

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF SOLOMON:
THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

STUDY NUMBER #16 – 1 KINGS 10:1-13 &
2 CHRONICLES 9:1-12

In our last study Solomon has sixteen years left. How is he going to spend it? Is he going to spend it spiritually minded or materially minded? We know there are some clouds that are foreboding on the horizon. For our hero it is not going to be pretty as he finishes it.

When you surrender spiritual values your heart gets hard, you get selfish and materialistic and that is exactly what is happening to Solomon. The difference between Solomon and David is David never loses that soft, tender place of a heart toward God. People saw that in David and, as a result, the kingdom was blessed.

The two stars in our story today are the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon. Because of all those projects and all the things that he did in the last study his wealth has increased incredibly. He is the Donald Trump, the Warren Buffett, and the Bill Gates of his generation. Secondly, the kingdom is extended by rapid growth. Thirdly, his wisdom is becoming to be known by every body. Because of those three things word has gotten out. We are going to have a diplomatic situation arise where we have a queen from a foreign country, who is coming to

Washington, D.C. to have a visit with the king. Solomon is going to entertain this lady for a diplomatic visit. We are going to be in 1 Kings 10 and 2 Chronicles 9.

v. 1 When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relation to the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions.

The scene of our study opens just like it would be Washington, D.C. and our President is entertaining some diplomat from some foreign country.

(The Unofficial Liberal Joke Book for the Politically Incorrect by Bob Phillips)

If I wanted to go crazy, I would do it in Washington because it would not be noticed. IRWIN S. COBB

The queen has made a **TREMENDOUS COMMITMENT** to this project and she has traveled about 1,200 miles to reach Jerusalem. She has been on the road for two or three months. That is about the distance between Tyler and Estes Park, Colorado.

She has traveled that far because she has heard about Solomon and his kingdom and she wants to see it first hand.

There are three things that will characterize this woman:

- 1) She is beautiful according to historical records.
- 2) She is very wealthy, and very successful.
- 3) She has a kingdom of similar magnificence although it is not as great as Solomon.

Back to verse 1, “*The queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relation to the name of the Lord, she came to test him.*”

What are the two things? *The fame of Solomon, and his relationship to the name of the Lord.*

In order to become complete in the study I have to stop for a minute. This woman is mentioned by Jesus in the New Testament. Matthew 12:41-42. Here is the scene, Jesus is giving a message and the Pharisees and Sadducees are in the crowd and they are back there taking notes so they can really mess Him up. They are not listening to the message, they are not going to respond to it, they are not going to repent and the Lord just stops and He uses two illustrations, He uses one from Jonah and He uses the other from the Queen of Sheba. Listen to what He says because they both have the same answer.

Matthew 12:41-42 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 one greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this genera-

tion and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom and now one greater than Solomon is here.

I take it from that that she not only came on a diplomatic mission to have a lot of hard questions about her kingdom answered, she had a heart. She wanted to know about the name of the Lord. The FAME of Solomon and THE NAME OF THE LORD were the things that had attracted her to take this long arduous twelve hundred mile trip.

Two commentators that I highly respect both believe that she makes some kind of a statement with regard to religious profession as to this encounter.

(John Walvoord in his commentary on the gospel of Matthew says:

Jesus sighted another illustration of the queen of the south who heard and believed in the wisdom of Solomon. Now greater than Solomon was here and the Jews would not believe.

(Harry Ironside in his commentary on Matthew says:)

When at last they shall stand trembling in their sins before the bar of God, the queen of the south will appear to upraid them because of their willful rejection of light, whereas she followed the gleam from

the very ends of the earth in order that that light might be hers forever more.

