

1Kings 4

“Life Under the Wisest King”

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What did (will!) life look like under the wisest king? Pastor leads his family in today’s “Hopewell @Home” passage. 1Kings 4 prepares us for the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these thirty-four verses, the Holy Spirit teaches us that the display of Solomon’s wisdom showed the blessedness of being under a wise king, especially pointing forward to the everlasting reign of our infinitely wise King Jesus.

Wednesday, January 19, 2022 • Read 1Kings 4

Questions from the Scripture text: Over whom was Solomon King (v1)? Whom do vv2–6 describe? What kinds of officials did he have? Whom else did Solomon have (v7a)? What did they do (v7b)? Who were they and from where (v8–19)? What unique things are said about Ben-Abinadab (v11)? Ahimaaz (v15)? Geber (v19)? How are the people described in v20? What is their number? What is their condition? Over what lands/area did Solomon rule (v21, 24)? What did they do (end of v21)? What do v22–23 describe? What’s the point? What was the condition of his own people (v25)? What do vv26–28 describe? What did God give Solomon (v29)? Even more than whom (v30–31a)? With what result (v31b)? What did he speak/write (v32)? About what sorts of things (v33)? And who did what (v33)?

Chapter three ended with all Israel hearing of Solomon’s wisdom and fearing him. Chapter four now concludes with all of the nations paying tribute, hearing of Solomon’s wisdom, and coming to hear him (perhaps as they bring the tribute). With those as bookends, we have a pretty good clue about what to see in the passage: God’s giving Solomon wisdom, and exalting him among and above the other nations. We see this wisdom and exaltation in several things:

Orderly, effective administration, v1–19. Wherever you’re from, whenever you read this, “government efficiency” is probably a laughable contradiction in terms to you. In a sinful world, that’s what you would expect. But the point of v1–19 is how well-organized and effectively planned and executed Solomon’s government was.

Great prosperity, v20–23. It’s one thing for a king to be prosperous. That can (sometimes, temporarily at least) be obtained by ruthlessness. It is a much greater commendation to a king that his people would be prosperous. That’s the point being made about Solomon in v20: “Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea, eating and drinking and rejoicing.” Not only did they have a population boom, but the economic boom kept up with and outpaced it.

And what was true of the people generally became more intense the closer you were to him. The household and retinue of the king had a daily provision that is difficult to fathom (v22–23). What a great king!

We mustn’t miss two important nuggets here: this particular turn of phrase first appeared in the Messianic promise of Genesis 22:17. It highlights Solomon’s greatness as a little picture of the coming kingship of Christ. Even if believers seem always to be a minority, there is a strong biblical emphasis upon the greatness of the multitude as a display of the greatness of our Redeemer King. When we see them eating and drinking and rejoicing, we have a taste of the real-life enjoyment that Christ’s subjects will have with Him forever and ever.

The second nugget is to see how “Judah and Israel” is still being used to summarize the people. This is a division that we could see forming all the way back to the beginning of David’s reign, and even now in Solomon’s height of wisdom and prosperity, it continues. What we are ultimately looking for in a king can be found in no one but Jesus!

Dominating power, v24–28. Part of the Messianic promise from Genesis 22:17 was that Abraham’s seed would possess the gate of their enemies. Now, v24 especially emphasizes the subjugation of all other kingdoms, while v25 emphasizes the contrasting liberty and security that all Judah and Israel enjoyed. There was more than enough for everyone, including a rapidly expanding government (v26–28).

Those last three words can be cautionary, and even more so when it sets of the Deuteronomy 17:16 alarm in the back of our minds (and don’t forget 3:1 with regard to that!). But there is One Whose reign will ever increase, yet always to the benefit of all of His subjects (cf. Isa 9:7).

The marvel of his wisdom itself, v29–34. Solomon’s wisdom outclassed all who were best known for wisdom up to his day (v29–31). The sheer volume of the production (v32), with the variety of composition (v32a, b) and the variety of subject (v33) was beyond anything such other men had ever produced. Truly, the Lord had kept His promise to Solomon!

