

# God's Message to Us in 1 Kings 1-15

*Halifax, NS*

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## **Introduction**

Jesus Christ is the central figure of the Scriptures.

- There is so much to learn about Him that the scriptures present many of types of Christ—people and things that represent Him.
  - Because He is our priest, the high priests are a type of Him...
  - Because He is also the sacrifice, the bulls and goats and lambs are all types of Him.
  - Because He is the one that nourishes us, the bread that came from heaven and the rock from which the water came represent Him.
- Just recently (in Samuel), we saw how King David was a type of Christ the King.
  - But one king is not enough to fully represent Christ, so today, we are going to see King Solomon, the son of David, showing us more about our Saviour.

In case you do not know, in our afternoon service, we are going through the books of the Bible—with one or two sermons about each book.

- Last week, we finished 2 Samuel, which covers the entire reign of King David.

We learned something very important last week when we studied about David...

- We learned that the state of the peoples' relationship with God was very much tied to the state of the anointed king's relationship with God.
  - We saw that when David was faithful, God blessed the whole nation with unity and victory over their enemies.
    - However, when David the king fell into sin, they were divided and had a terrible civil war.
    - We saw how God chastened both the king and the people together—
- This lesson about how God's people are tied with their king is very important for understanding the whole Bible.
  - We see it with all the kings of Israel, but above all, we see it with Jesus Christ!
  - There is only one way that you (or anybody else) can be accepted by God, and that is by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - Because He is faithful, so faithful that He even went to the cross to atone for our sins, we who trust in Him are fully accepted before God.
    - How wonderful it is to be tied to Him so that with Him we stand or fall, because we know that Christ stands forever.
      - In 2 Samuel 7, God promised David that he would have a Son who would be perfectly obedient and who would reign forever and ever.
        - If you are trusting in Him for your salvation, you have sure place in God's house forever and ever and you will rejoice in His glory.
- This lesson about how the king is tied to the people is essential for us to understand Solomon's reign as well.
  - In a similar way, with Solomon, we will see how God blesses the whole kingdom when Solomon the king is faithful, and how He chastens them all when Solomon the king is not faithful.

- But it is a different picture than it was with David.
  - With David, the blessing given is that of conquering all enemies.
  - With Solomon, the blessing portrayed is that of the prosperity we enjoy in Christ...

**I. See in the opening of First Kings a picture of the transition from Christ the conquering King to Christ the reigning King.**

**A. David represented Him as the conquering king.**

1. We see David in the opening chapters of First Kings as an old man.
  - By God's grace, he and his people Israel have been able to conquer all of their enemies.
  - As we saw in the celebration song of praise at the end of 2 Samuel, they all come humbly before him—no one dares to attack him.
    - Moab, Philistia, Edom, Ammon, Syria—they are all subdued by God's faithful king.
2. This is the picture of Christ at the end of the age—not that He will be an decrepit old man, but that His time as a conquering king comes to an end.
  - He no longer has the role because all of His enemies have been subdued.
  - God has promised Him that He will reign until all of His enemies are brought under His feet—then there will be a reign of peace forever.
    - Then He will enjoy the fruits of perfect peace with His people.
3. Today, Christ, though having made atonement for us, is still leading His church in battle.
  - The forces of the Satan and the world are continuing a desperate war against Him and His people on the earth...
    - But the day is coming when the warfare will end and there will be peace.

**B. At the time when the kingdom of peace begins, there is a final judgment in which the remaining enemies will be destroyed.**

1. One of David's rebellious sons, Adonijah, tries to take the place of Solomon as king—but he is put to death.
  - And there are those such as Joab, who, although he was used to help David conquer, is an unjust man who supports Adonijah. He is put down too.
  - And there are other rebels that have to be put down.
2. And so it is that Solomon, the king of peace, begins his reign of peace by putting down these final enemies.
  - This is what Christ does in this world when He gives a particular nation a time of blessing under the gospel.
    - I am inclined to think that He will do this for the whole world before He returns at the last day.
  - But we know for certain that He will do this in the final judgment—all of His enemies will be cast into the Lake of Fire so that there can be true peace—the peace that He has promised.
    - Solomon is a type of that peace.