I read that and I think I was writing this study during the holidays and I thought of you know who? The three wise men who left the East and followed the star and when they got to Jerusalem they say, “where is he who is born King of the Jews?” They didn’t even know. The theologians started looking in their books it is in Bethlehem. So they go to Bethlehem, they follow that star. When they got there they stood over the place where the little child lay. They went in and fell down and worshiped Him and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. That is very similar. Here she comes from this long trip she is going to have some things to say and then they are going to swap gifts. When it says she asks him hard questions, the kings and queens of the East love to do that with each other. If they could propose a situation that was impossible for solution, they had one little game of “Scrabble”. They are going back and forth, playing ping pong over difficult things and no matter what questions she asked, Solomon came up smelling like roses every time. He had the answers to her questions.

v. 2 Arriving at Jerusalem with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she came to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind.

What did they talk about? I think she is talking about

some of the struggles of being a queen in an Arabic man centered kingdom, I bet she faced a lot of those issues. The state of Sheba. The affairs of the state. I bet they talked about economy, because both of them are very materialistically minded. I think she talked about defense. Solomon what arrangements have you made for the defense of your kingdom, she needed the same. How about some treaties? Let's enter into some trade treaties because you are already getting gold from Ophir. Let's see if we increase a little bit for the benefit of both of our nations. I think she talked to him about wisdom. What computer program do you use to organize your administration like it is? It is something to behold. She wants to know about this GOD! That He has built this fabulous temple that she has seen from the outside. She wants to know about that. So those are all of the things that she brought on her heart to talk.

v. 3 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her.

I put Proverbs 16:23:

Proverbs 16:23 A wise man's heart guides his mouth,
and his lips promote instruction.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

So Solomon answered all of the queen's questions during this round the clock sessions with the king.

v. 4 When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built,

v. 5 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.

There are six things that blew her away. The palace he built, the food on his table, seating of the officials, attending servants and their robes, cupbearers and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord and the last phrase says she was overwhelmed. Do you know what that means in the Hebrew text? It means there was no more spirit in her because she was totally amazed. She was perfectly astonished. She was left breathless by her amazement.

v. 6 She said to the King, "The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true.

Do you think that encouraged Solomon? Just the fact that somebody would come from a foreign country and say everything I heard about you is true.

(Time-Out Leadership by Donald Luce)

“Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.”

MARK TWAIN

Beware of the people in your life who are not supporting you. They can be anywhere. Even those you are closest to may fall victim to petty jealousies That can undermine your success.

**Once you identify people who are not supporting you, take action immediately. Distance yourself from their slings and arrows. Define new rules for the game. You need people to reach your highest success.
p. 95**

Queen Sheba comes in with such a great word of encouragement. It is a positive word. When somebody comes up to me with something negative I just hit them positively. When somebody comes along and rains on your parade and you join them in it you are going to be living in self-pity all day long.

v. 7 But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard.

v. 8 How happy your men must be. How happy your

officials who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!

v. 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 had made you king, to maintain justice and righteousness."

What is it in this verse that is a concern to you that reveals her spiritual health at the moment? Did you read it close enough to get it? PRAISE BE TO THE LORD YOUR GOD. You see it is not ours and it is not mine yet. But I am sure searching while I am here. It is PRAISE BE TO THE LORD YOUR GOD. What did he do? He delighted in you and then He placed you on the throne of Israel. By the way that is what God does with leadership.

Romans 13:1 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

He ordains, the governors, the kings, the presidents, all of these are under His sovereign jurisdiction and why does a person take a position of leadership over people. What is the main job description of a president, a king, or a leader of the land? "To maintain justice and righteousness."

v. 10 and she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never

again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

The 120 talents of gold is 9,000 pounds of gold. You can figure out how many camels have to carry that cargo. You have a pretty big caravan that is coming into town with all of these gifts. I have to tell you that Solomon is going to out give her. I just want to let you know ahead of time when we get to the Chronicles passage you are going to see that he does more than she does.