How does it benefit you that Christ’s wisdom is the perfection of which Solomon’s was just a hint? How does it encourage you in your own pursuit of wisdom? How does it inform the way you use it?

Sample prayer: Lord, we praise You for Your faithfulness to give Solomon the promised wisdom and for Your own perfect wisdom, which we see pictured in him. We thank You that You have made the wisdom of man as nothing and have given to us, first and foremost, Christ Himself as the wisdom of God for us. Forgive us for when we are uncurious about Your Word or works, or when we fail to aim at Your glory and Your people’s good in how we use whatever knowledge You give us. Make us to love You with all of our wisdom, and to use it for the good of our neighbor, which we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP1 “How Blessed the Man” or TPH400 “Gracious Spirit, Dwell with Me”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

First Kings 4 versus 1 through 34.

These are God's words So let us hear them in such a way as to offer him worship.

So King Solomon was king over all Israel. These were his officials as Aria. The son of Zadak, the priest Eliharif and Ahesia the sons of Shisha scribes, yes, effect, son of a healed the recorder Minias under Joya over the army, exotic and Nebbieth are the priests. As Maria son of Nathan over the officers of who the son of a fan, a priest and the King's friend, he saw over the household.

And I don't Irum the Sun of Abda over the labor force and Solomon. Had 12 governors over all Israel. It provided food for the king and his household. Each one made provision for one month of the year. These are their names Ben-Hur. And the mountains of Ephraim, then Decker and Macaz shall bean date, Shemish and Elon Beit.

Hanan Benhasid in Aruba to him belongs Sokol and all the land of heifer Benavinidad and all the regions of door. He had tough act, the daughter of Solomon, his wife by another son of Ahiluud and Anakido and all they say on which is beside Zeratin below. Jezreel from bits and to available, as far as the other side of Japnaim then gave her and Ramat Gilead to him belong, the towns of Yaire, the son of Manasseh in Gilead.

Tim also belong, the region of our god in Bashan, 60, large cities with walls and bronze gate bars, a hintadab, the son of Ito in Mahanayan Himaaz and NAFTALI. He also took Bassamath the daughter of Solomon's wife Diana, son of Hushai in Asher and Allah Yahishafat son of Perua in Issachar Shamay, the son of Elah in Benjamin gave her the son of uri in the land of Gilead In the country of Seahon.

King of the Am writes and all King of Bashan. He was the only governor who was in the land Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea and multitude eating and drinking and rejoicing. So Solomon rained overall kingdoms from the river to the land of the Philistines.

As far as the border of Egypt, they brought tribute and served Solomon and all the days of his life. Now Solomon's provision for one day was 30. Cores of fine flowers, 60 cores of meal of 10 fatted, oxen, 20, oxen from the pastures and 100 sheep, besides deer gazelle's Robux and find a foul for, he had Dominion over all the region, on this side of the river from tip shop, even to Gaza, namely, over all the kingdoms.

On this side of the river. He had peace on every side all round him and Judah and Israel. Dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his victory from Dan. As far as we are cheva, all the days of Solomon. Solomon, had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots and then 12,000 horsemen at these governors each man in his month, provided food for King Solomon.

And for all who came to King Solomon's table, there was no lack and their supply. They also brought barley and straw to the proper place for the horses and steeds each man, according to his charge and God gave Solomon, wisdom and exceedingly, great understanding, and largeness of heart. Like the sand on the seashore, thus Solomon's wisdom excelled, the wisdom of all the men of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt for he was wiser than all men than Ethan.

The Ezrahite then hey man, Calcol and Darda sends him a hall and this fame was in all the surrounding nations. These spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs were 1,005. Also, he spoke of trees from the Cedar of Lebanon, even to the hyssop that springs out of the wall, he spoke also of animals of birds of creeping things, and a fish and men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom came to here, the wisdom of Solomon, So far the reading of guidance inspired and inherent word here at the end of chapter 4, something very similar to what we heard at the end of chapter 3.

At the end of chapter 3, we heard and all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered and they feared the king for, they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice. And then at the end of chapter 4 and men of all nations, from all kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the west of Solomon.