## II. Look with me at the glory of this ultimate reign of peace that Christ will have—as shown by Solomon’s reign!

A. First, see the wisdom and justice of our Solomon as reigning king.

1. Look at what happens in 1 Kings 3 when Solomon first begins his reign:

a. In 3:5 it says: **At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask! What shall I give you?”**

- What a tremendous thing—the king of God’s people can have whatever he wants...

b. So what does he ask for?

- Look at 3:6-9: **And Solomon said: “You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day. <sup>7</sup> Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I *am* a little child; I do not know *how* to go out or come in. <sup>8</sup> And Your servant *is* in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. <sup>9</sup> Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?”**

2. Is this not a beautiful picture of our King Jesus?

- The most important thing to Him is wisdom to lead God’s people in the beautiful ways of God’s house.

- He wants a kingdom of righteousness and justice. That is His great desire.

- Wisdom and justice are the essential components of a happy kingdom.

3. And we are told that God gives it to Solomon... plus a lot more.

- 1 Kings 3:10-13: **The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. <sup>11</sup> Then God said to him: “Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, <sup>12</sup> behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. <sup>13</sup> And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days.”**

- Don’t you see the delight of our heavenly Father in His anointed king?

- What a marvellous thing it is!

- How much greater is His delight in the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, His only begotten Son who is our king.

- What pleasure the Father has in blessing Him—what delight He has in Him as His anointed king who delights in wisdom.

TRANS> The wisdom and justice of our Solomon—how excellent it is.

- And now let’s look at a second thing that characterises Solomon’s reign—the central thing...

- B. Second, it is a reign characterised by God dwelling in the midst of His people.
- Solomon's first great project is to build a house (a temple) for God!
1. It had been the great desire of David, the warrior king, to build a house for God.
    - God had promised that after He gave His people the land and gave them peace in the land—rest from their enemies, He would have them build a house for His name.
    - David, latching on to that promise, wanted to build that house, but because David was the warring and conquering king, God did not permit him to build the house.
    - That belonged not to the reign of war, but to the reign of peace under Solomon his son.
  2. And now in 1 Kings we see that Solomon builds that house.
    - In 1 Kings 5 & 6 we are told about the building of it.
    - And as it is being built, the Lord brings His word to Solomon... in 6:11-13 it says: **Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying: <sup>12</sup>“Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. <sup>13</sup> And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.”**
  3. That is the most important thing about the kingdom of peace!
    - That because Solomon keeps God's commandments, God dwells among His people and does not forsake them!
    - a. That is what the glory of heaven is.
      - Jesus has brought us to the Father, and we are able to live before the presence of His glory forever.
      - In Revelation 21:3, John says: **And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.”**
    - b. In 1 Kings 8, Solomon brings the ark into the temple and the glory cloud, representing the presence of God, fills the house... showing that God is there.
      - The glory is such that the priests can't even continue to minister!
        - And then Solomon responds to the glorious promise of having God so near to His people in this house...
      - 1) In verses 14-21, he speaks of how merciful and faithful God has been in bringing them out of Egypt and in giving them this land and letting them build this house for His name that He might dwell among them.
      - 2) And in verses 22-53, he prays and asks God to answer His peoples' prayers when they pray toward this temple...
        - The temple is where atonement was made, so praying toward it is like praying in the name of Jesus who was crucified for us.
        - We know that we have communion and access with God—and always will—because Jesus has died for our sins and we come with faith in Him to the Father.

