

The Queen of Sheba Visits Jerusalem; The Wisdom and Wealth of Solomon

2 Chronicles 9

2 Chronicles 9:1-12 - *“Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, having a very great retinue, camels that bore spices, gold in abundance, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. ² So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her. ³ And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁴ the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers and their apparel, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.*

⁵ *Then she said to the king: “It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom.*

⁶ *However I did not believe their words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You exceed the fame of which I heard. ⁷ Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! ⁸ Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on His throne to be king for the LORD your God! Because your God has loved Israel, to establish them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness.”*

⁹ *And she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great abundance, and precious stones; there never were any spices such as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.¹⁰ Also, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum wood and precious stones. ¹¹ And the king made walkways of the algum wood for the house of the LORD and for the king’s house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers; and there were none such as these seen before in the land of Judah. ¹² Now King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, much more than she had brought to the king. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.*

Background Notes

The Queen of Sheba’s visit to Jerusalem must have been quite a sight in the ancient world. She was possibly the ruler of the “Serbians,” who lived in southern Arabia, and are mentioned as early as the book of Job in the Bible. If so, the Queen of Sheba travelled at least 1200 miles by camel to Jerusalem. Most likely she heard of Solomon’s fame from traders who travelled throughout the known world at that time. In fact, the traders of Sheba are mentioned in Ezekiel 27.

She had a very great retinue: *“camels that bore spices, gold in abundance, and precious stones”* (v1). What a sight this must have been! She came to test Solomon with hard questions. When we read in verse 1 that the Queen of Sheba

shared with King Solomon all that was on her heart, and then in verse 12 that Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all that she requested, there may have been some trade agreements that were involved in this official meeting. Gold from Ophir and algum trees came from the Queen of Sheba's area of control.

Some extra-biblical (non-biblical) sources claim that the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon lasted six months, and during that time they had an intimate relationship that resulted in a son being born when the queen returned home. The sources claim that this son later became King Menyelek of Ethiopia. Some sources go further, and claim that when Solomon met King Menyelek, he sent the Ark of the Covenant back to Ethiopia with him for safekeeping, and Solomon made a replica of the Ark for the Temple. Why? These sources claim that Solomon realized it was only a matter of time before enemies would conquer Israel! Some folks believe, even to this day, that the Ark of the Covenant is kept under lock and key in a secret place in Ethiopia. We cannot say whether or not there is any merit to the claims of these extra-biblical sources, but the Bible is completely silent about these claims.

Doctrinal Points

1. The Queen of Sheba is *typical* of the Church in her wonder and worship.

When the Queen of Sheba arrived in Jerusalem, she was awestruck! She had heard of Solomon's wealth and fame (v1), but now she saw it with her own eyes (v3-4). Then the Queen of Sheba made that classic statement: "The half has not been told" (v5-6).

If we are looking at the Queen of Sheba as a *type*, or picture, of the Church, "**The half has not been told!**" will be the response of all believers when we're with the Lord in glory, and we truly realize the amazing greatness of our King, the Lord Jesus Christ! 1 Corinthians 2:9 says, "*Eye has not seen, nor hear heard, nor entered into the heart of men, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*"

So the Queen of Sheba is a *type* of the Church in her awe and her honor of him. While the queen did not actually worship King Solomon, her honor and praise of Solomon and her gifts to him is part of the *type*, or picture, of the Church's response in wonder and worship of the true King.

Right now we are like the Queen of Sheba before she came to Jerusalem. She had only heard of the glories and greatness of King Solomon. But she believed the reports by faith! And when she met King Solomon face to face, and saw that all the reports that she had accepted by faith were true, including the reports about his kind treatment of his happy servants, she was filled with praise. Now we believe by faith the reports of our Lord as written in His Word, and in a coming day we will see Him face to face - and acknowledge that all the amazing reports in the Scripture are true!

The Lord is truly a great and glorious and gracious King and we will be filled with wonder and worship for the King forever. The Queen of Sheba is typical of the church in her wonder and worship.

2. King Solomon is *typical* of Christ in his wealth and wisdom.

2 Chronicles 9:13-31 - *“The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, ¹⁴ besides what the traveling merchants and traders brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon. ¹⁵ And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of hammered gold went into each shield. ¹⁶ He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.*

¹⁷ Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁸ The throne had six steps, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne; there were armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. ¹⁹ Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. ²⁰ All King Solomon’s drinking vessels were gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. Not one was silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. ²¹ For the king’s ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.

²² So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²³ And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. ²⁴ Each man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.

²⁵ Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.

²⁶ So he reigned over all the kings from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. ²⁷ The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland. ²⁸ And they brought horses to Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

²⁹ Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? ³⁰ Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ³¹ Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.”

We’ve mentioned that both David and Solomon are *types* of Christ. Remember, a *type* is an Old Testament picture of a New Testament truth. *The type* can be a person, place, event, or other item. So a *type* is a “spiritual illustration.”

David is a *type* of Christ, especially in the time when he was rejected, before he was acknowledged as king. As David was the rightful king, but he was not recognized as king until God brought him to the throne. In the same way, Jesus Christ is the rightful king now - but He is not recognized by the world as king. The majority of people today reject Jesus as Savior and Lord. But the day is coming when He will return to earth in glory. He will be enthroned as the rightful King over the entire world, and **every knee will bow** to Him!

In 2 Chronicles 9, Solomon is a *type* of Christ. King Solomon is *typical* of Christ as King in all his glory. See how this *type* emerges from the verses that we just read, as Solomon's wealth and wisdom are extolled. Look at verses 22-23, for example. *"So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart."* So it will be in the coming day when our Lord is exalted as King over all the earth!

Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah about this glorious kingdom:

"For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people;

For the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious" (Isaiah 11:9-10).

Do you see how all of these coming realities are pictured in the glorious kingdom of Solomon?

King Solomon is a *type* of Christ in his wealth and wisdom.

Practical Application

Bring your difficult questions to the Lord!

The Queen of Sheba asked King Solomon her difficult questions, and King Solomon answered all her questions: *"Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions... and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her."* (v1-2).

In view of the spiritual pictures that we've seen in this chapter, of the Queen of Sheba as the *type* of the church and King Solomon as the *type* of Christ, we certainly can draw this practical application from this chapter. **Bring your difficult questions to the Lord!**

Do you have any difficult questions? About life? About the Bible? About the future? Bring them to the Lord!

The Lord may not answer you overnight, and He may answer you in various ways, but He will not leave you groping in the dark! And you can be sure that **His answer will always be in line with His Word.** The answer may not satisfy all the skeptics but it will satisfy you! It will keep you from doubting, and it will allow you to move on in your Christian growth and fellowship with the Lord.

As the Queen of Sheba brought her difficult questions to King Solomon, let's bring our difficult questions to the Lord.

Bring your difficult questions to the Lord!