So again, in chapter 4, we the Holy Spirit is giving us those clues right before. And at the end of our passage that he is showing us how greatly wise Solomon wants this. Of course teaches us that God is faithful God made a promise that he would make Solomon wise and he kept his promise.

God has made us many promises that no one who calls upon the name of the Lord. Shall be put to shame that everyone who believes in the Lord. Jesus shall be saved that. He who began a good work in us. Will bring it to completion that when Christ who is our life of peers.

We shall appear with Him in glory that when he appears, we shall be like Him because we'll see him as he is that those whom he knew and predestined and called. And justified is so certain that it will have been done. He also glorified says the apostle. So they're all these promises and every time you read in the Bible, where God has kept a promise, you are to remember that God is faithful.

God keeps His promises God said to Solomon, that he had given him wisdom and that he would also give him riches. And the Lord keeps both of those things that we see, both of those things left. In this chapter. But also Solomon remember is David's, son, And David had been promised, a son.

Who'd be a great king. And as far as earthly kings go, Solomon is a pretty great king. But David had been promised to son, this kingdom would be forever. And Solomon's Kingdom is not going to be forever. In fact, we already have a hint reminder. And the last chapter.

Remember, we had reminders because he made a treaty with Pharaoh and he married an Egyptian wife, and although the Lord did grant him repentance by the end of it, he offered worship at the high places. And here we are told that Solomon has all of these chariots and horses something that the Lord had told his people that they were not to do Deuteronomy, 17 and verse 16 reminds them.

Don't go back to Egypt, and don't multiply chariots and horses. Well, first Kings, 3 Solomon, made a treaty with Egypt and took an Egyptian wife first Kings. Four. Solomon had so many the horse hasn't chariots that he needed 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots and 12 and 12,000 horsemen.

In fact, we read elsewhere, we had entire cities, just for keeping chariots. So many were the chariots in the horses, and so we're reminded that as wise and great. A Solomon is he's actually in all of his greatness that took the breath of the Israelites away and took the breath of of the kings of the earth away.

And we'll read about one who isn't even under his domain, but comes to visit him the queen of Sheba and it'll say that when she saw even how his servants were dressed, there was no breath left in her took her that this great wisdom and these great riches. And this great kingdom, although it took the breath of the world away is for us, just a hint of what Jesus is.

Like is a king of his perfect wisdom of his perfect reign. So we can look at Solomon and his wisdom. And we can say, we wish our government was like that. And that's something for those who are in government and godly to aspire to, but we can also say were thankful that Jesus Christ is our government and the government is on his shoulders and to the increase of his reign and his peace.

There is no end. It may seem to us like of the increase of government power in Washington. There is no end, but that's not true. It will end. Jesus Christ has all the power and so as we consider some of what the Holy Spirit shows us in this passage about Solomon's, wisdom and Solomon's.

Reigned that is one of the great messages of this passage that those things in which Solomon is great. Jesus is perfect and infinite and we rejoice to have him as king. And we pray with all more eagerness than thy kingdom. Come, right. So the first thing that we see and especially in the first 19 verses is a lot of names that may be very difficult for many to pronounce.

And even I following pronunciation cues and how they are written in. English was not pronouncing each of them, the way they're written in the Hebrew. I don't remember. A lot of these names but all of these names with the difficult pronunciations for us, makes it feel long and teaches In fact there's temptation.

Sometimes you come to a 19 versus like this and you say okay lots of Hebrew names. Skeptiverse 20. Don't do that. Because often the length of the list is part of the point As part of the point here. Solomon had appointed just the right man for every position and every level of government.

And he had so many government officials with him in Jerusalem that he needed a whole other set of officials to attend to what the government officials in Jerusalem would need. And of course, there was enough that provision for this because of how wide a rain, the Lord had given him even over neighboring kingdoms from basically from the Euphrates to the Nile, which is what the Lord had promised His people.

