

I Kings Lesson 10

I Kings Chapter 10

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

E-mail: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Memory verses for this week: *Act 13:25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.*

Introduction: In our last study, we studied about God's second appearance unto Solomon. He again had heard Solomon's prayers and supplications, and promised to be with both him and the Nation of Israel if they would obey his commandments and his statutes. We talked about the vast buildings that Solomon built and how he even created a large navy of ships at the end of Chapter 9. This week we begin with the visit of the queen of Sheba to Solomon.

Sheba was a kingdom in Arabia. Sheba, in fact, was Saba in Southern Arabia. These were the Sabaeans of classical geography, who carried on the trade in spices with the other peoples of the ancient world. They were Semites, speaking one of the two main dialects of Himyaritic or South Arabic. Sheba had become a monarchy before the days of Solomon. Its queen brought him gold, spices, and precious stones. She is called by Matthew as the "queen of the south"

Matt. 12:42, The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

I. A QUEEN SEARCHING FOR WISDOM

1Ki 10:1 And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions.

1Ki 10:2 And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

1Ki 10:3 And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not.

The Queen of Sheba came because she had heard of Solomon and his Lord. Fiction writers and movies have distorted this beautiful story, by injecting the idea that Solomon and the queen of Sheba carried on a romance and that even a child was born to them. This is wicked and vile fiction, and there is not one word of evidence in the bible that this is so.

She came with hard questions. No doubt she was an intelligent woman with many questions she wanted answered. Verse 2 says that the Queen of Sheba

came with great wealth and communed there for a time in the palace of King Solomon. She came with an open heart and an inquiring mind. Her mind was not closed to new knowledge, so she came to the right place. We as Christians need to always have a tender heart that can be touched by the Holy Spirit.

As Brother Atkinson pointed out in our services last week, we never in a lifetime arrive with all knowledge of the Word of God. We have to study and grow continually. When we will be open to direction, God promises to bless us like a tree beside the running waters.

Psa 1:3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

You can picture a tree like that with limbs that can bend with the wind and survive the hardest of storms. But if we become cold and hard and brittle, the trials may break us down. We need to be ready to hear what "thus saith the Word of the Lord"

1Ki 10:4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built,

1Ki 10:5 And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.

1Ki 10:6 And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom.

1Ki 10:7 Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.

Solomon made a huge impression on the queen. She saw what great wisdom he possessed, and the beauty of his house, and how he took care of his servants. She testified of his wisdom, of his household, and of his worship as they went up to the house of God. It so moved her that it says in verse 5 that there was no more spirit in her. All of her previous doubts were eliminated and she now proclaimed that "The half was not told". His wisdom and prosperity exceeded even the fame which she had heard.

1Ki 10:8 Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom.

1Ki 10:9 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.

The queen praised King Solomon for all he had done. He had a kingdom of happy men and servants that stood before him to hear his wisdom. Solomon was praised for the wisdom he gave to his servants and she acknowledged that it was God who was the source of all these blessings. If you received a blessing in this past week, remember from where it came. ALL good things come down from the

Father of Lights. If you have a notion that you were the one that provided for your family, remember who it was that gave you your abilities to go out and make a living.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

1Ki 10:10 And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

1Ki 10:11 And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones.

The queen did much more than say nice things. It says in verse 10 that she gave gold well over 3 million dollars in value. The almug trees mentioned in verse 11 were of great value.

Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary defines the Almug tree as:

Almug tree —“a tree providing a sweet-scented timber which is black outside and ruby-red inside. It is a native of India and takes a high polish. It is known as red sandalwood. The wood is strong and so antiseptic that it is insecticidal. King Solomon’s builders undoubtedly deliberately selected the wood of the almug tree for the pillars of the temple because of its specific qualities of strength, beauty, and long life.”

1Ki 10:12 And the king made of the almug trees pillars for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day.

1Ki 10:13 And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

Solomon uses the almug trees to make pillars for the House of the Lord and made harps from them also. Solomon was kind to the queen of Sheba and gave her whatsoever she asked. Note that Solomon is a type of Christ in the Kingdom age. Then the world will pay to Him the homage and honor that He deserves.

