

1 Kings 11:1-10
“Jesus is the Son of Solomon”
Advent 3

December 18th, 2019
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Vicar Miguel Gonzalez-Feliciano

Grace, mercy and peace are yours from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

[Jesus is the Son of Solomon]

This Advent we’re asking the question, *Who is Jesus?* Matthew’s genealogy is helping us. So far, we’ve learned that Jesus is the Son of David and Jesus is the Son of Abraham. This week we continue with these verses in Matthew. “Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah’s wife.”

Who is Jesus?

Jesus is the Son of Solomon. What does that mean?

[Easy as Pie]

It’s easy as pie to begin. It’s tougher than nails to finish. It seemed that easy for Solomon. When his father David died, pretenders to the throne included his half-brothers Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah. Solomon had them eliminated with the greatest of ease. Solomon’s enemies included Joab, Abiathar, and Shimei. They had been no problem. Anointed by Zakok as king of Israel at the Gihon Spring, Solomon came out of the starting blocks like a greyhound after jackrabbits. All the money was on Solomon, the tenth of David’s seventeen sons. Solomon had become the frontrunner with ease, and he was only gaining more and more steam.

In 1 Kings 3:7 Solomon calls himself a kid. But we would call Solomon a prodigy. He spoke 3,000 proverbs and his songs numbered 1,005. He gained control of two main international trading routes—the Via Maris along the Mediterranean Coast and the King’s Highway. The result was “From Dan to Beersheba, Judah and Israel lived in safety, each man under his own vine and fig tree” (1 Kgs 4:25). This is an Old Testament way of saying that the stock market was up; unemployment was down; and everyone was living a life that was incredibly better than they could have imagined!

However, kings weren't only judged by their ability to rule and govern well. Kings were also expected to guide the people in their devotion to God. But, even in this, Solomon exceeded way beyond anybody's expectation. Solomon needed no lessons in Greek or Hebrew; no lectures on the end times, studies on the angels, no fieldwork, and no vicarage.

Building problems? He says to Hiram, King of Tyre, "My people will talk with your people." This corporate merger brings about—among other projects—the Jerusalem temple, the royal palace and the chariot cities of Hazar, Meggido, and Gezer.

If there was ever a sure-fire candidate for the ministry, it was Solomon! For the first ten chapters of 1 Kings, Solomon is awesome, it's hard to find a flaw with the guy, he seems almost perfect!

But.

In the eleventh chapter of 1 Kings we have these words: "Solomon had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray" (1 Kgs 11:3).

Forgetting the words of his father David in Psalm 27:1, "The LORD is my light and my salvation," Solomon flies toward the sinful desires of his heart! 1 Kings 11:3 says that "his wives turned his heart." They turned his heart to follow Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites, and Chemosh the detestable god of Moab. Down, goes Solomon in all his glory. Down, goes his kingdom. It's cut in two in 1 Kings 12. Turns out Solomon wasn't so perfect after all.

[Tougher Than Nails]

It's easy as pie to begin. It's tougher than nails to finish. Like Solomon, you and I are great at the beginning! We begin with unbridled enthusiasm, high energy, a never-say-die attitude. Like hot knives into butter, we tear into new projects, new classes, new relationships.

But.

As time goes on, we get weary, fatigued, and impatient and bored.

Then we zoom toward different jobs, dazzling relationships, deadly desires—at least a thousand of them. Desires of pride, power, position, prestige, prominence, even pouting over poor, poor pitiful me. And the world doesn't do you and me any favors! Constantly you and I see ads of impossibly attractive people living impossibly successful lives with all the best gadgets and toys. Quietly, the world whispers, "You should have all of these things, look this way, drive this car. This would be you if only you chased a little harder. If you're honest with yourself, you'd admit it. You're just not good enough." Then down goes the joy of our salvation. Down goes passion for the lost. Down goes desire for the Word.

[One Greater Than Solomon]

But.

Matthew 12:42 says, "One greater than Solomon is here." That would be Jesus. Jesus is the son of Solomon, but Jesus is greater than Solomon!

Jesus not only began strong, Jesus finished strong. And for Jesus it was tougher than nails. Because in addition to the nails, there was scourging, mocking, spitting, beating, slapping, sweating, bleeding, and crowning with thorns. Still, Jesus finished. Despite his disciple's kiss of betrayal. Despite his friends running for cover. Despite his countrymen clamoring for his death. Jesus finished.

Look. Listen. The sky is dark. The two thieves are moaning. There is Jesus, taking a deep breath and speaking these words. "It is finished!" (Jn 19:30). The veil rent. The blood poured. The curse removed. The sacrifice complete. Death defeated. Paradise restored. "It is finished!"

Was this a cry of defeat?

By no means! This is a cry of victory.

[Divine Hospitality]

So today, you and I get no judgement from “on high.” Instead, we receive the Father’s welcome, a Shepherd’s embrace, a Friend’s infinite love. Divine Hospitality.

This hospitality is shown in the friend who calls you and I to come and live. Live in the rooms He has prepared for you, eat at the table that has been set and rejoice in the salvation of the Lamb. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus proves that though it was tougher than nails, he finished for us. He came to win us from the desires of the world.

Finishing strong doesn’t mean finishing first. It doesn’t mean finishing without blood, sweat, and tears. Finishing strong means daily fixing our eyes on Jesus and the work he did for you and me on the cross. Fix your eyes on the Son greater than Solomon. The world may whisper, “You’re not good enough,” but here is what Jesus promises,

“It is finished.”

So be it.

Amen.

As followers of Christ, “Keep loving one another earnestly
And show hospitality to one another without grumbling.” AMEN! (1Pt 4:8-9)