The peril of accumulating wealth was illustrated in a story related by Dr. R. R. Brown, the gracious octogenarian. He told about a man who confided to his pastor, “When I had \$50,000 I was happy, but now that I have \$500,000 I am miserable.” The minister replied, “The solution is easy. Give \$450,000 away!” But the prosperous church member answered, “I can’t! Having money is like grabbing an electrical wire—the more ‘juice,’ the tighter its hold”.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v. 11 (Hiram’s ships brought gold from Ophir; and from there they brought great cargoes of almugwood and precious stones.

Almugwood is that very hard black with a red center wood that is used for the steps of the palace, the temple and is used for the musical instruments, verse 12:

v. 12 The king used the almugwood to make supports for the temple of the Lord and for the royal palace, and to make harps and lyres for the musicians. So much almugwood has never been imported or seen since that day).

v. 13 King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for, besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty. Then she left and returned with her servants to her own country.

Royal Bounty? Do you realize that the Lord is in the business of giving you more than you can ever ask for or imagine? Think about it.

Philippians 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

I think we all need to realize the biblical principal. You can see the Lord's hand in it when, in fact, it is beyond anything we can ask or imagine.

Let's go to the Chronicles passage:

v. 1 When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions. arriving with a very great caravan—with

camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she came to Solomon and talked with him about all she had on her mind.

Now, here's Solomon, he has reached the heights of grandeur.

Zig Ziglar says: “Total effort, fully expended, in quest of a worthy ideal is the key to maximum performance.”

Solomon is there in what you see.

v. 2 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for him to explain to her.

v. 3 When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the palace he had built,

v. 4 the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, the cupbearers in their robes and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was overwhelmed.

v. 5 She said to the king, “The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true.

v. 6 But I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half the

greatness of your wisdom was told me; you have far exceeded the report I heard.

v. 7 How happy your men must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!

v. 8 Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the Lord your God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them, to maintain justice and righteousness.”

The reason he put him on the throne is to rule for the LORD YOUR GOD. You are there as a representative of God to rule for Him and I only wish that he would have remembered this. It reminds me of what David said in Psalm 75:6-7.

Psalm 75:6-7 No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. But it is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another.

If I get the privilege to serve and to be in a position of leadership it is because God has put me there and I always need to remember in humility and brokenness that I am God’s representative in that position.

v. 9 Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. There had

never been such spices as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

v. 10 (The men of Hiram and the men of Solomon brought gold from Ophir; they also brought albugumwood and precious stones.

v. 11 The king used the albugumwood to make steps for the temple of the Lord and for the royal palace, and to make harps and lyres for the musicians. Nothing like them had ever been seen in Judah.)

v. 12 King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for; he gave her more than she had brought to him. Then she left and returned with her servants to her own country.

Now we have had a diplomatic encounter between these two. Does it bother you that all of it centers around material things? Each one trying to outdo the other. She gives a great gift, he turns around and gives a greater gift. Material things, material things.

Daily Bread February 6th:

Intelligent people can sometimes be unbelievably foolish. Consider the 19th century explorers of the Franklin Expedition who tried to reach the North Pole. Annie Dillard, in her book Teaching a Stone to Talk, describes the provisions they took for that hazardous journey:

“Each sailing vessel carried an auxiliary steam engine and a 12-day supply of coal for the entire projected 2 or 3 year voyage. Instead of additional coal...each ship made room for a 1,200 volume library, a hand organ playing 50 tunes, china place settings for officers and men, cut glass wine goblets, and sterling silver flatware. The expedition carried no special clothing for the Arctic, only the uniforms of Her Majesty’s Navy.” Imagine heading into frigid wastelands with supplies like that! What utter folly!

Some People heading into eternity may be even more shortsighted. Multitudes fail to think of their destination with its dangers of everlasting destruction. Ignoring their desperate need for forgiveness of their sin through faith in Jesus Christ, they pay no attention to His solemn question, “What profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”

Don’t you wish that Solomon would understand that and the things he is spending his energy for these remaining sixteen years is on material goals.

