

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF SOLOMON: THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

SESSION #16: 1 Kings 10:1-13 & 2 Chronicles 9:1-12

TEXT:

1 Kings 10:1-13

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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 has made you king, 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.

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

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 retinue to her own country

2 Chronicles 9:1-12

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.

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."

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 algumwood and precious stones.

v.11 The king used the algumwood 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 retinue to her own country.

INTRODUCTION:

(Poetry: Complete Works to 1993 by Skinny Rowland)

THE RABBIT HUNT BY SKINNY ROWLAND

I had my heart all set, on rabbit meat one night,
 so I took my rifle off the wall, and put my hat on tight.
 I headed for the willows, where I knew they hung around,
 and sneaked along real quiet like, I didn't make a sound.
 Sudden like I heard a noise, I whirled and cocked my gun,
 I guess that's when he seen me, for he took off on the run.
 A great big fat old snowshoe, with fur as white as snow,
 I stood and stared dumbfounded, as I watched that bugger go.
 Coming to my senses, I took off in pursuit,
 I held my gun at ready, in case I had to shoot.
 I saw him down the trail away, it was him without a doubt,
 He had hit a straight stretch, and was really moving out.
 He left a great big cloud of dust, and that's as fast as you can get,
 especially on a snowy trail, when the ground is soaking wet.
 I went on down the trail, till I found his tracks again,
 and there he was just loping, once more the chase began.
 I barely could believe it, but between each mighty bound,
 it must have been 3 minutes, before his feet would hit the ground.
 And then his speed it doubled, if that could really be,
 and he headed like a rocket, right straight at a tree.
 I thought for sure I had him, he veered not back nor forth,
 but he hit that tree at breakneck speed, and rickashayed off north.
 So I decided to give up, and to admit to my defeat,
 my gut was not a match at all, for those speedy snowshoe feet.
 So I turned around towards home, not one shot was fired,
 I must have ran a full ten miles, I know I sure was tired.
 The trails end was getting near, I'll admit that I was glad,
 but then I saw a sight, that would drive a sane man mad.
 I doubt one could believe it, the sight that I just saw,
 there sat that doggone rabbit, he beckoned with his paw.
 Then he started off again, at his usual gait,
 but when I didn't follow, he sat down there to wait.
 Well that old cuss had beat me, I had lost the fight,
 so instead of the rabbit stew, it's beans again tonight.

p. 34

(1001 Humorous Illustrations for Public Speaking by Michael Hodgin)

Pastor Dad

The minister's little daughter was sent to bed with a stomachache and missed her usual romp with her daddy. A few minutes later she appeared at the top of the stairs and called to her mother, "Mama, let me talk with Daddy."

"No, my dear, not tonight. Get back to bed."

"Please, Mama."

"I said, no. That's final."

"Mother, I'm a very sick woman and I must see my pastor at once."

p. 251

Since we are going to be WITNESSES of a lot of wealth and grandeur, I thought you would appreciate this little piece that was given to me this summer:

An answer to the eternal question "Is it better to be a jock or a nerd?"

Michael Jordan will make over \$300,000 a game: \$10,000 a minute, assuming he averages about 30 minutes per game.

Assuming \$40 million in endorsements next year, he'll be making \$178,100 a day (working or not)!

Assuming he sleeps 7 hours a night, he makes \$52,000 every night while visions of sugarplums dance in his head.

If he goes to see a movie, it'll cost him \$7.00, but he'll make \$18,550 while he's there.

If he decides to have a 5 minute egg, he'll make \$618 while boiling it.

He makes \$7,415/hr more than minimum wage (after the wage hike).

He'll make \$3,710 while watching each episode of Friends.

If he wanted to save up for a new Acura NSX (\$90,000) it would take him a whole 12 hours.

If someone were to hand him his salary and endorsement money, they would have to do it at the rate of \$2.00 every second.

He'll probably pay around \$200 for a nice round of golf, but will be 'reimbursed' \$33,390 for that round.

Assuming he puts the federal maximum of 15% of his income into his tax deferred account (401k), he will hit the federal cap of \$9500 for such accounts at 8:30 a.m. on January 1st, 1997.

If you were given a tenth of a penny for every dollar he made, you'd be living comfortably at \$65,000 a year.

He'll make about \$19.60 while watching the 100 meter dash in the Olympics. He'll make about \$15,600 while the Boston Marathon is being run.

While the common person is spending about \$20 for a meal in his trendy Chicago restaurant, he'll pull in about \$5600.

Next year, he'll make more than twice as much as all of our past presidents for all of their terms combined.

Amazing isn't it? But:

Jordan will have to save 100% of his income for 270 years to have a net worth equivalent to that of Bill Gates.

Nerds win.

(Stories for the Heart by Alice Gray)

The Greatness of America
Alexander de Tocqueville

Early in the nineteenth Century the French statesman, Alexander De Tocqueville, made a study of democracy in our country and wrote as follows . . .

“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there.

“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her fertile fields and boundless forests, and it was not there.

“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there.

“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her public school system and her institutions of learning, and it was not there.

“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her democratic congress and her matchless constitution, and it was not there.

“Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power.

“America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”
p. 118

(Thoughts on Leadership: Thoughts and Reflections From History's Great Thinkers by Forbes Leadership Library)

A character standard is far more important
than even a gold standard.

The success of all economic systems
is still dependent upon both righteous leaders
and righteous people.

In the last analysis, our national future
depends upon our national character—
that is, whether it is spiritually
or materially minded.

ROGER BABSON

p. 30

(The Seeking Heart: Volume 4: The Library of Spiritual Classics by Fenelon)

I also warn you not to let your business distract you from your spiritual life. If you allow yourself to be constantly distracted, your heart will grow hard.
p. 18

We have arrived in our BIOGRAPHY OF KING SOLOMON to the PENTACLE of his fame. We are going to look in on a foreign dignitary visiting Solomon in Jerusalem.

