



MORRISON ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.mzluth.org

January 5, 2025

Pastor James Enderle

Epiphany of Our Lord

First Lesson/ Sermon Text: [1 Kings 10:1-9](#)

Psalm of the Day: Psalm 72 (Red Hymnal)

Second Lesson: [Acts 13:46-49](#)

Gospel Lesson: [Matthew 2:1-12](#)

THE GIFT OF GOD is for All People WISDOM FOR THE WORLD

1. God's _____ goes out to the world.
2. _____, _____, and _____ bring people to God.
3. Don't _____ your _____ of God.
4. _____ is far _____ than Solomon.

Welcome to worship today at Morrison Zion Lutheran Church. We exist to glorify God. We have set out to do this by gathering around the Gospel so that we may grow in the Gospel and go to others with this Gospel.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from Jesus Christ, our Lord:

When is the last time you heard some great reviews about something and you went and you were overwhelmed? I think about movies from history. You would watch a movie and people would say "You have to go see this movie!" Everyone would go to the theater. "You have to see this in the theaters!" You just don't see that anymore. There are very few movies where people say "You have to go..." and spend now \$15.00 to go see this movie. More often, now a movie comes out and there is bad word of mouth and no one really wants to go see it.

Maybe you can think of a restaurant where someone says "Their food there is amazing! You have to go there! You have to get their fish fry or fresh cheese curds. And their burgers are amazing!" Maybe you go and you are overwhelmed. But other times people go somewhere and they say "The service wasn't good" or "This wasn't great."

Maybe it's a place to travel. I see people over and over again going to the Dominican Republic. I see people last year, this year head that way. Or to Gatlinburg, I hear lots of people say "Gatlinburg is great" and other people look confused. There are a lot of things in our world that you hear good things about and you want to have it.

We posted pictures of Hot Pot. My wife and I went on a date not too long ago and some other people said "I've heard that's really good!" We actually got to have it again last night. It's this amazing, kind of different type of food.

This is kind of the experience that had happened in our text where there were rumors and news about something so amazing that someone had to go and find out about it. We see this happening for Solomon and the queen of Sheba is going to come, but this isn't the only time that this happens. I think over and over again, because God is so great, the Bible is so great, Jesus' love is so amazing, that His Wisdom, His Word is so powerful, God's **wisdom for the world** is amazing, that it draws people in.

Maybe you've experienced this where you didn't have God's Word and you didn't have the understanding and once you started really digging into Scripture and maybe had someone to explain it to you and really clarify it and dig through traditions or some of the other confusing things you had heard, you are now just so delighted in the wisdom of God's Word. This is really where we find the queen of Sheba and her going to King Solomon. She had heard these amazing things. So we see what she does as she hears about the fame of Solomon.

But notice here this amazing thing. It says ***...the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relationship to the Lord, she came to test Solomon with hard questions.*** He has fame and his relationship to the Lord. There is something special with him and His God and then she came to quiz him. The wisdom of Solomon, the power, the things of the kingdom of Israel had such reputation that someone from Africa was willing to travel. This is a picture of *God's wisdom that goes out into the world.*

This happens over and over again, that this truth of God is something amazing, it's something profound. People can discover great things. We can talk about and study some amazing things, but there is nothing quite like God and His wisdom. When God is blessing and working through someone and seeing the amazing things that He brings about, it draws people in. It drew in the queen of Sheba. Why did this draw her in? Maybe she heard the amazing story of Solomon and his wisdom.

We know Solomon wrote proverbs. He wrote many of the proverbs. He wrote Ecclesiastes. And we hear about one of his great points of wisdom in [1 Kings 3](#) when there were two moms. This is one of the most famous stories of Solomon. Each mother had a child but one child died. So they come to Solomon and they both claim that this living child is their child. So what does Solomon say they should do? It sounds somewhat gruesome but he says, "Cut the child in half and give one-half to each mother." What happens is the real mother says "No, no, no! Don't do that! Give the child to the other mother." So Solomon knew that the one who was willing to sacrifice

even having the child but letting the child live was the real mother. He showed great wisdom in a difficult situation.

Here again, we see his wisdom. Not only in this section do we see his wisdom, but look at all the things that it talks about. As she comes, she comes with all these amazing things. She comes with spices and gold and precious stones. Then when she comes to question Solomon, nothing was too hard for him to explain. But then what is fascinating is it says, ***When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was overwhelmed.*** Notice it's not that she just "heard" the wisdom but she "saw" all the wisdom. Maybe that's an understanding that there is a difference between knowledge and wisdom.