Psa 72:7 In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

Psa 72:8 He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

Psa 72:9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

Psa 72:10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

Psa 72:11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.

Psa 72:12 For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.

Psa 72:13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

Psa 72:14 He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

Psa 72:15 And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.

Psa 72:16 There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

Psa 72:17 His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.

Psa 72:18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.

Zechariah 14:8-9, And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

Isaiah 9:6-7, For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

II. THE FLOOD TIDE OF PROSPERITY & BLESSING FROM GOD

1Ki 10:14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold,

1Ki 10:15 Beside that he had of the merchantmen, and of the traffick of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country.

1Ki 10:16 And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of gold went to one target.

1Ki 10:17 And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

Solomon was greatly blessed in an abundance of wealth. The amount of the gold alone is staggering. Over six hundred threescore and six talents of gold. Note that this number is 666, the number of man. These riches had a negative effect on King Solomon.

Ecclesiastes 5:19 Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

The spice trade came from the east, right through the Solomon's kingdom, and

there was tremendous profit in trading spices and the taxes that came from the trade. Shields of gold were made for pomp and ceremony.

1Ki 10:18 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold.

1Ki 10:19 The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays.

1Ki 10:20 And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom.

King Solomon build a great throne of ivory. There was great external grandeur in this throne. Verse 18 says that this ivory throne was overlaid with pure gold. It is difficult to imagine the expense of a throne being made from ivory. Beside the steps were images of lions. The lions were a symbol of authority and power. The English have used images of lions in their governmental affairs. Their use here also looks to the future.

Revelation 5:5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

1Ki 10:21 And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

1Ki 10:22 For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

1Ki 10:23 So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.

Solomon's kingdom was expanded and he obtained many expensive luxuries. Luxurious drinking vessels made from pure gold. He was a partner with Hiram in a great trading venture that opened their ships up to the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, and all the coast of Africa. This is perhaps where the great amounts of ivory were obtained. Solomon was seen as the greatest in wisdom as a ruler. He exceeded all the kings in wealth and wisdom it says in verse 23.

1Ki 10:24 And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

1Ki 10:25 And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

All the earth came to seek King Solomon's wisdom. Of course we can be glad that we have access to a even greater wisdom.

1 Corinthians 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto

us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

According to the custom, they would be obligated to bring great gifts when they came to visit. We as Christians also have opportunity to seek wisdom.

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

1Ki 10:26 And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem.

1Ki 10:27 And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance.

We saw all the greatness of King Solomon, but verse 26 marks the beginning of Israel's national decline. By setting up all these horses, Solomon showed disobedience to God. We must never let power or riches turn us from the Lord. You've heard the saying "Power corrupts". It certainly seems that "Absolute Power" will "absolutely corrupt" unless we keep our focus and heart on the things of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 17:15-20 Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel."

1Ki 10:28 And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.

1Ki 10:29 And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites,

and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.

Solomon disobeyed by multiplying horses and also disobeyed by taking many wives.

Deu 17:16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

Deu 17:17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

Deu 17:18 And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:

Deu 17:19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:

He might have had a copy of the law, but he did not follow it. If we as Christians have a bible and never read it, what profit is there in owning it. I had an old preacher once say that almost any Christian can weather a storm and come out on the top on the other side as he will look to God for strength. But prosperity is blinding, and many rich men lose sight of their needs due to great blessings. Let's never lose focus on the Lord if we are poor or greatly blessed.

There are great dangers when we have great prosperity.

Psalm 62:11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.

Psalm 52:9 I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it: and I will wait on thy name; for it is good before thy saints.

1 Timothy 6:6-11 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

No matter what may come into our lives, we need to always put God first and then treat our fellow man as we would want to be treated. When we will do these two simple things, riches will not cause us to fall away from the Lord.

* Additional Comments added by E.L. Bynum in Nov. 2013.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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E-mail: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.