The KEY CHARACTERS in our study will be:

"THE QUEEN OF SHEBA" and

"KING SOLOMON."

McNeely says:

Wealth and rapid growth were not the only significant happenings in the Solomonic kingdom. Solomon's wisdom also captured notice. Apparently his wisdom was considered to be divinely ordained, and as such attracted the queen of Sheba.

p. 55

Alexander Whyte says:

I SHALL take up somewhat high ground with you concerning the Queen of Sheba. For, so far as I have seen, that wonderful woman has never had adequate justice done to her. As I see her, the Queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem on the very highest of errands. She was moved to undertake her journey by the very strongest and the very loftiest of motives. And she saw and heard and took home in her heart far more than her very highest expectations.

p. 292

We will be looking at the TWO PARALLEL PASSAGES that report this event. There are very little differences between the two but for the sake of completeness, we will address these issues from both passages.

We will begin our study in 1 Kings 10 and then move on to 2 Chronicles 9.

1 Kings 10:1

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 in this study is like having some prestigious foreign dignitary come to Washington D.C. to take council with the president.

(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

Personally I don't think you can make
a lawyer honest by an act of legislature.
You've got to work on his conscience.
And his lack of conscience is what
makes him a lawyer.

WILL ROGERS

All the feminists are going to really love this particular episode in the life of King Solomon because we have a woman who has achieved greatness.

A friend of mine this past summer made a passing comment that got my attention:

"Any woman who is trying to achieve equality with man is an underachiever."

(The Complete Book of Practical Proverbs & Wacky Wit by Vern McLellan)

When you think of having a woman for president, that's no problem. What's worrisome is the thought of having a man for first lady!
p. 114

(Something to Smile About by Zig Ziglar)

Nothing confuses a man more than to drive behind a woman who does everything right.
p. 116

God made man. Then He stepped back, looked him over, and said, "I can do better than that," and He made woman.

(Mary Crowley)

p. 64

The queen has made a TREMENDOUS COMMITMENT to this project for she has traveled about 1,200 miles to reach Jerusalem. That is about the distance between Tyler and Estes Park, Colorado.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Sheba is modern Yemen (not Ethiopia), in Arabia, about 1,200 miles from Jerusalem. Sheba may be the land of the Sabeans . . . Solomon's expeditions to the east by sea . . . would have brought him news of this prosperous and important Arabian kingdom. The queen's primary purpose in visiting **Solomon** seems to have been to see if he was really as wise and wealthy as she had heard . . .
p. 507

McNeely says:

Sheba is to be identified with modern Yemen. Solomon's mercantile navy, operating along the Arabian coast, would have had contact with this the most prosperous and important of the Arabian kingdoms.

p. 55

Gaebelein says:

Sheba was known to such ancient writers as Strabo and Pliny. It was the center of a vast commercial empire in the southwestern part of the Arabian peninsula. The ruins which are still to be seen testify of a great civilization.

p. 269

DeVries observes:

Coming from the heart of Africa (or possibly Arabia), she represents riches and glory. Characteristically, she comes to Jerusalem with a large armed guard. She and Solomon engage in a test of his wisdom. The queen is amazed, but extends her amazement through inspecting the minute details of how he runs his household and public affairs.

p. 139

Keil & Delitzsch point out:

When the fame of Solomon's great wisdom came to the ears of the queen of Saba, probably through the Ophir voyages, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem, to convince herself of the truth of the report which had reached her, by putting it to the test by means of enigmas.

p. 158

Lockyer, speaking of "THE QUEEN," says:

Sheba, meaning *repose*, a province between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean and famous for its spices, gems and gold (Psalm 72:10; Isaiah 60:6), was named after Sheba, grandson of Cush, who settled in Ethiopia (Genesis 10:7). Thus the Queen of Sheba was of the Semitic race and not wholly alien from the stock of Abraham. Queens were not unusual in her region (Acts 8:27). Legend has it that she was a ruler of the great kingdom of South Arabia and that she was renowned for her beauty, wealth and magnificence.

p. 211

Matthew Henry says:

An account of the visit which the queen of Sheba made to Solomon, no doubt when he was in the height of his piety and prosperity. Our Saviour calls her *the queen of the south*, for Sheba lay south of Canaan.

p. 376

Patrick & Lowth say:

Now she came to hear of Solomon's fame by the ships that went to Ophir: for they sailed by her coast, and in all likelihood spread his fame there, as they did in all other places where they touched, proclaiming his magnificence, and especially his wisdom, and his glorious temple which he had built for the worship of his God: whose praise they set forth as far above all gods.

p. 329

Haldeman says:

She had heard reports concerning Solomon. She wished to know for herself about him. It was not mere sentiment, but genuine desire. She was willing to pay for her desire in the trouble it took to gratify it. She was determined to know the truth.

p. 379

Wiersbe says:

Our fame and God's name must go together (v. 1). If God magnifies your name (Josh. 3:7; 6:27), be sure He gets the glory (Ps. 135:13). Fame is a heavy burden to bear, and only God can help us do it wisely.

The queen traveled twelve hundred miles to see and hear Solomon. Her reasons were both personal and political, for she wanted to enter into trade agreements with the king. The people of Jesus' day rejected a "greater than Solomon" who was there among them (Matt. 12:42), and they were judged for it.

p. 202

"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 Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Such testing was a sport among ancient Near Eastern monarchs. Probably **the queen** was interested in discussing trade and perhaps defense arrangements as well.

p. 507

Matthew 12:41, 42

"The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South shall rise up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

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.