Can someone have a lot of knowledge and be very smart but not have wisdom? You can think of it this way. Knowledge can just be facts, knowing something, but they say wisdom is putting it into practice. The simple one is knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit but wisdom is not putting that tomato in a fruit salad. A writer, Paul David Tripp, said this about the difference between knowledge and wisdom: "There is a huge difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge is an accurate understanding of truth. Wisdom is understanding and living in light of how that truth applies to the situations and relationships of your daily life. Knowledge is an exercise of your brain. Wisdom is the commitment of your heart that leads to transformation of your life." So it's kind of putting that knowledge into practice and doing the right things in a difficult time. Or the understanding that God gives us commands but He doesn't tell us exactly how to do all things. But here we saw that the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and was amazed at all the different things that Solomon had. The amazing temple, and look at all the things that are listed— ***the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings.*** It's an understanding that the wisdom that attracts people shows itself in our lives.

What I can say about this is *truth, beauty, and goodness brings people to God*. What does that mean? When you speak the truth, it matters. When you try to do things with beauty, it matters. When you try and seek goodness, it matters. This is what Solomon was doing. Not just was he wise in how he explained things but there was a beauty in it, majesty to the nation, to how things were ran. And here this woman who had all these things, all these treasures, she was in awe. The word here where it says "overwhelmed" can be translated to "breathless." She couldn't say anything. She was overwhelmed by the beauty and majesty of God.

Think about what we try to do in worship and Christmas, with the choirs and the band and all the different types of music that we can have. We try to present beauty. And we try to do things in an orderly way, to understand that goodness and truth brings people

to God. If that's how we do it at church, at school, the truth, beauty and goodness of what God gives us through Christianity, through the Bible, that means something.

Our world is very advanced. We are getting more and more advanced. We can do just about anything, but is there a lot of beauty and goodness and truth anymore? I'd say we've become very advanced, but it's harder to find some of those things. And even the idea of objective beauty and goodness is getting lost. More and more, we are becoming morally corrupt. So that goodness and truth is lost. And I think the world is seeing that. The world is seeing what happens when you lose the truth and you lose beauty and you lose goodness. People are saying "Where do we go?" They are missing God. We have the opportunity to bring that to people.

This is what Solomon did and we see that this is what the queen of Sheba noticed. We see that she was brought and had an awe of God. Notice that this all brought her to understand God though. We see in Verse 6 that she talked about his achievements and his wisdom. She talks about the report and how "happy" the people are. This word is more like "blessed," understanding how God has blessed us. It's not always about happiness but understanding we have God. But then she praises the Lord in Verse 9. ***"Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord's eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness."*** I think an important thing to see is that even though Solomon was wealthy and wise, there has to be an understanding that he was pointing to God, that he was giving glory to God, not just boasting in himself. Otherwise who would the queen of Sheba praise? She would say "Oh, King Solomon! You are great!" But through what Solomon did, and we see that he was sacrificing burnt offerings to the Lord, he was thanking God. So if we, through all those things are pointing to God, then other people will see that. How important it is that we practice that beauty and truth and goodness, but don't have pride. Continue to focus on the Lord because that's really where a problem can be. Here the queen of Sheba is in awe of the Lord.

In our Gospel Lesson, we see that the Magi, the Wise Men, traveled hundreds of miles to go visit the Savior. These people were in awe and wanted to go and be with the Lord. They were in awe. Is it easy for us to lose our awe of God? That same writer of the quote above, Paul David Tripp (that quote is from [Dangerous Calling](#)), says one of the most dangerous things that one can do is lose their awe for God. It's actually a book about pastors, the danger of pastors, that they can lose their awe in God. And what do pastors get to do? They get to preach all the time and they study God's Word, but they can lose their awe of God. Do you think that could happen? He works with all these pastors and he says that's one of the biggest problems.

