**A Magnificent Kingdom**

**I Kings 9:1-10:29 (Lesson #9)**

***“1 As soon as Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king’s house and all that Solomon desired to build, 2 the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. 3 And the LORD said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me. I have consecrated this house that you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. 4 And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, 5 then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’ 6 But if you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, 7 then I will cut off Israel from the land that I have given them, and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight, and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples. 8 And this house will become a heap of ruins. Everyone passing by it will be astonished and will hiss, and they will say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’ 9 Then they will say, ‘Because they abandoned the LORD their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore the LORD has brought all this disaster on them.’"***

As we read this you will see the writer of Kings again sets up the **“if”** and **“then”** grammatical format that we saw in the last chapter. There it was the seven prayer scenarios. Here it is Solomon **“if”** this happens, **“then”** I will do this.

**Vs 1 –** So this appears to be after the 20-year period that involved the building of the Temple (7 years) and the building of the Royal Complex (13 years). The Lord once again appeared to Solomon.

The Lord had first appeared to Solomon at Gibeon **(I Kings 3:5)**. It was there that the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said to him: **“Ask what I shall give you.”**

To fit this in Solomon’s life, the construction of the temple and the palace were finished. Now Solomon had to deal with life *after* completing his greatest accomplishment.

**Vs 2 –** This really highlights the grace of God, not just an initial appearance, but a second appearance here in the middle-point of his reign.

We do not know if this was also a dream, but we can imagine that it was.

**APPLICATION:** Grace is indeed amazing and God continues to extend it. God says little new to Solomon, but by grace he repeats what Solomon needed to hear. God does that with us as well. Each time we close our Bible, we are at the same sort of crossroad!

**Vs 3 –** Notice God’s response to Solomon’s prayer:

1. I have heard your prayer and your plea.

**APPLICATION:** *“And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.” (1Jo 5:14 ESV)*

*“We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.” (Joh 9:31 ESV)*

1. I have consecrated this house
2. I have put my name on it forever (keep an eye on this, as God explains this is conditional)
3. My eyes and my heart will be here for all time (keep an eye as God explains this is conditional)

**Vs 4-5 –** First we see promises of blessing: If you will follow me as David (followed), integrity of heart and uprightness, following my commands, statues, and rules.

Then the promise: ***I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.***

**This is the amazing promise that God tells Solomon once again!**

**MESSIAH:** Ultimately, these verses look well beyond Solomon to the Lord Jesus Christ. Over and over again, we are reminded that Solomon would fail, but the Lord Jesus’s kingdom would be established.

**Vs 6–9** -But if you turn aside, if you do not keep my commands, if you go and serve and worship other Gods.

**Vs 7 –** Then, six clear warnings, to Solomon

1. I will **cut off Israel from the land** and the house.
	1. Stark, graphic, and it came true.
	2. **APPLICATION:** *the wages of sin is death.*
2. I will **cast Israel out of my sight**.
	1. Stark, graphic, and it came true. This is the price.
3. Israel will become a **proverb and a byword**.
	1. A mockery, a joke

**APPLICATION:** When I read this, my blood chills. I can tell you this. I do not want to let sin, result in my faith becoming a byword, a mockery, or a joke for unbelievers to ridicule my great God.

1. The **consecrated house** will become a heap of ruins
	1. The beautiful temple, the stone, wood, and gold, will become a ruinous heap. And it did!
2. People who pass by will be amazed and even questions why has Yahweh done this to the land and to this house
	1. This no doubt also happen.
3. They will answer their own question. Because Israel abandoned God and worshipped other Gods.

Now it is the grace of God to tell Solomon, the price for sin, the penalty that Solomon and the nation would pay.

**APPLICATION:** If we follow God, blessings will follow. I am not talking necessarily about houses, land, and money (necessarily). Obedience leads to blessings. Disobedience leads to curses in our life.

**MESSIAH:** We have a king, who has bore all the curses in His body and thus we are richly blessed in Him!

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***10 At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king’s house, 11 and Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold, as much as he desired, King Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. 12 But when Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, they did not please him. 13 Therefore he said, "What kind of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?" So they are called the land of Cabul to this day. 14 Hiram had sent to the king 120 talents of gold.***

Now keep an eye out for the words (build and building). This was Solomon’s calling in redemptive history. **Solomon was a builder.**

**APPLICATION:** We can see God’s gifts and calling on one another. As we get to know each other, we recognize the unique blend of abilities, interests, and spiritual gifts that God has blessed each of us with.

