# Cursed to Bless

# God Blesses Israel and the World!

Episode: 5

Passage: 1 Kings 10:1-13

Characters: - Host - Sam - Pastor - Ben - Pete - Ruth - Kate - Boss # full\_only

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Language: en-AU

### Intro

**ATMOS**: Theme music 5 sec, Host background music below host’s volume

**HOST**: Hello, this is Mary, your host. Welcome to Cursed to Bless, the show that asks a big question: Why is life so hard, when God is so good? We hear God blesses us, but how? Money, health, happiness? The answers are found in *Jesus*, in who he is and what he’s done. We see this when we read the Bible as *one big story*, with Jesus as the hero from start to finish.

**HOST**: In this episode, we learn that God establishes his people in his promised land, gives them his King, and blesses them and the world.

**HOST**: Remember to pause, read the passage, and answer the questions when you hear the sound. Our first question is: Who is a famous person that you really admire? Why? Pause and discuss now.

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: Thank you.

### Bible Study

**FX**: Flasback Outro

**ATMOS**: Host background

**HOST**: Listeners, let’s listen to the friends’ Bible study. They were all sitting at Pastor’s house…

**FX**: Flashback Intro.

**ATMOS**: House living room

**PASTOR**: Welcome everyone. Let’s pray first: “Dear Father please help us listen carefully to your Word now, and learn together. In Jesus name …”

**ALL**: Amen.

**PASTOR**: Let’s review our memory verse from last time: 1 Peter chapter 2, verses 9-10. I will read it out loud. When I pause, say the word that comes next, without looking at your Bible:

**FX**: In each ‘…’ gap below, Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence

**PASTOR**: (Leave a 2 second pause where you see ‘…’ and say the answer word with emphasis.)
“But you are a … *chosen* people, a royal … *priesthood*, a holy … *nation*, God’s special … *possession*, that you may declare the … *praises* of him who called you out of … *darkness* into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of … *God*; once you had not received … *mercy*, but now you have received mercy.”

**TRANSLATOR**: Replace this with text from the local Bible translation. Pick the same significant words for the gaps, as much as possible.

**PASTOR**: Today, we’re reading 1 Kings chapter 10, verses 1-13. Let’s read it together.

**FX**: Pause prompt, then page flicking for 3 seconds.

**PASTOR**: Thank you. Ben, what are the main ideas in this passage.

**BEN**: A queen hears about King Solomon, and she wants to visit him to see for herself how wise he really was.

**KATE**: She must have been very wealthy! Verse two says she had lots of gold and jewels.

**PASTOR**: What can we tell about Israel now.

**RUTH**: They’ve come a long way from our last lesson. God kept his promise to Abraham, and now his descendants have a land of their own - they don’t have to keep moving in tents anymore. They have a wonderful temple where they can meet God.

**BEN**: They’re so secure and established in their land, that a foreign queen wants to visit and see how God has blessed them. They’re famous in the nations far away!

**SAM**: That sounds nice. I don’t really feel settled and established in this world.

**PASTOR**: That’s OK, we’re not meant to. As Christians we’re just passing through this world. We look forward to God’s New Creation.

**PETE**: Well, once I start my new business, I’m going to make lots of money - I’ll be set for life!

**SAM**: I’ve started a new job. Maybe that’ll help me feel settled and blessed.

**PASTOR**: Your business and job sounds great, boys. But it doesn’t come close to what God has prepared for us in heaven.

**BEN**: And what about God’s third promise to Abraham - blessing?

**KATE**: They’re very wealthy now.

**BEN**: Yes. But I’m thinking more of the blessing of a wise king. I think that’s an even bigger blessing. A foolish king will make his people poor pretty quickly… God blessed the whole nation through a king that rules wisely.

**RUTH**: And not just his own people. Now we have a queen coming to them. I can imagine her going back to her people, and telling them about God’s goodness. So her people far away will be blessed too!

**SAM**: Oh, didn’t God promise Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him?

**PASTOR**: That’s right Sam. I’m glad you remember. What can we see about that promise?

**SAM**: Well… I guess she’s learning about God. That’s a blessing, right?

**BEN**: Yeah, verse three says Solomon answered all her questions. Verse five says the queen was overwhelmed when she saw how God had blessed his people.