- He talks about those times when the people sin, but then turn back to God and look toward this house where atonement is made for them—that God would remember them and restore them.
  - That applies to us even now with our reigning Christ...
  - And our access to God will be even greater when we enter glory.
  - What a delight it will be to have God so near to us whenever we go to Him to answer us, to provide for us, to bless us.
- 3) And then see how Solomon blesses the assembly in 8:56-61: **“Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses. <sup>57</sup> May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. May He not leave us nor forsake us, <sup>58</sup> that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers. <sup>59</sup> And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day may require, <sup>60</sup> that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no other. <sup>61</sup> Let your heart therefore be loyal to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, as at this day.”**
  - What a thing it is for sinners to have access to God like this.
  - It is a tremendous privilege to be His people and to serve Him.
- c. And then in chapter 9, the Lord appears to Solomon and confirms that He will hear His people when they pray toward this house!
  - In 1 Kings 9:3, He says: **“I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.”**
  - Then He assures him that the blessing will continue if obedience continues, but if Solomon’s sons forsake the Lord, then God will chasten them...
  - This same conditional promise applies to Christ our Solomon, only there is a great difference!
    - We know that Jesus Christ will never forsake the LORD, not in the least.
      - He will reign in perfect righteousness forever as our King.
        - That means that in Him, we are perfectly secure.
        - That means that in Him, we always have access to God.

TRANS> God’s dwelling with us is what will make heaven heaven—

- First Kings also gives us an additional window into the glory of this kingdom of peace.

C. In chapter 10, we see the riches and the beauty of this kingdom of peace.

1. The way this is shown to us is through the visit of the Queen of Sheba.

- She hears of the glory of Solomon’s wisdom and of his kingdom of peace and she comes to see it.
- Look at her response in 1 Kings 10:4-9: **And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, <sup>5</sup> the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the**

**LORD, there was no more spirit in her. <sup>6</sup> Then she said to the king: “It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. <sup>7</sup> However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. <sup>8</sup> Happy *are* your men and happy *are* these your servants, who stand continually before you *and* hear your wisdom! <sup>9</sup> Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.”**

- How happy are the people who have the LORD as their God—how God loves us to give us our Solomon—
    - How beautiful His house is—how beautiful it will be in glory!
    - We cannot even begin to imagine how happy we will be when we are brought to Christ and are able to live in His ways.
      - Such order, such wisdom, such prosperity.
        - The Father loves us so much!
2. The second half of chapter 10 tells us some particulars about the splendour and wealth of the kingdom.
- a. In verse 14 & 15, we are told about the gold that Solomon himself took in each year—six hundred and sixty six talents—
    - which if purchased today would be about a billion dollars—and this doesn’t even count the revenue of the merchants and traders and governors and kings of Arabia.
    - Solomon made two hundred large shields of gold that together were worth 180 billion dollars at today’s prices for gold.
      - We are told of the ivory throne that Solomon built with stairs and twelve lions—six on each side—
      - And of his golden drinking vessels and of the animals that were brought into his kingdom.
  - b. Why are we told all of this?
    - We are told all of this to give us a glimpse of the glory that we shall have when the kingdom of peace fully comes—
      - We are told this so that we will know that our God delights in giving beautiful things to His people.
    - And don’t think the wealth was all just with Solomon—it was enjoyed by all the people.
      - It was so great, we are told, that silver was as common as stones—hardly even considered as valuable...
      - And cedar trees were as common as sycamores (v. 27).
  - c. When the Apostle John sees his vision of the New Jerusalem in glory, he speaks of things that are beyond our ability to comprehend.
    - Our God loves beauty and order and He loves to give good things to His sons and daughters who have His Son Jesus as their king.
    - My brothers and sisters, this is what the Lord has in store for us through our Solomon, King Jesus, forever and ever.

TRANS> But there is something else we learn from Solomon in First Kings about our Christ...