Here in verses 10-14 we have some details about what is going on in Solomon’s life, following the biggest project of his life.

**Vs 10 –** It appears this happens after all the building is finally finished.

**Vs 11 -** So Solomon gave Hiram (king of Tyre, the guy who had assisted him in the project of his life) **20 cities in Galilee**. Why Galilee. This was in the northern kingdom.

**Vs 12 –** Hiram was **not impressed** with these cities.

**Vs 13 –** You can see that he responds to Solomon about the cities and calls them the land of **“Cabul.”** Literally **“worthless” or “good for nothing.”**

**Vs 14 –** We have the additional detail, that it seems that Hiram had given Solomon **120 talents in gold**. Contextually, this appears to be to be related to the land.

The is some disagreement on the weight of a talent (in the Old Testament), the range is from 66 – 75 lbs.

If we go with 66 lbs., 120 talents of God would be 7920 lbs. of gold or 126,720 oz of gold. By today’s standards, an oz of gold is $1700. This would equate in today’s money to $215,424,000. So this was a massive sum of money.

**We are not sure and commentators disagree, but it seems that Hiram gives the cities back to Solomon, and Solomon rebuilds them, we read in II Chr 8:**

*“****1*** *At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house,* ***2*** *Solomon rebuilt the cities that Hiram had given to him, and settled the people of Israel in them.” (2Ch 8:1-2 ESV)*

The writer leave us in the dark if these issues are good or bad.

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***15 ¶ And this is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon drafted to build the house of the LORD and his own house and the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer 16 (Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it with fire, and had killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as dowry to his daughter, Solomon’s wife; 17 so Solomon rebuilt Gezer) and Lower Beth-horon 18 and Baalath and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land of Judah, 19 and all the store cities that Solomon had, and the cities for his chariots, and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. 20 All the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel —  21 their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel were unable to devote to destruction —  these Solomon drafted to be slaves, and so they are to this day. 22 But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves. They were the soldiers, they were his officials, his commanders, his captains, his chariot commanders and his horsemen. 23 These were the chief officers who were over Solomon’s work: 550 who had charge of the people who carried on the work. 24 But Pharaoh’s daughter went up from the city of David to her own house that Solomon had built for her. Then he built the Millo.***

Beginning in verse 15 the writer of Kings, wants us to know some facts about Solomon’s reign and what he accomplished in various areas of his life.

**Vs 15 –** Now the writer, gives us an account of the forced labor that was used to build house of the LORD, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer

Further, Solomon builds the defenses (fortification) of Israel. Solomon moved from building the House of Yahweh, building his own house, to building the defenses around Israel. Solomon was a builder.

The Millo was likely a terraced area that allowed them build houses on a mountain that was sloping.

**Vs 16 –** For reasons that are not clear: ***Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it with fire, and had killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as dowry to his daughter, Solomon’s wife***

So Solomon was given this city as a gift.

**Vs 17-19 -** So Solomon took the city of Gezer and rebuild it. He also rebuilt Lower Beth-horon, Baalath and Tamar. He rebuilt store cities, places for chariots, places for horsemen. He built up various cities and gave them clear function. Solomon was a builder…

**Vs 20-21 –** Solomon’s workforce was created out of these people from surrounding nations. The problem, God had directed them to be destroyed.

But we see that Solomon used these surrounding peoples as slave labor instead of using Hebrews.

**Vs 22-23 -** So, good news, no slaves were made out of Israelites.

But as God had warned, a **monarchy ultimately results in the loss of freedoms** and many men and women were being employed in direct support of the King and the King’s army.

**Vs 24 -** Here we are reminded, living on the temple mount, in a special house that Solomon had prepared was **Pharaoh’s daughter**.

Again, we are told that Solomon built the Millo. This seemed to be important for those who lived in the city.

We see a man operating, within his abilities and giftedness. But, we also see a man who is forgetting his greatest calling. To follow God in all the details of his life.

**APPLICATION:** This is a warning to us. We cannot let our abilities and gifts that God has given us ever compete with our calling to follow God in the details of our lives.

**Vs 25 -** So kept the feast days as prescribed by the Lord.

This would have been the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover), the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles.

*“"Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.” (De 16:16 ESV)*

Solomon fulfilled his duty, year by year.