And now Solomon has that fulfilled literally, which is one reason why we don't look to the end of the age now and say, well one day the Jews will get that back. If Solomon had the literal geographical boundaries fulfilled and he's just a small picture of what Jesus would be like than the promise is kept with regard to Jesus with an even greater fulfillment.

Little patch of land. In the ancient Near East is parked of the heavens and the earth and the heavens, and the earth belong to King, Jesus. In fact, they have belonged to him as his right? As the god, man. Our mediator ever since he rose again from the dead, you remember.

He told his apostles right before he ascended into heaven, all authority, in heaven, and on earth have been given to me. And so, the Lord Jesus has everything and even the treasures of God to give us, which he does by his Holy Spirit, Solomon had all of the treasures of the neighboring kingdoms to give to his

subjects, and that's why there was more than enough, even with all these government officials.

So we have orderly effective administration understanding of how to attend to every detail, and how to put every person in exactly the correct place. And of course, what Solomon does, little Jesus does big and he gets everything, right? He knows exactly what he's doing and there will be one day when the all sin and resistance to Christ are gone.

And there will only be visible beautiful order in the new heavens and the new earth forever and ever and where we won't need any government, except for Christ, because we will all also be perfectly sanctified and glorified. So that's one thing about Solomon. The orderliness of his administration. Another thing about Psalm Solomon is a great prosperity of his administration.

This we see from first 20 through verse 23, and especially in verse 20, Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand. But the sea in multitude. So God had kept another one of his promises that he had made that he would make them as numerous as the sand of the sea Genesis 22:17.

After the Abraham had was about to offer Isaac and the Lord had provided a substitute. He promised him that his descendants would be as the sand and the sea and that they would possess the gate of their enemies. And we see that verse 21 Solomon reigned over all the kingdoms from the river which means Ephratus to the land of the Philistines, you mentions their enemies as far as the border of Egypt to had been enemy.

Number one, so enemies future and present. And past a little picture of the Lord giving. Not just prosperity but power and whereas the wealth of all those other nations was flowing into Israel. Each Israelite had liberty and safety under the reign of Solomon. Verse 25, Judah and Israel. Dwelt safely, Each man under his vine and his fig tree From Dan, which is the northernmost city in Israel.

As far as Beshiba which is the southernmost city in Israel. All the days of Solomon. And so you have the orderly administration, you have the great prosperity and liberty of his own people and the subjugation of all of the enemies you have as dominating power. And then the last place you just have the beauty and Brett of his knowledge.

The Lord didn't just give him wisdom for governing. The people he gave him marvelous wisdom of great beauty and great breadth 3,000. Proverbs 1500 songs. Sorry, one 3000 Proverbs 1,005 songs and they covered trees from the cedar tree of Lebanon. The greatest tree to the little springs of hip that would take root in the wall and spring out and start to cover the wall and he wrote all sorts of things about them.

And not just plant life, but animal life animals, and birds, and creeping things, and even fish. And so people would come kings of the earth and men from all nations kings. All the kings of the earth would come to hear him, talk about anything and everything, the breadth and the beauty of his knowledge.

And this of course is even more. So, with King Jesus, because he's the creator, he doesn't just know about these things as one who is studying them, he knows about them as one who made them and maintains them, and everything. We learn about in all the world, as you do your school and you learn stuff and your science classes.

For instance, you're seeing the great wisdom of the breadth, and the beauty seen the great breath and beauty of the wisdom of King Jesus who made and maintained all things. So let us marvel at his wisdom and let us feel secure and know that all things belong to us because they all belong to Jesus and are being used for our good that we made delight in him.

Who is our king? Let's pray Father. Thank you for reminding us that you keep your promises. Thank you for reminding us to see the wisdom of King, Jesus and how you rule and overrule, and all things. And to look forward to the day when the kingdoms of the earth will have become the kingdom of our Lord.

Jesus Christ, and all sin and all evil and all enemies. Even death itself will have been destroyed. We pray that you would make us to rest and rejoice in him to be thankful that we belong to him to give him praise and honor and obedience and service from cheerful and grateful hearts.

We ask that you would help us then by your spirit to do these things. In Jesus name, Amen.