### III. We learn how inadequate all other kings are besides Christ.

A. All through the chapters we just looked at in First Kings, Solomon is told that he and his kingdom will be blessed if he obeys. See how this is emphasised:

1. When David was on his deathbed, he reminded Solomon of this:
  - **1 Kings 2:3-4: “And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; <sup>4</sup> that the LORD may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,’ He said, ‘you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’ ”**
  - You see that the promise of blessing is conditional upon obedience.
2. The Lord tells Solomon a similar thing when He appears to him the first time—when Solomon asked for wisdom...
  - After telling him that he will give him that along with riches and honour, He promises, in 3:14: **“So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”**
  - And we already looked at 6:12 where, as Solomon was building the temple, the Lord sent His word, saying: **“Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David.”**
3. And then in 1 Kings 9:4 after the temple was built, He appears to Solomon and promises to hear His people (as we saw), but adds a blessing and a curse:
  - **1 Kings 9:4-7: “Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, *and* if you keep My statutes and My judgments, <sup>5</sup> then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’ <sup>6</sup> *But* if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments *and* My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, <sup>7</sup> then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples.”**
  - You see again that blessing depends on the obedience of the king.

B. But there is a sad opening to chapter 11.

1. After all the promises, after all the warnings, after all the blessing and the kindness that God has shown to Solomon,
  - He does something that makes it clear that he is only a type, only a pattern, of the Son that God is going to send...
  - He is inadequate and unfit—only Christ will do.
2. In 11:1-8 we are told of the wretched things that Solomon did:

- **1 Kings 11:1-8: But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—** <sup>2</sup> **from the nations of whom the LORD had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love.** <sup>3</sup> **And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.** <sup>4</sup> **For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of his father David.** <sup>5</sup> **For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.** <sup>6</sup> **Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as *did* his father David.** <sup>7</sup> **Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that *is* east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon.** <sup>8</sup> **And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.**
- Oh Solomon, how could you do this when God had been so kind to you?
  - The Lord Jesus can ask this question, but how can we ask it?
  - The same twisted sinful heart is in us all—
    - Only Jesus is able to be our king!
    - All others fail, but Jesus reigns in righteousness forever and His kingdom will never be destroyed.

C. The consequences of Solomon’s unfaithfulness are devastating.

1. First, God divides the kingdom.

a. This is announced in 11:11-13:

- **1 Kings 11:11-13: Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.** <sup>12</sup> **Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son.** <sup>13</sup> **However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”**
- As prophesied, this division of Solomon’s kingdom occurred when Solomon’s son Rehoboam became king and God called Jeroboam, a former servant of Solomon’s, to be king over the ten tribes of Israel.
  - God commanded Jeroboam, the same as He had commanded Solomon, to be faithful to His covenant and receive blessing,
    - But right away, Jeroboam sets up worship at two high places instead of worshipping at the temple in Jerusalem as God commanded.
  - After this, Jeroboam is referred to as the one who caused Israel to sin.
    - He led them away from the true worship of God.

b. Division in the church is always the result of sin—somewhere.

- Now that Jesus is our anointed king, it is never because of His sin, for He is ever faithful...
  - We have the assurance that we will have perfect unity in Him when the church militant becomes the church triumphant.