A CONTENTED CHRISTIAN

Leaning on his fence one day, a devout Quaker was watching a new neighbor move in next door. After all kinds of modern appliances, electronic gadgets, plush furniture, and costly wall hangings had been carried in, the onlooker called over, "If you find you're lacking anything, neighbor, let me know, and I'll show you how to live without it." That Quaker and the apostle Paul apparently had one thing in common—they had learned the secret of contentment.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

Alexander Whyte, commenting on the phrase "ALL THAT SHE HAD ON HER MIND," says:

'All that was in her heart.' I suppose the sacred writer means all matters, or, at least, very many matters connected with the throne and the state of Sheba. Affairs of state, as we would say: her anxieties about her treaties of war and peace; her seat of judgment and justice over her own people; royal-family matters also, no doubt; and matters, maybe, still nearer her heart.
p. 294

Lockyer says:

She undertook a long journey, for those times, and at fabulous cost, to sit before Solomon and learn of his wisdom. She felt that no effort was too great or price too high for an introduction to the king's superb wisdom.
p. 212

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown and say:

A long train of those beasts of burden forms the common way of travelling in Arabia; and the presents specified consist of the native produce of that country. Of course, a royal equipage would be larger and more imposing than an ordinary caravan.
p. 257

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

Proverbs 19:8

He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers.

Proverbs 16:23

A wise man's heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction.

The old cowboy spoke words of wisdom when he said:

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On! II by Texas Bix Bender)

Entering the Publishers' Clearinghouse Sweepstakes every year is not considered a well-thought-out retirement plan.
p. 92

The old cowboy was right when he said:

(Savvy Sayin's: Lean & Meaty One-Liners by Ken Alstad)

After some folks tell you all they know, they keep on talkin'.
p. 156

(The Living Body: The Church Christ Is Building by Dr. Richard Halverson)

Almost every time I have spoken at a preachers' retreat, seminar, or conference and mentioned this way of ministering to which God has led me, many say to me, "But Dick, I just don't have the time." To me, this is a commentary on where we put our priorities in the pastorate these days. No time for people, no time for their needs, no time for their hurts, no time for their tragedies.

A ministry that has no time for people is the very antithesis of Jesus' ministry, the antithesis of his way of love, the antithesis of his way of discipling. And yet so many contemporary pastors are preoccupied with the business of inventing, promoting, administering, and perpetuating programs, organizations, and property.

p. 68

McNeely says:

We are probably correct to conclude that the queen made the fourteen-hundred-mile journey to Solomon's capital to do more than "test him with difficult questions" (v. 1). Trade agreements and some kind of political alliance were probably a part of the agenda for her visit. But the test of difficult questions was important. If Solomon were divinely gifted with wisdom, he would be able to solve all kinds of perplexing problems. That Solomon's answers were more than satisfactory is evidenced in verse 3: he "answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her" (v. 3).

p. 55

Spurgeon says:

She put difficult questions to him in order that she might be instructed by his wisdom; and if you want to ascertain what the wisdom of Christ is, the way to know it is to come and sit at His feet, and learn of Him. I know of no other method; it is a very sure one, and it will be a very profitable and blessed one if you adopt it. He has Himself said, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

p. 768

Spurgeon says further:

Very likely she brought before him the difficulties connected with her government, various schemes relating to trade, the modes of war, or the arts of peace; possibly she talked to him concerning the beasts of the field, and the fish of the sea, and the fowls of the air; but I am persuaded that she also talked about higher things,—the things of God; and I am led to that conclusion by the expression in the first verse of my text, “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.”

p. 769

I take it from the Matthew 12 passage when Jesus speaks of the queen of Sheba that she did not only gain wisdom for the administration of her kingdom, but that she gained wisdom and insight into one's relationship with God.

Jesus uses TWO ILLUSTRATIONS in Matthew 12:

1. JONAH and the repentance of the Ninevites, and
2. THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

I would take it that if repentance was involved in one, at least a right response toward God would be involved in the second illustration.

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. Again the illustration is a belief among the Gentiles which would emphasize the point he was making to the Pharisees.

p. ???

Harry Ironside in his commentary on Matthew says:

He brought forth also another witness from the Old Testament, the queen of Sheba, whom he calls the queen of the south. She came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon because she had learned that he could reveal to her precious things concerning the name of the Lord, which are so long to understand. She did not consider a journey of perhaps a 1,000 miles too great in order to hear the wisdom of Solomon so that deniers of the truth were unmoved, though Solomon's Lord Himself was in their midst. 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.
p. ???

I see a PARALLEL between the visit of the queen of Sheba to Jerusalem and to the coming of the three wise men to Jerusalem at the birth of Christ in:

Matthew 2:1-11

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him." And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them where the Christ was to be born. And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet, 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; For out of you shall come forth a Ruler, Who will shepherd My people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called the magi, and ascertained from them the time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and make careful search for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, that I too may come and worship Him." And having heard the king, they went their way; and lo, the star, which they had seen in the East, went on before them, until it came and stood over where the Child was. And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly, with great joy. And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

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 caused the "QUEEN OF SHEBA" to be "OVERWHELMED" when she saw them:

1. "THE PALACE HE HAD BUILT,"
2. "THE FOOD ON HIS TABLE,"
3. "THE SEATING OF HIS OFFICIALS,"
4. "THE ATTENDING SERVANTS IN THEIR ROBES,"
5. "HIS CUPBEARERS," and
6. "THE BURNT OFFERINGS HE MADE AT THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD."

Keil & Delitzsch say:

She saw *, *i.e.* Solomon's palace, not the temple, and "the food of his table," *i.e.* both the great variety of food that was placed upon the king's table (ch. v. 2, 3), and also the costly furniture of the table (ver. 21), and "the seat of his retainers and the standing of his servants," *i.e.* the places in the palace assigned to the ministers and servants of the king, which were contrived with wisdom and arranged in a splendid manner.
p. 159

Seeing all of these wonderful things our text CONCLUDES in verse 5 by saying:

"SHE WAS OVERWHELMED."

