

# 1 Kings 10 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

**CLICK VERSE**

**To go directly to that verse  
1 Kings Commentaries**

1 Kings 10:1  
1 Kings 10:2  
1 Kings 10:3  
1 Kings 10:4  
1 Kings 10:5  
1 Kings 10:6  
1 Kings 10:7  
1 Kings 10:8  
1 Kings 10:9  
1 Kings 10:10  
1 Kings 10:11  
1 Kings 10:12  
1 Kings 10:13  
1 Kings 10:14  
1 Kings 10:15  
1 Kings 10:16  
1 Kings 10:17  
1 Kings 10:18  
1 Kings 10:19  
1 Kings 10:20  
1 Kings 10:21  
1 Kings 10:22  
1 Kings 10:23  
1 Kings 10:24  
1 Kings 10:25  
1 Kings 10:26  
1 Kings 10:27  
1 Kings 10:28  
1 Kings 10:29

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[1 Kings Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

## THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

[Click to Enlarge](#)

**1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with difficult questions.**

ESV 1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.

NET 1 Kings 10:1 When the queen of Sheba heard about Solomon, she came to challenge him with difficult

questions.

LXA 1 Kings 10:1 And the queen of Saba heard of the name of Solomon, and the name of the Lord, and she came to try him with riddles.

CSB 1 Kings 10:1 The queen of Sheba heard about Solomon's fame connected with the name of the LORD and came to test him with difficult questions.

LXE 1 Kings 10:1 And the queen of Saba heard of the name of Solomon, and the name of the Lord, and she came to try him with riddles.

KJV 1 Kings 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.

GWN 1 Kings 10:1 The queen of Sheba heard about Solomon's reputation. (He owed his reputation to the name of the LORD.) So she came to test him with riddles.

NAB 1 Kings 10:1 The queen of Sheba, having heard of Solomon's fame, came to test him with subtle questions.

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

NLT 1 Kings 10:1 When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, which brought honor to the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.

YLT 1 Kings 10:1 And the queen of Sheba is hearing of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of Jehovah, and cometh to try him with enigmas,

NAS 1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with difficult questions.

CJB 1 Kings 10:1 When the queen of Sh'va heard what was being said about Shlomo because of the name of ADONAI, she came to test him with difficult questions.

NJB 1 Kings 10:1 The queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame and came to test him with difficult questions.

NKJ 1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.

NRS 1 Kings 10:1 When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon (fame due to the name of the LORD), she came to test him with hard questions.

RSV 1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions.

- **And when:** 2Ch 9:1-12 Mt 12:42 Lu 11:31
- **Sheba:** Ge 10:7,28 25:3 Job 6:19 Ps 72:10,15 Isa 60:6 Jer 6:20 Eze 27:22,23 38:13
- **heard:** 1Ki 4:31,34
- **concerning:** Job 28:28 Pr 2:3-6 Joh 17:3 1Co 1:20,21
- **test him:** Jdg 14:12-14 Ps 49:4 Pr 1:5,6 Mt 13:11,35 Mk 4:34

#### Related Passages:

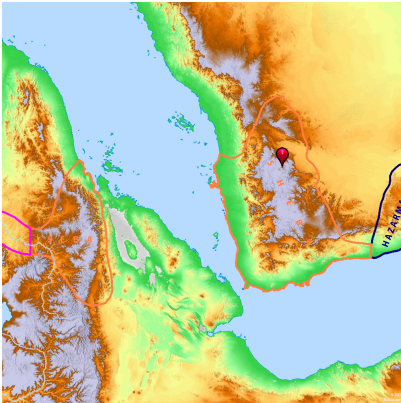
2 Chronicles 9:1+ Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with difficult questions. She had a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and a large amount of gold and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was on her heart.

Matthew 12:42+ "The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will 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.

Luke 11:31+ "The Queen of the South will rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Jeremiah 29:13 'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

Deuteronomy 28:1; 10+ "Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. (28:10) "So all the peoples of the earth will see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they will be afraid of you.



Possible Location of Kingdom of Sheba

**Paul House:** If any doubts about Solomon's greatness remain after chap. 9, surely 1 Kgs 10:1–29 removes them. So far the text has presented the monarch's exploits from an Israelite's point of view. In 10:1–13, however, an outsider's opinion is included. The queen of Sheba travels some 1,500 miles to examine his wisdom. Perhaps she also wanted to explore future trading ventures as well (cf. 1 Kgs 10:11–12), but her primary purpose was to verify Solomon's reputation for wisdom and devotion to Yahweh (v. 1). She is not disappointed. Solomon exceeds her expectations. The author follows up this story with more data intended to convince readers of Solomon's political, financial, and military splendor (1 Kgs 10:14–29). (See [1, 2 Kings - Page 160](#))