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

The final criterion that will be used by God to judge us is not success but faithfulness.

p. 69

(Walking With Saints: Through the Best and Worst Times

of Our Lives by Calvin Miller)

The problem with most of us is that dying remains a future event. We rationalize that the way to get the most out of our hedonistic lives is to schedule our confessions as close as possible to our dying time. We all want to be saved....but not yet.

p. 12

I took down my hymnal and sang Isaac Watts great old hymn:

WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my god;
All the vain things that charm me most—
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;

**Love so amazing so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1 The Lord is famous for doing exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

LESSON #2 The queen of Sheba paid a tremendous price to have the privilege of this audience with Solomon.

LESSON #3 The Lord's gift of wisdom to Solomon makes it possible for him to answer all of her questions.

LESSON #4 When is the last time you have been overwhelmed and left speechless at what God has done or is doing in your life?

LESSON #5 We know so little of what the Lord has prepared for those who love Him.

LESSON #6 The queen of Sheba says, "Praise be to the Lord your God," not my god or our god.

LESSON #7 We must be always mindful that when the

Lord gives us an assignment it is our responsibility, just like Solomon, “to rule for the Lord your God,” to do it heartily to the Lord.

LESSON #8 It would seem that Solomon and the queen of Sheba, both, are trying to make a statement in the extravagant gifts they have given each other on this occasion.

LESSON #9 We must be constantly mindful that the things of this world will pass away.

LESSON #10 The choice is really between that which is temporary and that which is eternal.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF SOLOMON

STUDY NUMBER SIXTEEN – 1 Kings 10:1-13 & 2 Chronicles 9:1-12

1 Kings 10:1-13

10:1 When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relation to the name of the Lord, she came to test him with hard questions.

10:2 Arriving at Jerusalem with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she came to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind.

10:3 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her.

10:4 When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, 10:5 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.

10:6 She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true.

10:7 But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard.

10:8 How happy your men must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!

10:9 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."

10:10 And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

10:11 (Hiram's ships brought gold from Ophir; and from there they brought great cargoes of almugwood and precious stones.

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10:13 King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for, besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty. Then she left and returned with her retinue to her own country.

2 Chronicles 9:1-12

9:1 When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions. Arriving with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she came to Solomon and talked with him about all she had on her mind.

9:2 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for him to explain to her.

9:3 When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the palace he had built, 9:4 the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, the cupbearers in their robes and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was overwhelmed.

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LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

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LESSON #2 The queen of Sheba paid a tremendous price to have the privilege of this audience with Solomon.

LESSON #3 The Lord's gift of wisdom to Solomon makes it possible for him to answer all of her questions.

LESSON #4 When is the last time you have been overwhelmed and left speechless at what God has done or is doing in your life?

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LESSON #6 The queen of Sheba says, "Praise be to the Lord your God," not my god or our god.

LESSON #7 We must be always mindful that when the Lord gives us an assignment it is our responsibility, just like Solomon, “to rule for the Lord your God,” to do it heartily to the Lord.

LESSON #8 It would seem that Solomon and the queen of Sheba, both, are trying to make a statement in the extravagant gifts they have given each other on this occasion.

LESSON #9 We must be constantly mindful that the things of this world will pass away.

LESSON #10 The choice is really between that which is temporary and that which is eternal.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read 1 Kings 10:1-13 and 2 Chronicles 9:1-12 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. Why did the Queen of Sheba come to visit Solomon, according to verse 1?

3. What was the Queen of Sheba's response to what she saw of Solomon's kingdom according to 1 Kings 10:7?

4. Describe the gift that was given by the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, according to verse 10.

5. What did Solomon do for the Queen of Sheba, according to 1 Kings 10:13?

6. How did Solomon handle all of her questions, according to 2 Chronicles 9:2?

7. What are the things that the Queen of Sheba observed, according to 2 Chronicles 9:3 & 4?

8. What little phrase summarizes her response

to all that she saw, according to 1 Kings 10:5 and 2 Chronicles 9:4?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?