**RUTH**: So God is blessing Israel *and* the world!

**PETE**: Why would a queen that’s so wealthy want to visit king Solomon anyway?

**RUTH**: Perhaps she valued knowing God more than gold…

**PETE**: Well, I wish someone gave *me* money and gifts just for being a Christian! All we get is a hard life.

**PASTOR**: We have a king who rules us wisely and blesses us. He will establish us in the ultimate Promised Land - a new creation for all peoples.

**PETE**: I don’t get it.

**PASTOR**: Pete, I think if you could really understand all of God’s blessings to us in Jesus, you would be overwhelmed just like the Queen of Sheba.

**PETE**: I just don’t see it.

**RUTH**: Did you notice in verse five – the Queen of Sheba saw the offerings at the temple. It reminds me of what God said in our last lesson, that Israel would be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

**PASTOR**: Exodus chapter 19, right.

**RUTH**: I wasn’t sure what that meant, but I think I see it now.

**PASTOR**: Yes. God’s blessing is spreading from Jerusalem into the whole world. Not just with material gifts, but the gift of knowing God. More and more people are glorifying God.

**BEN**: God is so good to include all his people in keeping his promises of blessing - even us in our country! We don’t have to be from an ethnic group to be close to God.

**RUTH**: Yes, this passage reminds me that Jesus is our good king. Submitting to him means blessing, not a cursed slavery. Makes me want to keep submitting to him!

### Questions to Pastor and Application

**PASTOR**: OK, what questions would *you* like to ask?

**PETE:** Sorry Pastor, but I don’t get it. How does the Queen of Sheba have anything to do with us today? I’m not wealthy and my friends and family back in the village are very poor!

**PASTOR:** Ahh Pete. The story of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba is like a picture of something far better that God has done for people all around the world. He’s established the kingdom of King Jesus! Jesus is far greater and more powerful and wise and wealthy than Solomon. And Jesus is now bringing people from all around the world into his kingdom. But… Jesus said his kingdom was not an earthly kingdom. It is a heavenly kingdom. So we have to wait for heaven, the real Promised Land, the New Creation. So, Pete, this story of Solomon’s kingdom is a picture of heaven, where God’s promises to Abraham will be totally fulfilled. But until we reach heaven, we are not *promised* physical blessings at all. Rather we are promised difficulties and sufferings! In fact, Jesus himself said that if we want to be his disciples we have to deny ourselves, take up our crosses and follow him. That means dying to self and living for him. But it will all be worth it!

**PETE:** I’m not sure I can believe that.

**SAM**: I find it hard too, Pastor. How can we know what you say is true?

**PASTOR**: Well, we’ll talk more about it in another study. But we can know for sure that it is true, because Jesus came back from the dead and has gone into heaven already. He suffered more than you or I ever will, but is now enjoying perfect life forever. And remember, Jesus is not just God, but he is a human being, just like you and me. We can be sure our sufferings will be worth it!

**SAM**: That’s good!

**PASTOR:** Now… let me see if you can tell me what we’ve learned so far in our studies. What did we learn in our first study from Genesis chapters 1 and 2?

**PETE:** That’s easy! God’s got all the power and made everything very good!

**PASTOR:** Excellent Pete! Then what?

**KATE:** But Adam and Even listened to Satan and disobeyed God’s rule about not eating the fruit of the tree…

**RUTH:** and that brought God’s curse on us – a hard life outside God’s place, the garden, and then death.

**BEN:** But God is so gracious to us that he promised to remove the curse and bring blessing to the world again. He made three promises to Abraham. They were people, land and blessing.

**SAM:** But … Abram didn’t have any children then, so God gave him Isaac, and then came millions of others - the nation of Israel… but they were in Egypt in slavery, so God saved them out of Egypt, defeating Pharaoh, and brought them into the Promised Land.