- But in the meantime, we need to lament the division in the church and pursue healing of it in the right way.
    - The very act of dividing itself is sometimes a sin—as when people split the church over petty differences.
      - But often, it is our duty to separate—for example, when Jesus was rejected by the Jewish church, it became the duty of those who were faithful to follow Him, thus separating from the Jewish Church.
      - When faithful leaders are driven out of the church, it is the duty of faithful disciples to go with them, bearing the reproach of Christ.
  - All the while, we should be praying and doing our part to restore the unity of the church—
    - by repenting of our own sins and by calling others who have sinned to repent.
- c. How thankful we should be that in Christ, our unity will be restored.
- He is our faithful King of peace and God will bring all of the elect together in Him at last, and we will stay together in love forever.
  - Solomon had a small taste of this, but his sin put an end to it, showing that only Jesus is fit to be the anointed king of God’s people.
  - God sent division that the people might turn their hope to Jesus, the coming Son.
- Sending division is the first consequence of Solomon’s unfaithfulness.
2. Second, God raises up enemies to Solomon from the nations.
- a. Again, we are directly told that *God* brought this about.
- **1 Kings 11:14: Now the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was a descendant of the king in Edom.**
  - Many Christians would deny that God would ever raise up enemies against His people, but the scripture testifies again and again that He does.
    - He raises them up to chasten us for our sins.
    - Moses said that God would do this if they were unfaithful...
      - We saw it over and over in the book of Judges...
      - And now we see it because of Solomon’s unfaithfulness.
  - Solomon’s kingdom was greatly weakened when the ten tribes left.
    - And so was his influence and dominion among the nations.
      - He was broken by wars with Israel as well as many other nations besides Hadad of Edom as the years went by.
- b. When God’s people are faithful in some part of the world today, God raises them up and gives them dominion over the generations—
- Often they have persecution at first, but God is with them and blesses them through it all and makes them stronger and stronger...
    - And the next thing you know they are ruling over the country.
  - But often it is only for a short time and then they become proud and ungrateful.
    - Then the Lord begins to raise up our enemies and we lose our influence among the nations.

- c. The Lord breaks us, as He broke Solomon's kingdom, so that we might seek Jesus Christ and return to Him.
    - Jesus is the only one who is fit to be God's anointed King, and He will not only give us peace with each other as God's church,
      - but He will also give us lasting victory over all our enemies.
    - Once the kingdom of peace emerges under Him, no enemy will be able to stand against us ever again.
- And there is a third consequence of Solomon's unfaithfulness that can be expressed like this:
3. Third, God replaces the gold with bronze.
    - a. We saw the incredible prosperity in Solomon's kingdom where silver was not even considered valuable because it was so plentiful...
      - It was truly the golden years of his kingdom...
        - But now, because of Solomon's sin, the gold is taken away and replaced with bronze.
      - You can see this with Solomon's son in 1 Kings 14:25-27: **It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. <sup>26</sup> And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took away everything. He also took away all the gold shields which Solomon had made. <sup>27</sup> Then King Rehoboam made bronze shields in their place...**
    - b. The day is coming when, with Jesus as our king, we will have riches in glory that will never be taken away.
      - In this world, God loves to prosper His people when they are faithful as a nation, but as we saw, He takes it away when our hearts turn away from Him and we become ungrateful.
      - Only in Christ do we have a blessing that will last forever...
        - It is our inheritance, but only in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- D. But there is something very important to notice about God's chastening as it is revealed in in 1 Kings (and 2 Kings as well)...
1. Even though Solomon sinned and even though he and his kingdom experienced division, subjugation to enemies, and an end to prosperity,
    - The Lord stresses all along that He will not utterly forsake Solomon as He did Saul because of the promise He made to David.
    - Over and over God promises mercy even as He pronounces judgment on the house of David...
      - He makes qualifications like the one we read about in chapter 11 when He told Solomon that He would give the ten tribes of Israel to Jeroboam:
      - He added in 11:13: **"However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."**
    - You can see this again with Abijam, Solomon's grandson, who inherited the throne:

- In 1 Kings 15:3-4, it says: **And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him; his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. <sup>4</sup> Nevertheless for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, by setting up his son after him and by establishing Jerusalem...**
- 2. All through the years God was faithful to the house of David to show us and assure us that He always keeps His promises.
  - Everything is in anticipation of David's Son Jesus Christ.
  - In Him we have hope and confidence.
  - No matter what sins and what hard times the church may go through now until He returns...
    - We can be sure that God will be faithful to bless us for His sake.
    - He is our Solomon, and in Him we have the assurance of perfect peace.

**Conclusion:** Solomon gives us a glimpse of the glorious inheritance that we will have in Jesus Christ when He comes!