Do you think you and other Christians can lose their awe of God? That we're not like the queen of Sheba, who was praising God for His wisdom and His love to Israel? But we're

like, "Huh, alright." Or where they were willing to travel miles and miles to go to God and people are unwilling to get up and read or unwilling to go every now and then to church, even though it's only a few miles away. You're here, so I want to thank you for being here, but it's not just a question of being here. It's asking, are you in awe of God? Do you read the Scriptures and are amazed at who He is and what He has done for you? Maybe it's even a thing to think about where sometimes people say "You're a Christian because this is where you were born." "If I was born in the Middle East or somewhere else, I wouldn't be a Christian, so it's just where I've been placed." Isn't it true somewhere down in the line you had an ancestor who became Christian, who became in awe of God and Jesus and what that means for you today? Or maybe it's you! Maybe you're parents weren't Christian. Or maybe you were distant from God and now you have an awe of God. But somewhere along, we see that this message is for everyone, so that means it's for you! We aren't deserving and it's not, "Okay, maybe you've been a member at Morrison your whole life, maybe you were baptized here, your parents, your grandparents," but it's the awe of God and how amazing it is that God brought one of your loved ones to know Him, or that He has brought you to know Him. And what the danger is, just how easy is it to lose that. One generation, for a parent to not tell their child. Or, I think sometimes the bigger danger is we can tell our children and we can encourage them to go to Sunday School or Catechism Class or to day school, but they can see if you have an awe of God—an awe of God that creates a humility to confess sin; an awe of God that understands His love and mercy. An awe of God that shows who we are and our need for a Savior; a confidence in what Christ has done for you; an ability to rest knowing that God has everything for you—that even if things are difficult, He has power. You don't have to worry. *Don't lose your awe of God.*

One of the greatest ways that we can do that, to not lose our awe of God, is to focus on the right thing. Here the queen of Sheba came and saw how wise Solomon was, but she didn't just praise Solomon. She really praised the Lord, how great the love of God was that He loved Israel. It doesn't even say that God loved Solomon but that He loved Israel to give this wisdom and power to Solomon, to maintain justice and righteousness. We see that our God has so much love for us that He has given us more than Solomon though. God loves Israel; He loves you and me, to give us someone greater.

There is a place in the New Testament that the queen of Sheba mentioned here is mentioned as the Queen of the South. It's in [Matthew 12](#). This is when the Pharisees are asking for a sign from Jesus. He had performed lots of miracles already, so He says this: ***"A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*** Jesus will rise again. But then He says, ⁴¹***"The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here."*** This is kind of an interesting point. How great of a prophet was Jonah? He

helped save Nineveh, but we kind of call him a “racist prophet.” He didn’t want to save them. He reluctantly went. He ran away. So to say someone greater than Jonah is here, that’s not such a big deal to say Jesus is greater than Jonah. But then listen. It says, ⁴² ***“The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.”*** Jesus is far greater than Solomon. Why is that important? It’s because Solomon was a great king. He had great wisdom. But do you know what he also had? He did a lot of foolish things. He had 700 wives, 300 concubines. He brought a lot of good things to Israel and a lot of praise to God, but He was a sinner. And these women often led him astray. He was not always wise in his living.

But we have one who is far greater than Solomon, who is the Word of God, who is the epitome of wisdom because He is God. Then what did He do? He didn’t come to be a king of just Israel but a king for the world; a king of every nation, language and tribe; a spiritual kingdom forever! Then He came to be perfect, not to have wealth but to take on your and my sins, to do something that is priceless, something far greater than Solomon could ever do! That’s the awe of God that we can rejoice in.

I was trying to get it here to show you but if you know the psychologist, Jordan Peterson, he is from Canada. He has become pretty famous. He has a lot of wisdom. He speaks about a lot of interesting things. He is doing a lot of talks on the Bible—Genesis and Exodus. Now he is doing the Gospels. He struggles with evolution and he sees too much symbolism in the Bible. You can find interviews where he is struggling with the truth of Jesus because he knows it. You can just see him emotionally. He is crying and is trying to figure it out—what the truth of Jesus would actually mean. But he is too stuck on himself and evolution and man’s wisdom. But we have Christ. We have the awe of what it means that you are forgiven in the Lord. I want to show that clip, you can look it up, because the emotion of understanding the truth of what Jesus would mean, that Jesus lived and died for you. Your sins are forgiven. You have eternal life. That’s amazing! That’s a message for you and the whole world.

As the queen of Sheba was in awe of Solomon and his wisdom and his treasure and the palace, that’s an amazing thing. But don’t lose your awe of God, especially of Jesus and what He means for you and the whole world—that you are loved and forgiven, at peace with God. Amen.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [\(Philippians 4:7\)](#) Amen.

You can see the emotional video of Jordon Peterson by going here: [Jordan Peterson TERRIFIED by his own BELIEF](#) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sD20MUTJf0Y&t=147s&ab_channel=DanielKolenda