Keil & Delitzsch translates this:

. . . "and there was no more spirit in her:" she was beside herself with amazement, . . .
p. 159

Patrick & Lowth, commenting on this same phrase, says:

She was perfectly astonished. For as he discoursed of all sorts of natural things, so he was no less skilful in political government; and transcended in the knowledge of divine matters, as his book shows us; having all things likewise in such order both in his house and everywhere else, that it was amazing.
p. 330

Montgomery & Gehman, dealing with this same phrase, say:

And there was no more spirit in her: so EVV; but following the original physical meaning of the Heb. noun, she 'was left breathless' by her amazement.
p. 217

(God's Little Devotional Book by Honor Books, Inc.)

The difference
between ordinary
and extraordinary
is that little extra.

p. 294

I really believe that when we get to heaven and we see all that the Lord has prepared for us, we too are going to be "OVERWHELMED." We are going to be left totally breathless!

Paul speaks about that in:

1 Corinthians 2:9

but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."

Rebecca Manley Pippert in her new book A Heart Like His talks about King Saul and his pride and unwillingness to allow God to do a good work in his life. She says:

At the first meal where we observed Saul eating, Samuel had placed him at the honored end of the table in recognition that he would become king. The prophet said emphatically, "Eat, because it was set aside for you for this occasion. . . ." (1 Sam. 9:24) But the last meal Saul ate was prepared by a witch, who also gave him an emphatic order to eat. That first meal was given as a covenant with God, but Saul's last meal was a covenant with evil. The contrast could not be more stark.

p. 202

(From A Heart Like His: The Shaping of Character in the Choices of Life by Rebecca Manley Pippert)

The choice is really ours, isn't it? as to where we choose to dine. Personally when I received the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior, nearly sixty years ago now, I got a special invitation which I am really looking forward to!

Revelation 19:9

And he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

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

Beginning at verse 6 and going down through verse 9 we now have the RESPONSE of the "queen of Sheba" to these things she has HEARD AND SEEN.

She begins her RESPONSE with the words:

"THE REPORT I HEARD IN MY OWN COUNTRY ABOUT YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND YOUR WISDOM IS TRUE."

What a great word of encouragement this must have been to Solomon to hear this response from an outsider!

(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. You cannot afford to be around people who are not bolstering you. You have so much to do, and time is short. Negative energy from others translates into unconscious or conscious sabotage and results in lost opportunities.

There are a lot of people who can see the value of your vision. Target and recruit them. Their benevolence and greatness will give you the positive energy you need to soar.

I attract like-minded souls and mentors on the path to success. Because of the strength of my purpose, they positively support me and guide me on my journey.

p. 95

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.

Matthew Henry says:

How she expressed herself upon this occasion. 1. She owned her expectation far out-done, though it was highly raised by the report she heard, *v. 6, 7*. She is far from repenting her journey or calling herself a *fool* for undertaking it, but acknowledges it was well worth her while to come so far for the sight of that which she could not believe the report of. Those who, through grace, are brought to experience the delights of communion with God will say that the one-half was not told them of the pleasures of Wisdom's ways and the advantages of her gates. Glorified saints, much more, will say that it was a true report which they heard of the happiness of heaven, but that the thousandth part was not told them, 1 Cor. ii. 9.
p. 376

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

Wiersbe raises the question:

Do we take our blessings for granted? In spite of the queen's enthusiasm, perhaps even Solomon's servants got accustomed to hearing his wise words and beholding his great wealth (*v. 8*). Israel grew accustomed to the miracle of the manna (Num. 11), and the church at Ephesus grew accustomed to Christ's love (Rev. 2:1-7).
p. 202

Man will do many things to get himself loved; he will do all things to get himself envied.

Mark Twain

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

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 has made you king, to maintain justice and righteousness."

The queen of Sheba concludes her remarks by offering up:

"PRAISE [and tribute] . . . TO THE LORD."

We need to notice that she is offering this:

"PRAISE . . . TO THE LORD YOUR GOD."

The REASON for this "PRAISE" is TWO-FOLD:

1. "[He] HAS DELIGHTED IN YOU" and
2. "[He has] PLACED YOU ON THE THRONE OF ISRAEL."

She has tremendous insight in her FINAL STATEMENT:

"BECAUSE OF THE LORD'S ETERNAL LOVE FOR ISRAEL, HE HAS MADE YOU KING, TO MAINTAIN JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS."

What a far cry this statement is from those who are making comments about America!

(The Things that Matter Most by Cal Thomas)

Columnist Don Feder, in his A Jewish Conservative Looks at Pagan America, summarizes it well: "The gods of late twentieth-century America include the doctrines of radical autonomy, of absolute rights divorced from responsibilities, of gender sameness, of self-expression which acknowledges no higher purpose, or moral relativism and sexual indulgence. Their temples are courtrooms, legislative chambers, classrooms, news rooms, and the executive suites of entertainment conglomerates and publishing firms. We are one nation under God no more."

p. 212

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.

Now that her TRIBUTE is finished, she gives her gifts.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary indicates:

... **120 talents of gold** ... [would be about] 4 ½ tons) ...

p. 507

With all that weight you can get an idea of how large her entourage was and what an overwhelming sight it must have been as she came into Jerusalem.

The cowboy says:

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On! II by Texas Bix Bender)

We might not be so bad off if we had a little less of everything.

p. 13

Soft grub, feather beds, and easy livin' can lead to a sold saddle.

p. 73

THE PERIL OF RICHES

The peril of accumulating wealth was illustrated in a story related by Dr. R. R. Brown, the genial 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)

I think the old cowboy would agree with that because he said:

(Don't Whiz on a 'Lectric Fence: Grandpa's Country Wisdom by Roy English)

Don't whiz on a 'lectric fence.
p. 82

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

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.)