**APPLICATION:** Our duty to walk with God is never completely fulfilled. Like Solomon, we must continue to pursue and worship God.

**Vs 26 -** Solomon builds a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber. It is on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.

**Vs 27 -** The Phoenicians were coastal people and thus many were seamen. Hiram sent some of his men with Solomon’s men to serve in the **Hebrew Navy.**

They went to Ophir and brought from their **420 talents of gold**. If we use the conservative estimate of 66 lbs. this would be 27,720 lbs. or 443,520 ounces, at $1,700 an ounce = **$753,984,000.**

Now as we transition into chapter 10, we were last told about this land of Ophir, which was likely south of where Solomon’s fleet was housed.

Solomon was acquiring a great deal of wealth. Is there a problem with wealth acquisition? It has been said it is not having money that is the problem, it is when money has you that there is a problem.

*“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.” (1Ti 6:10 ESV)*

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***10:1 ¶ Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions. 2 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. 3 And Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. 4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 5 the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her. 6 And she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, 7 but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard. 8 Happy are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! 9 Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD loved Israel forever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness." 10 Then she gave the king 120 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.***

The transition at first seems out of place. We are talking about Solomon’s Navy, and the gold they are bringing from Ophir, and then we start talking about the Queen of Sheba.

I suspect, the Queen of Sheba lived in the same general area of Ophir, and this is how she heard about Solomon and His kingdom.

And that provides the tie together that brings the writer of Kings thoughts together!

**Vs 1 -** She clearly comes from a distant land, having heard of the **“fame of Solomon”** concerning **“the name of Yahweh.”**

So she hears about Solomon, but it is in connection with His God.

Having heard about his wisdom that is given to him by God.

**MESSIAH:** Hey, let me pause. If you think Solomon had an international following. How about Jesus? *“and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."” (Ge 22:18 ESV)*

We read in vs 1b, she came to **“test him”** with **“hard questions.”**

We should not picture these as **irrelevant riddles**, but **real matters** about **running the state**. These were **difficult questions** involving running her kingdom that she was not sure about and she came seeking real wisdom.

**APPLICATION**: *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.” (Jas 1:5 ESV)*

**Vs 2 –** She came with an **entourage**; she came in **might** (that is the Hebrew word) and she came with **pomp and circumstance**. She came with **many camels bearing gifts** including spices and **“much gold and many precious stones.”**

She came to Solomon and talked about everything that was in her heart, she discussed with him all the matters that really mattered to her. **She opened up** and **told him everything** and **sought his wisdom on many matters.**

She had traveled for a great distance for this very reason, an audience with the wisest King who had ever lived!

**MESSIAH:** What a picture of Jesus. Each of us sought Him, we came from various places, but in all cases it was afar. We too had questions and we too were seeking answers. I want you to see in this interaction between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, the interaction between every wayward sinner and the King of Glory!

**Vs 3 -** The wisest king who had ever lived, answered all her questions, God revealed everything to the King and the King explained everything to her.

Can you imagine what it was like for the Queen of Sheba, all of these issues, all of these enigmas, all of these areas where she was unclear on how to proceed, and Solomon provides all the answers

**APPLICATION:** Solomon gave **this foreigner** his undivided attention. What a picture of the hospitality that we should have with others.

**Vs 4 –** After the queen had heard the wisdom of Solomon, after she had “seen” the wisdom of Solomon, after she had seen all that he had constructed, the food on his table, the impressive array of court officials, the way the attendants served, how sharply dressed they were, the amazing cupbearers and the gold and crystal serving places.

After she had seen the **amazing worship** that occurred at the temple, it started with a **blood sacrifice**, **pointed out the need for atonement**, and moved on from there to a **worship service** of the one true and living God.

**We read in Vs 5b -** She was **blown away**, the **whole event took her breath away**, she was **beside herself with amazement.**

**Vs 6 –** She then says to the King: **The things I heard, in my own land, what I heard about your amazing words and your amazing wisdom**. They were too much to believe. **I did not believe them**.

But now, I have seen them with my own eyes and it is all true. And more than that in verse 7b: And behold, the half was not told me. **Your wisdom and your prosperity surpass everything that I heard!**

**MESSIAH:** Solomon and his kingdom were breathtaking, it is nothing compared to the breathtaking grandeur of our Lord and Savior Jesus and His kingdom.