**PASTOR:** You’ve done very well! And today we’ve read that God gave the nation of Israel a great King to rule wisely over them and bless them. And not only did he bless Israel, he blessed other nations through Israel, like the Queen of Sheba. And because the Bible is one story with Jesus as the hero, we realise that what God has done so far in the story actually points us towards what Jesus *will* do, which is far far better for the whole world.

**PASTOR**: OK, let’s talk about our own lives now. How does this passage make you feel about God?

**BEN**: God is so good to include us in his blessing! We don’t have to be from an ethnic group to be close to God.

**PETE**: I’m amazed - are you really saying that God was thinking of us in our country when he promised blessing to Abraham?

**PASTOR**: Yes!

**SAM**: I’m trying to understand that. Frankly, I don’t feel very blessed.

**BEN**: I feel thankful for Jesus. This passage reminds me that Jesus is our *good* and *wise* king.

**RUTH**: Yes! Submitting to him means blessing, not a cursed slavery. Makes me want to keep submitting to him!

**PETE**: Hmm, I don’t like obeying anyone’s orders.

**BEN**: But that depends on the kind of king you’re obeying. What if he is wise, kind, and powerful?

**SAM**: That sounds like a blessing!

**PETE**: I just don’t feel it.

**PASTOR**: Thank you everyone. Let’s read our memory verse on the whiteboard: John chapter 14, verse 6. Let’s read it together now.

**ALL**: “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’.”

**PASTOR**: Let’s memorise that for our next lesson. Let me pray. Good Father, we praise you for establishing your people in the promised land and giving them your king. We marvel at how you blessed Israel and the world. Thank you for our king Jesus, who blesses us. We long to enjoy his rule in your new creation. In Jesus’ name…

**ALL**: Amen.

**PASTOR**: Thank you everyone, see you next time.

**ALL**: Goodbye pastor.

### Interactive Questions

**FX**: Flashback outro

**HOST**: Listeners, let’s answer some questions now. Say your answer aloud. **HOST**: Which of God’s promises to Abraham has he already kept? Say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to each of these sentences:
A large offspring. [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] Yes.
A land of their own. [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] Yes.
Blessing. [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] Yes.
Blessing other nations through Abraham’s descendants. [FX: Response prompt, then 2 seconds silence] Yes.

**HOST**: How has God fulfilled his promise of blessing? Was it…
through a great *harvest* of the land, through a wise *king*, or through winning a *war*.

**FX**: Response prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: Through a wise *king*. God used king Solomon to bless them.

**HOST**: What is the result of all of this for God? Is it…
he is *forgotten*,
he is *glorified*, or
he is *hated*.

**FX**: Response prompt, then 5 seconds silence

**HOST**: He is glorified.

**HOST**: How does this story help us understand Jesus?

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence.

**HOST**: This story helps us understand how, through King Jesus, God rules and abundantly blesses his people and will establish them in the ultimate Promised Land, the new creation - heaven!

**HOST**: Discuss this question: How does the story of Israel and Solomon remind you of Jesus as our king?

**FX**: Pause prompt, then 5 seconds silence

### Outro

**FX**: Flashback outro

**HOST**: Listeners, now we’ve heard about Sam’s day, listen to what he prayed before going to sleep…

**ATMOS**: Soft prayer background effect (e.g. chimes) fade in

**SAM**: Dear God, You are the God of all peoples - even mine! I can’t wait to enjoy the new creation that Jesus is blessing us with. I don’t know what all this means for my life now, but I want to obey you Lord Jesus! You are a wise king, so I submit to you. Amen. ::: {custom-style=“Instruction”} **ATMOS**: Prayer background fade out :::

**HOST**: Thank you for completing this lesson. We learnt how God establishes his people in his promised land, gives them his King, and blesses them and the world. Will you join me for our next lesson? We will learn how Israel’s disobedience shows just how stubbornly sinful people are, and how deserving of God’s curse we are. Please read 1 Kings chapter 11, verses one to 13 and Deuteronomy chapter 28, verses 58 to 63 before then. Now you can discuss how this lesson matters in your life: How does this passage make you feel about God? Goodbye.

**FX**: Theme music fade out.