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says of these two verses:

These verses, which seem out of place here, may reflect a trade arrangement that resulted from the queen's visit. **Ophir** may have been close to or a part of the queen's kingdom of Sheba (cf. 9:28). **Almugwood** is strong, beautiful (black outside, ruby red inside), and long-lasting. Solomon used it in the **temple** steps . . . as well as for the other purposes mentioned here.
p. 507

Keil & Delitzsch say:

The allusion to these costly presents lead the historian to introduce the remark here, that the Ophir fleet also brought, in addition to gold, a large quantity of *Algummim* wood (see at ch. ix. 28) and precious stones. Of this wood Solomon had * or * made for the temple and palace. . . . a support, and * may be a later form for *, a flight of steps or a staircase, so that we should have to think of steps with bannisters.
p. 160

YOU CAN STILL FLY!

In his book *Hurryin' Big for Little Reasons*, Ronald Meredith spoke of a quiet spring night when the silence was broken by the sound of wild geese flying. "I ran to the house," Meredith comments, "and breathlessly announced the excitement I felt. What is to compare with wild geese across the moon? It might have ended there, except for the sight of our tame mallards on the pond. They heard the wild call they had once known. The honking out of the night sent little arrows of prompting deep into their wild yesterdays. Their wings fluttered a feeble response. The urge to fly—to take their place in the sky for which God had made them—was sounding in those feathered breasts, but they never raised from the water. The matter had been settled long ago. The corn of the barnyard was too tempting!"

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

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 retinue to her own country

Patrick & Lowth say:

By their mutual presents, which she made to him (ver. 10), and he at her departure made her, they testified their friendship to each other; desiring by these to be remembered. And Solomon desired to know what would be most acceptable to her, among all the rarities she had seen, which he bestowed upon her; besides, he generously added more things of value, which it is likely she had not in her own country.
p. 331

McNeely says:

The king presented gifts to the queen as well. The exchange of gifts, part of normal diplomatic protocol, is alluded to in the expression, "what he gave her according to his royal bounty" (v. 13). But Solomon did more: he gave her "all her desire" (v. 13). His response to this foreign queen pictures well the grace of God in His dealings with men. He not only supplies what is necessary, but "much more" (cf. Rom 5:15, 17, 20).
p. 56

Ephesians 3:20

Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say:

Solomon not only gave his illustrious guest all the insight and information she wanted; but, according to the Oriental fashion, he gave her ample remuneration for the presents she had brought.
p. 257

Baxter says:

The visit of the Queen of Sheba (x. 1-13) has an interest all its own; and Solomon's generosity to her becomes a beautiful illustration of the *heavenly* King's bounty to ourselves. In chapter x. 13 we read: "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." The wondering-eyed Queen was fairly overcome by all the much-to-be-coveted treasures which she saw. With womanly appreciation, she simply could not resist asking for this and that and the other thing, until eventually she found herself in the quandary of seeing much more than she desired, without being able to commit the rudeness of asking still further! Solomon, however, read her heart, and gave her not only all that she *asked*, but all that she *thought*; and then even to that, he added his "royal bounty."
pp. 100-101

Baxter says further:

God grant us faith to ask for big things, and to have large desires toward Him!—for giving does not impoverish Him, and withholding does not enrich Him.
p. 101

Baxter says finally:

It is interesting to note that in the verse above-quoted, where Solomon is said to have given the Queen of Sheba "of his royal bounty," the Hebrew reads, literally, "*according to the hand of King Solomon*." Think what that "according to" meant. Solomon was the richest king in all the earth, and his giving was such as *corresponded* with that! What lavish bounty, then, is in that "according to"! It reminds us of Philippians iv. 19—"My God shall supply all your need *according* to HIS riches in glory by Christ Jesus." May the Holy Spirit teach us the meaning of that "according to," and enrich our lives with that royal bounty which comes from Him who said, "A greater than Solomon is here."
p. 101

Lockyer says:

Our Lord paid the queen a tribute of admiration when, in dealing with the deserved judgment upon His generation, He called her "the queen of the south" (Matthew 12:42). Dr. James Denny says, "The praise of Jesus is the highest certificate that can be bestowed on any one, and wherever we find it we may be sure there is something peculiarly worthy of admiration." pp. 212-13

MISPLACED TREASURE

A man bought a luxurious house and filled it with expensive and spectacular furnishings. After taking a friend on a tour through its many spacious rooms, the owner of the mansion asked proudly, "Well, what do you think of it?" He expected to hear lavish praise, so he was stunned when his guest responded, "It is gorgeous; but to be perfectly frank, things like this make it hard to die."

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(Rainbows: The Book of Hope edited by George W. Humphreys)

Love ever gives—
 Forgives—outlives—
 And ever stands
 With open hands.
 And while it lives,
 It gives.
 For this is Love's prerogative—
 To give—and give—and give—

John Oxenham.

p. 109

Let us turn our attention to the Chronicles passage to see what further insights we can gain for ourselves from the text:

2 Chronicles 9:1-12

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.

Patrick & Lowth say:

I shall only add, that the hard questions she came to ask, were not the curious inquiries into the secrets of natural things, or new political matters, but about things pertaining to piety, and the service of God. For our Saviour saith, she came to hear the *wisdom of Solomon*, and should therefore rise up in judgment against that generation, who would not learn of him; and in 1 Kings x. 1, it is said, the fame she heard of Solomon was *concerning the name of the Lord*: which moved her to this journey.
pp. 550-51

My wife Jeanne and I once dined with a rich man from a blueblood Boston family, and I asked him, "How in the world did you grow up in the midst of such wealth and not be consumed by materialism?"

His answer: "My parents taught us that everything in our home was either an idol or a tool." So how do you view your possessions?