**Vs 8 -** Everyone is happy. Your servants are happy, and they too are both amazed and blessed as they stand here day-to-day and hear your great wisdom. Your people are blessed to have you as their King.

**MESSIAH:** What a picture of the Kingdom of Christ. His servants who are filled with joy, because of the Savior. We are pictured as those who stand before our King looking to hear His wisdom.

*“****16*** *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,* ***17*** *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2Ti 3:16-17 ESV)*

**Vs 9 -** She then declares a blessing and she uses Yahweh’s name. Blessed be the LORD your God. He set you on the throne.

**MESSIAH:** Blessed be our God, who has set Jesus upon the throne of David forever! The Father did this because of His great love for His people.

**MESSIAH:** If this is true of Solomon and it was. How much truer of the Lord Jesus Christ! The ultimate king of Kings and Lord of Lords. The ultimate one who executes justice.

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***11 Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a very great amount of almug wood and precious stones. 12 And the king made of the almug wood supports for the house of the LORD and for the king’s house, also lyres and harps for the singers. No such almug wood has come or been seen to this day. 13 And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired, whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of King Solomon. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.***

**Vs 11 -** We then jump back to Ophir and what the fleet of Hiram is doing. Again, I suspect these are connected and why the writer of Kings can move so easily between them.

So Hiram fleet brought gold from Ophir, as well as almug wood and precious stones.

**Vs 12 -** We see the king had specific uses for the almug wood.

**Vs 13 –** The writer transitions us back, to Solomon and the queen of Sheba. We see the king gave her all that she desired. The king was generous, and not just generous but extremely generous!

He gave beyond the standard royal gift.

**MESSIAH/APPLICATION:** Think of how generous Christ has been with you and I, and be reminded how generous we should be with those around us.

**MESSIAH:** God has richly blessed us in Christ. Can I remind you:

*“****3*** *¶ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,* ***4*** *even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love* ***5*** *he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,* ***6*** *to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.” (Eph 1:3-6 ESV)*

*“****16*** *The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,* ***17*** *¶ and if children, then heirs —  heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.” (Ro 8:16-17 ESV)*

God has withheld nothing from us. He has given His own Son, and with Him everything. What a picture of Jesus, we see here in Solomon.

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Now the writer of Kings stops telling the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and starts telling us about the greatness of Solomon’s kingdom, in his own words. The writer now becomes part of the story.

***14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, 15 besides that which came from the explorers and from the business of the merchants, and from all the kings of the west and from the governors of the land. 16 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold; 600 shekels of gold went into each shield. 17 And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; three minas of gold went into each shield. And the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 18 The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with the finest gold. 19 The throne had six steps, and the throne had a round top, and on each side of the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the armrests, 20 while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. The like of it was never made in any kingdom. 21 All King Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver; silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. 22 For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.***

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***23 Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. 24 And the whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. 25 Every one of them brought his present, articles of silver and gold, garments, myrrh, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year. 26 And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 27 And the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. 28 And Solomon’s import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king’s traders received them from Kue at a price. 29 A chariot could be imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver and a horse for 150, and so through the king’s traders they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.***

Solomon excelled above all the kings of the earth in both riches and wisdom. God had fulfilled His word! People came from everywhere to heard Solomon’s wisdom. People brought all types of gifts to the king

This was an absolutely amazing time for Israel. AMAZING.

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As you think about Solomon’s throne, let’s reflect on Jesus’s throne:

*“2 At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. 3 And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, 6 and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7 the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"” (Re 4:2-8 ESV)*

As you think about the beauty and grandeur of the Solomon’s Jerusalem, I am reminded of the picture of the heavenly Jerusalem from the book of the Revelation:

*“****9*** *¶ Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb."* ***10*** *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,* ***11*** *having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.* ***12*** *It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed —* ***13*** *on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.* ***14*** *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.* ***15*** *And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls.* ***16*** *The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal.* ***17*** *He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel’s measurement.* ***18*** *The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass.* ***19*** *The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald,* ***20*** *the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.* ***21*** *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.” (Re 21:9-21 ESV)*

Solomon’s kingdom, for all the pomp and beauty, is NOTHING compared to the Kingdom of Christ. The kingdom of which we serve are ambassadors.

**One day, we are going home, to the magnificent kingdom that God has prepared for us. Solomon’s kingdom was only meant to whet our appetites!**