can I be sure that I will come at the end of my days in the world to be in heaven? How can I be saved? How can I be forgiven my sins?

It doesn't matter what question you come to. Some of the most momentous questions, but he is the answer. And he's God's provision as the answer to all our questions, to all our need, to all our dilemma.

There wasn't a single question she asked. Nothing was hidden from the king. There is nothing hidden from your king, Jesus.

Nothing hidden from him who reigns on the throne of heaven. That's why he's able to deal with us on all our need exactly and fully as he does.

But you notice verse 7. Verse 7 says, He says, I did not believe the reports until I came, and my own eyes had seen it.

[54 : 47] And behold, the half was not told me. In other words, the Queen of Sheba was saying, I heard such a lot about you, King Solomon. I heard so much that it really moved me to leave my own land and come and see you for myself.

But now she's saying, Despite all that I had heard about you, I now know that what is true far exceeds everything I heard about you. The half was not told me.

And you know, when you come to know Jesus for yourself, that's something you begin to realize. That however much you knew him and knew about him before then.

Now you're able to say, you know, there's so much in this. It's going to take me a whole eternity to explore everything about Jesus and about his salvation. The half has not been told me.

But you need to come and find that out for yourself. Just like the Queen of Sheba said, I did not believe until I came and my own eyes had seen it.

[55 : 57] In other words, as she stepped into the palace of King Solomon, she began to realize the riches, the grandeur, the wisdom, the abilities of this man were far, far greater than what she had heard about in her own land.

And you need to come into the palace of the King. You need to respond to his invitation. Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

You need to come into the palace of the King. You need to come to know Jesus for yourself. You need to come and explore the things that the Bible tells you are true about him. But see it for yourself.

Know it for yourself. Test it for yourself. I don't know if you've ever been to Buckingham Palace. I've just been the once. I'd read much about it.

I'd seen photos of some of the contents of it. But only by going to take up a tour of the palace, or at least the amount of it that you can see. You can see all the special rooms that are there, most of them at least.

[57 : 01] And it's only as you actually go in there and see it for yourself, and as you look around you, and as you actually see it with your own eyes, you then realize, Oh, this is actually more than I ever thought about. This is more than the photos actually showed me.

And so it is with Christ as well. You can only really prove it to yourself by coming to know him, by coming to him.

And verse 13 finishes with, 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.

Don't you love those words? Especially when you apply them to Jesus, that they foreshadow the bounty of King Solomon, the immense riches and ability of King Solomon, the bounty of King Solomon.

What about the bounty of King Jesus? Because that's what he takes you in to experience. And there are no limits to the bounty of King Jesus.

[58 : 07] That's all there waiting for you and I to know, for you and I to explore, for you and I to experience.

The bounty of King Jesus. The power behind the throne, the people before the throne. Where are you tonight?

Are you still outside the palace? Or have you gone and taken the invitation to come to Jesus? To come to know him as your King?

And to come to explore the bounty of King Jesus? May God bless these thoughts on his word and his word to us. We're going to sing in conclusion now.

Our final psalm tonight is Psalm 72. Another psalm of kingship. Psalm 72, verses 1 to 7.

[59 : 07] This is from St. Sam's to June Warrington. Endow the King with justice, Lord, the royal son with righteousness. Your people, your afflicted ones, he'll judge with truth and uprightness.

The mountains will bring peace to them. The hills the fruit of righteousness. He will defend and save the poor. Crush all those who them oppress. Verses 1 to 7. To God's praise.

Amen. And, O the King with justice, Lord, the royal son with righteousness.

You people, your afflicted ones, feel charged with truth and uprightness.

The mountains will bring peace to them. The hills the fruit of righteousness.

[60 : 33] He will defend and save the poor. And crush all those who them oppress.

As long as sun and earth enter, So will ye live time without end.

Fill me like showers on the earth. Like grains that all will descend.

The righteous end will blossom forth. Throughout his everlasting reign.

Until the moon no longer shines, Peace in abundance will remain.

[62 : 05] If you'll let me get to the main door, please, after the benediction. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore.

Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.