—Howard Hendricks

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

Gaebelein says:

The fame of Solomon had spread far and wide, and the Queen of Sheba comes to bring her tribute to admire and praise his wisdom and to give him presents of glorious things and of great value.

p. 429

Matthew Henry says:

Those who know the worth of true wisdom will grudge no pains nor cost to obtain it. The queen of Sheba put herself to a great deal of trouble and expense to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and yet, learning from him to serve God and do her duty, she thought herself well paid for her pains.

p. 457

Dillard observes:

Chap. 9 closely follows the parallel account in 1 Kgs 10:1-28, . . . apart from some minor modifications.

p. 70

Dillard says further:

The visit of the queen of Sheba is described as a wisdom encounter and emphasizes the admiration of a gentile ruler for the wealth and wisdom of Solomon. While a firsthand observation of Solomon's wisdom might have been worth the arduous and hazardous journey across 1,400 miles of desert from ancient Saba (roughly modern Yemen), commercial interests were probably the more basic motivation. The economy of ancient Saba was built on trade in frankincense and myrrh. Access to sea trade through Tyre . . . to the Mediterranean world required passage through Solomon's monopoly on the overland routes; negotiations with him concerning the trade in these aromatic resins would have been worthy of the queen's attention.

p. 71

Selman says:

The name and identity of *the queen* remain tantalizing unknown. Her kingdom of *Sheba* or Saba corresponds roughly to modern Yemen and was well known in ancient times for its wealth, based on trade in frankincense and myrrh (*cf.* Ezk. 27:22-23). It is most likely that the context of the visit was a trade mission, though whether this was an attempt to protect Saba's overland routes to counter competition from Solomon and Hiram's sea-trade or to pay traffic tariffs for the privilege of using the routes to the Mediterranean (*cf.* v. 14) remains uncertain.

p. 353

Selman says further:

After the queen's arrival (v. 1), the biblical story concentrates on what the queen saw and heard (vv. 2-4), what she said (vv. 5-8), and what she did (v. 9).

p. 354

Tell me a cowboy doesn't have his priorities straight. As you read of all his fame and see all of this wealth listen to our cowboy speak:

(Unedited Notes by G. T. Burton)

If, in time, I reach the height
of repute and world acclaim,
And do such things that all will know
the deeds that brought me fame.

I'll count these things of little note,
in the total of my life,
When I compare it to the day
I took you for my wife.

(Something to Smile About by Zig Ziglar)

Total effort, fully expended, in quest of a worthy ideal is the key to maximum performance.

p. 75

Paul Brand & Philip Yancey wrote a book called Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants. Paul and his wife spent years in research in the leprosy colonies trying to diagnosis the disease and prescribe remedies:

In one case that my wife, Margaret, treated, a woman named Alma hurt herself by using eyebrow liner. Characteristically, she had lost her eyebrows and eyelashes because of leprosy bacilli invasion. Each day she painted mascara on both areas with a brush, but because her hand and eye were insensitive she often missed the eyelid margin and stabbed the pigment into her eye. Margaret warned her strongly that she would soon damage her eye irreversibly. Alma ignored all these admonitions, and one day she explained why. "You don't understand," she said. "It's more important how the world sees me than how I see the world."

p. 170

(From Pain: The Gift Nobody Wants by Paul Brand and Philip Yancey)

Wiersbe says:

Wealth and wisdom are the central themes of this chapter; gold is mentioned sixteen times and wisdom six times. According to King Solomon, wisdom is better than wealth (Prov. 3:13-15; 8:10-11), although most people today would probably rather have money. They measure life by prices, not values.

If you want gold, silver, and jewels, you must dig for them. Very little treasure lies on the ground, convenient to pick up. If you want wisdom, you must "seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures" (Prov. 2:4). That means work! It means taking time to read, meditate, pray, and put truth into practice.

The only convenient materials you will find are wood, hay, and straw, but they will not last (1 Cor. 3:10-15). To sacrifice the permanent for the immediate is folly, not wisdom.

pp. 240-41

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

J. Vernon McGee says:

In other words, Solomon told her the secret of his kingdom. He told her that *God* had given him his wisdom. He told her that the temple was their approach to God because God had said it was there He would meet with His people.
p. 424

(In the Hands of God: Inspiration From Daily Life by William Barclay)

As the old proverb reminds us: "He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not is a fool—avoid him; he who knows not and knows that he knows not is a wise man—seek his company."
p. 131

(Collected Verse of Edgar A. Guest by Edgar A. Guest)

Wisdom

This is wisdom, maids and men:
Knowing what to say and when.

Speech is common; thought is rare;
Wise men choose their words with care.

Artists with the master touch
Never use one phrase too much.

Jesus, preaching on the Mount,
Made His every sentence count.

Lincoln's Gettysburg address
Needs not one word more nor less.

This is wisdom, maids and men:
Knowing what to say and when.
p. 902

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.

Besides the "WISDOM OF SOLOMON . . . SHE IS OVERWHELMED" with the SIX THINGS that we discussed earlier in the Kings passage:

1. "THE PALACE HE HAD BUILT,"
2. "THE FOOD ON HIS TABLE,"
3. "THE SEATING OF HIS OFFICIALS,"
4. "THE ATTENDING SERVANTS IN THEIR ROBES,"
5. "THE CUPBEARERS IN THEIR ROBES," and
6. "THE BURNT OFFERINGS HE MADE AT THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD."

These six things plus his "WISDOM" caused her to be "OVERWHELMED."

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

Verses 5-8 now give us the RECORD of her RESPONSE to the King of what she has seen.

Selman says:

What the queen saw took her breath away (v. 4; 'left her breathless', JB; *she was overwhelmed*, NIV), literally, 'there was no more breath/spirit in her'. Apart from 1 Kings 10:5, the phrase occurs only in Joshua 2:11; 5:1, and on each occasion it is used of non-Israelite amazement of what God has done.
p. 354

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.