**Dale Ralph Davis:** All of chapter 10 can be divided into two major sections, verses 1–13, where the Queen of Sheba says, 'This is unreal!,' and verses 14–29, where the narrator exclaims, 'And get a load of this!' Does that sound like too much hype? Then let me simply point out that within each of these two primary divisions the writer places a testimony section: verses 6–9 contain the testimony of the Queen of Sheba and verses 23–25 the testimony of the narrator himself. These testimonies are important for communicating the writer's intended perspective. . .we can say that 1 Kings 10 speaks a word of testimony, namely, that the prosperity of the people of God is always a gift of Yahweh's goodness, which (I would think) demands of us both gratitude (lest we idolize the gifts in place of God) and joy (lest we despise God's gifts as though they were sinful). ([1 Kings: The Wisdom and the Folly](#))

**August Konkell:** But the greatness of Solomon's kingdom is not a tribute to Solomon and his military exploits. Unlike Assyrian annals, the memory of Solomon is not to immortalize a great king. The narrative will go on to make Solomon responsible for the failure of his kingdom. The greatness of Solomon is integrated with his building of the temple, particularly by the repeated reference to Hiram. Hiram was involved in providing materials, a skilled labor force, and a trade alliance that gives the empire international status. The temple is confirmation that God has fulfilled his promise to David in establishing his throne. The objective of the account is to show the kingdom established by God is not inferior to the greatest empires of its time. ([1 and 2 Kings - Page 203](#))

**Now when the queen of Sheba** - The identity of **Sheba** is not absolutely certain, and we do not even know her name, just her title. The primary candidates are Ethiopia in east Africa and "Saba" in south Arabia which is modern Yemen.

**MacArthur** feels that "Sheba was located in southwestern Arabia, about 1,200 mi. from Jerusalem. The primary motive for the queen's visit was to verify Solomon's reputation for wisdom and devotion to the Lord."

**Don Anderson:** The scene in this study is like having some prestigious foreign dignitary come to Washington D.C. to take council with the president. There are three things that characterize this woman: 1) She is beautiful according to historical records (THE SCRIPTURE HOWEVER IS SILENT). 2) She is very wealthy, and very successful. 3) She has a kingdom of similar magnificence although it is not as great as Solomon.

**Heard about the fame** ([shema](#); Lxx - [onoma](#) = name) **of Solomon concerning the name** ([shem](#); Lxx - [onoma](#) = name) **of the LORD** ([Jehovah - Yahweh](#)) - " Keep in mind in the ancient world communication was not easy and yet the queen who is at least 1200 miles (or more) away from Jerusalem hears about the king named Solomon, probably through the Arab traders. This is a wonderful report not only of Solomon's fame associated with the Name of the LORD. One has to wonder if she also heard about his incredibly large harem!

*Our fame and God's Name must go together.*

-- Warren Wiersbe

**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. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Brian Bell** - If God magnifies your name, make sure **He** gets the glory for it. Ps.135:13 **Fame** is a heavy burden to bear, and only **God** can help us do it wisely.

*Not to us, O LORD, not to us, But to Your Name give glory  
Because of Your lovingkindness, because of Your truth.*

-- Psalm 115:1+

**Edith Deen** in [All the Women in the Bible \(page 137-142\)](#) writes "The Queen of Sheba, who came to prove/verify, lives on now, nearly 30 centuries since her visit, as a woman whose spirit of adventure and whose resourcefulness, courage, and curiosity have not been surpassed by any queen history. And certainly her sense of good public and international relations is unparalleled among women of a Bible.

**She came - She came** indicates made a volitional choice. Without going too far in speculation, I have to believe the Spirit of God was at work because she hears not just about a man but about His God. And she is moved (I believe by the Spirit) to make a long and difficult trip to inquire about these two names, One of which could change her eternal destiny. If a heart is seeking for God, God will find a way to either bring the good news to them or as in this case, bring them to the good news! Was she saved? We cannot be dogmatic, but her reaction in 1Ki 10:9 and Jesus' commendation of her would support the premise she was saved. She reminds me of another powerful pagan ruler named Nebuchadnezzar, who I think there is a good chance we will meet in heaven (cf Da 4:34-37+).

**To test** ([nacah/nasah](#); Lxx - [peirazo](#)) **him with difficult questions** ([chidah](#); Lxx - ainigma) - **NET** = "to challenge him with difficult questions." **YLT** = "to try him with enigmas." She was not trying to trip Solomon up but to discern whether what she had heard about his wisdom was true. The Greek word for **difficult questions** is ainigma which clearly gives us English "enigma" and which means requires special acumen to understand because it is expressed in puzzling fashion.

**Joseph Hammond** adds "The Arabian mind has ever delighted in dark sayings, enigmas, &c., and extensive collections of these have been made by Burckhardt and others (see Keil in loc.)." ([Pulpit Commentary](#))

**Wiseman** - "The hard ('enigmatic', REB) questions ([chidah](#)) were not just 'riddles', as in Judges 14:12, but included difficult diplomatic and ethical questions (**ED**: THIS LATTER STATEMENT IS SOMEWHAT SPECULATIVE) . According to Josephus, Hiram had made similar approaches. The test was not an academic exercise but to see if he would be a trustworthy business partner and a reliable ally capable of giving help." (See [1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 139](#))

**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. (See full article [THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH SHALL RISE UP IN THE JUDGMENT WITH THE MEN OF THIS GENERATION, AND CONDEMN THEM](#))

**Matthew Henry**: 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.

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**Utley- Sheba**" There is still scholarly discussion about where this name (BDB 985) originated.