J. Vernon McGee says:

This woman said, "When I heard about what God had done, I just didn't believe it." But she had faith enough so that when she heard about the greatness of Solomon, she made a long, arduous trip to see for herself. Believe me, it was a long, arduous trip in that day. She couldn't go out to the airport and take a plane which would bring her there in a couple of hours. It was probably a couple of months across a hot, burning desert. She came all the way in order that she might know something of the wisdom of this man and learn about his approach to God. That was the thing that left no spirit in her. She couldn't believe it until she had seen it.
p. 425

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."

There is an ADDITIONAL PHRASE here in the Chronicles passage that does not occur in the Kings passage which I think is most significant. Here in this passage she says:

"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."

She LEAVES OUT the phrase:

"TO RULE FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD."

I think if Solomon had remembered that it could have helped him negotiate some of the tough water that is ahead and to have made some right decisions at this critical juncture in his life.

It reminds me of:

Psalm 75:6, 7

For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west
nor from the south.
But God is the judge: he pulleth
down one, and setteth up another.

What a privilege it is to "RULE [AS KING] FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Like Hiram's words of **praise**, . . . hers too were probably a formal courtesy, not an indication of her conversion to Yahweh.
p. 627

Once again I think you have to give **SERIOUS CONSIDERATION** to the words of the Lord Jesus in the Matthew passage about how much the queen of Sheba understood about a relationship to God as a result of this visit with Solomon.

Patrick & Lowth say:

In these words she says a great deal more than is there related, ver. 9, for she here calls the throne of Israel the "throne of the Lord;" and acknowledges Solomon to be made "king for the Lord his God;" that is, not only to rule by his authority, and as his viceroy, but for his glory, and to promote his religion.
p. 551

(Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives by Richard A. Swenson, M.D.)

In his influential writings, Wilberforce makes several references to the importance of progress. Yet it is not progress in wealth, education, and power that he speaks of, but instead, progress in virtue. This, he suggests, could be measured by "the fear and love of God and of Christ; love, kindness, and meekness toward our fellow men; indifference to the possessions and events of this life compared with our concern about eternity; self-denial and humility."²³ It does not sound much like our current definition of progress, but it *does* sound hopeful.

23. William Wilberforce, *Real Christianity: Contrasted with the Prevailing Religious System* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1982 [first published 1829]), page 91.
p. 37

Dear Friend,

"Praise be to the Lord God, Who has delighted in you and placed you on His throne as king to rule . . ."
II Chronicles 9:8

Tick . . . tick . . . tick . . . tick.

When the queen of Sheba hit town she was overwhelmed with what she saw politically and personally. "WOW!" was the only word for Solomon's military leadership, spiritual leadership and economic leadership. "Enormous!" was the only word for his income, his personal worth and his influence.

Are not those the same characteristics we would want others to see in us? Someone who is success at work. Someone who is considered indispensable to the team. Someone whose efforts strengthen the company and position it for the future. And in our personal life, we want others to take note of our income, our net-worth and our influence.

Tick . . . tick . . . tick . . . tick.

But what was NOT SEEN by others was an attitude in Solomon's heart. "My wife must not live in the palace of David, king of Israel, because the places the ark of the Lord has entered are holy," (8:11). There was an inconsistency between the relationship with his wife and the whole issue of holiness.

In the midst of all the outstanding things Solomon had going for him, was one major area that stood "outside" his commitment to God. His relationship with women was not a part of "holiness." The result is tragically recorded for us in I Kings 11:4 "his wives led him astray."

Amazing! All we have to do is allow one area to be outside God's control, one area to be unyielded to Him and it will become over time a fatal flaw. An accident waiting to happen. A ticking time bomb! If in quiet moments you can hear the tick . . . tick . . . tick . . . tick in your soul, don't wait any longer! Defuse it by your obedience.

"Since we have these promises, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminated body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God." II Cor. 7:1

Navigatin' for Him,

Rick Foster

(From *The Challenge* by Rick Foster, February 15, 1997)

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 algumwood and precious stones.

v.11 The king used the algumwood 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.)

Dillard says:

The joint maritime venture of Solomon and Hiram is mentioned within the larger narrative of the queen's visit in Kings, and therefore also in Chronicles; it may have been prompted by the fact that their trade initiative was oriented to the same region from which the queen had come.

p. 72

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 retinue to her own country.

Patrick & Lowth say:

The last clause, concerning his presents (viz. "besides that which she had brought unto the king"), is expressed much otherwise in 1 Kings x. 13, where the words are, "besides that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty." Which is here explained to have been done to requite her for the great presents she had made the king.
p. 551

I am reminded of those words of the Lord Jesus when he tells the PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN in:

Luke 12:19, 20

'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.'" "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'

THE SIN OF DISCONTENT

A saintly man, who had few possessions but enjoyed the simple things of life, was conversing one day with a millionaire. Consumed with the passion for making money, the financier was always gathering wealth but had no time to help others or attend to the important matter of his soul. The happy Christian said to his friend, "You know, Bob, I'm richer than you are. I have as much money as I want, but you don't!" His wise observation was a true commentary on the bitter fruit of setting one's affection on this world's goods and always wanting more!

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

AVOID THE PERISHABLES!

Once in Persia reigned a king
 Who upon his signet ring
 Graved a maxim, strange and wise;
 Which when held before his eyes
 Gave him counsel at a glance,
 Fit for every change or chance—
 Solemn words, and these are they:
 "Even this will pass away."
 Trains of camels through the sands
 Brought him gems from other lands;
 Fleets of galleys o'er the seas
 Brought him pearls to rival these;
 But he counted little gain
 Treasures of the mine or main:
 "What is wealth?" the king would say,
 "Even this will pass away."
 'Mid the pleasures of his court,
 At the zenith of their sport,
 When the palms of all his guests
 Burned with clapping at his jests;
 Seated 'mid the figs and wine,
 Said the king: "Ah, friends of mine,
 Pleasure comes, but not to stay—
 Even this will pass away."
 Towering in a public square
 Forty cubits in the air
 Stood his statue carved in stone,
 And the king, disguised, unknown,
 Gazed upon his sculptured name,
 And he pondered, "What is fame?
 Fame is like a fleeting day—
 Even this will pass away."

—Anonymous

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

The passion of acquiring riches in order to support a vain expense corrupts the purest souls.

Fenelon

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(In the Hands of God: Inspiration From Daily Life by William Barclay)

With regard to life, *serenity*, with regard to people, *charity*, with regard to self, *humility*, with regard to death, *certainly*—these are the characteristics of the Christian life.

p. 101

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular experience in the life of King Solomon?

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.

(The Victorious Christian Life by Dr. Tony Evans)

Well, actually, we did deserve something: divine judgment. We were destitute, having no hope whatsoever. As sinners, our future was bright—not due to the glory of God, but to the fires of hell. God had the free choice of placing us in hell because of our sinfulness. Moreover, He could have even charged us rent for being there!

Before Christ, we lived in a graveyard called "trespasses and sins," corpses unable to do anything to satisfy the demands of a Holy God (Rom. 3:23). The coroner's report from God declares that all mankind exists in a spiritual mortuary, and while there may be varying degrees of decomposition—some are sick and dead, others poor and dead, some white and dead, others black and dead—all are equally dead, totally without the life of God within them.

A hundred years ago when a person died, he would be buried rather crudely. The deceased would be placed in a wooden coffin, broad at the top and narrow at the bottom. He would be transported to the closest cemetery in a horse-drawn carriage and lowered into the ground by a rope, which was wrapped around the top and bottom of the box.

However, today when you die, you die in style. You are placed in a rather expensive bronze casket, which is lined with linen. You get to rest your head on a satin pillow. You are dressed by professionals who manicure your nails, comb your hair, and fix your clothes (matter of fact, I've seen some people who looked better dead than they ever looked alive!). As you leave the church for the burial grounds, you ride in a limousine, a lifelong dream for some of us. In fact, a fleet of limousines lead by two men on motorcycles who stop traffic as you ride through red lights on your way to your final resting place. Finally, you are lowered into the ground by a smooth, nickel-plated machine.

The bottom line, however, is still the same: Dead is dead. And that's God's verdict on all of humanity outside of Christ. The unregenerate are walking zombies entombed by this world order, the control of the devil, and the desires of their own flesh. They deserve God's wrath, not His grace. Not a very pretty picture but a necessary one if grace is to ever make sense.
pp. 20-21

Happiness is not based on money and the greatest proof of that is our family!

—Christina Onassis

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

(Forever, Erma: Best-Loved Writing From America's Favorite Humorist by Erma Bombeck)

Betsy Bombeck, Erma's daughter

I have often been asked what it's like to have Erma Bombeck for a mother. I'd always tell people, "She is my mother—and we all know how mothers can be." Now the question is what it's like to live without her, although in many ways she surrounds me.

Many of my friends lived with her clippings on their refrigerators, and I'd joke that my refrigerator was the only Bombeck-free zone in America. But her pictures are in my home and office, pictures with that big smile and our family all around. You couldn't miss how she brightened up a room. I will miss her energy. That presence that drew you toward her, that emanated from her and out to everyone. It was in her eyes, her hands, her laugh, her touch. It was infectious.

Her presence was so much greater than the five-foot-two she stood. I loved to put my hand in her small hands, the hands that could make those typewriter keys fly. From my mom I learned to laugh at myself and give much to others. Live each day to its fullest, so that when you go to bed you know you've done it all.

She challenges me to carry on her spirit of dignity, grace, courage, humor, love for others and most especially for family and God. In that way she never really dies—she continues to live.
p. 268

Although I'm the proudest mother in all the universe, I don't love my daughter for being famous. I'm proud of her for being the most generous, warm and caring person I know. She used her God-given talents to help others. Erma is the kind of daughter every mother would be proud to have.

What was my proudest moment? The day God gave me this priceless and special person . . . Erma Louise
p. 270

(A Man to Match the Mountain: Overcoming the Obstacles of Life by David Roper)

*It is strange: but life's currents drift us
So surely and swiftly on
That we scarcely note the changes
And how many things are gone.*

—F. B. Meyer

p. 54

(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

(The Message: Proverbs by Eugene H. Peterson)

Proverb 20

God is in charge of human life,
watching and examining us inside and out.

Love and truth from a good leader;
sound leadership is founded on loving
integrity.

p. 69

(The Christian in Complete Armour by William Gurnall)

Are you cutting your short life into chips by wasting time on trivia when our salvation still has not been worked out? Are you pampering and decorating your body while your soul is slipping into hell? This is like painting your door when the house is on fire. It would be far more becoming for you to call upon God and lie in repentant tears for your sins at His feet than to wallow in your sensual pleasures and let your sleeping conscience temporarily ease the dread thought of your approaching punishment.
(December 2)

(The Message: Psalms by Eugene H. Peterson)

Psalm 73

I'm still in your presence,
but you've taken my hand.
You wisely and tenderly lead me,
and then you bless me.

You're all I want in heaven!
You're all I want on earth!

p. 104

Psalm 119

You're blessed when you stay on course,
walking steadily on the road revealed by Yahweh.
You're blessed when you follow his directions,
doing your best to find him.
That's right—you don't go off on your own;
you walk straight along the road he set.

p. 163

Psalm 119

Oh, that my steps might be steady,
keeping to the course you set;

p. 163

Psalm 119

The wicked do their best to throw me off track,
but I don't swerve an inch from your course.

p. 170

(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

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.

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