1. Yemen – from local contemporaneous literature it was known as Saba (ABD, vol. 5, pp. 1170-1171). This may have been the Sabeans of the period.
2. Northern Arabia – a colony called Sheba is known, which had several queens as leaders.
3. This term first appears in Gen. 10:7,28; 25:3, which makes it an Arab tribe that migrated to Ethiopia (Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.6.5.). If accurate she was an ancestor of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia. Jewish tradition says she had a child with Solomon who became Ethiopian royalty (Abyssinian line).

Option #1 fits history best. This locale was known for

1. its spice trade
2. its wealth in silver and gold

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**Fame** (report) (08088) **shema** means news, report, fame, refers to the "thing heard," such as family news (Ge. 29:13), news of military movement (Jer 37:5; 50:43) and news of judgment (Nah. 3:19). Shema' can refer to a report of an event, such as the report of the downfall of Tyre (Isa. 23:5), the report of some wrongdoing (Hos. 7:12), the report of Israel's victories (Deut. 2:25) or even a false report about someone (Exo. 23:1). Shema' can refer idiomatically to a report as "the hearing of the ear" (Job 42:5; Ps. 18:44). And it can refer to someone's fame, such as God's fame (Nu 14:15; Isa. 66:19; Hab. 3:2), Solomon's fame (1 Ki. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1) and Wisdom's fame (Job 28:22).

**TWOT (online)** - Used 1) of news generally, whether good or bad, 2) of the fame attached to a person, and 3) of hearsay, as opposed to personal experiential knowledge. Thus it is used in Isaiah 23:5 of the report or news of Jacob's arrival. In 1 Kings 10:1 it is used to describe Solomon's fame that had reached as far as Sheba. In Job's great confession (Job 42:5) he testifies that his former knowledge of God had been but hearsay, and that as a result of his personal encounter with God he has come to see his own nothingness in the face of the greatness of God.

**SHEMA - 17X/16V - about(1), fame(4), hear\*(1), hearing(1), news(1), proclamation(1), report(8).** Gen. 29:13; Exod. 23:1; Num. 14:15; Deut. 2:25; 1 Ki. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1; Job 28:22; Job 42:5; Ps. 18:44; Isa. 23:5; Isa. 66:19; Jer. 37:5; Jer. 50:43; Hos. 7:12; Nah. 3:19; Hab. 3:

**Test** (05254) **nacah/nasah** Lxx = **peirazo**) to test, to try, to prove. In most OT uses has idea of testing or proving quality of someone or something and doing so often through adversity or hardship. As the following context makes clear (note "to see," lit., "to know," in 3:4), the purpose of this divine test was to determine if Israel was truly loyal. An examination of parallel passages shows that such divine tests were designed to reveal otherwise hidden character qualities. Testing which shows what someone is really like generally involves difficulty or hardship.

**Swanson** sums up **Nacah** - 1. (piel) test, try, i.e., attempt to learn the true nature of something (1Ki 10:1); 2. (piel) attempt, try, i.e., exert oneself to do something (Dt 4:34); 3. (piel) test, try, i.e., cause or allow hardship or trouble in a circumstance, often with choices within the situation, implying a different outcome is possible (Jdg 2:22)

**NACAH - 37X/34V - make a test(1), proved(1), put(1), put to the test(2), tempted(3), test(13), tested(9), testing(3), tried(1), try(1), venture(1), ventures(1).** Gen. 22:1; Exod. 15:25; Exod. 16:4; Exod. 17:2; Exod. 17:7; Exod. 20:20; Num. 14:22; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:16; Deut. 13:3; Deut. 28:56; Deut. 33:8; Jdg. 2:22; Jdg. 3:1; Jdg. 3:4; Jdg. 6:39; 1 Sam. 17:39; 1 Ki. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1; 2 Chr. 32:31; Job 4:2; Ps. 26:2; Ps. 78:18; Ps. 78:41; Ps. 78:56; Ps. 95:9; Ps. 106:14; Eccl. 2:1; Eccl. 7:23; Isa. 7:12; Dan. 1:12; Dan. 1:14

**Difficult questions** (riddles) (02420) (**chidah**) means an enigmatic, perplexing saying or question where the meaning is obscure or hidden. Most uses (8x) refer to Samson's riddle in Judges 14. A riddle is a question, puzzle or statement so phrased that ingenuity is required to answer or understand. **NET Note** - The sayings of the wise often take the form of riddles that must be discerned.

**CHIDAH - 17V - dark sayings(2), difficult questions(2), insinuations(1), intrigue(1), riddle(10), riddles(1).** Num. 12:8; Jdg. 14:12; Jdg. 14:13; Jdg. 14:14; Jdg. 14:15; Jdg. 14:16; Jdg. 14:17; Jdg. 14:18; Jdg. 14:19; 1 Ki. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1; Ps. 49:4; Ps. 78:2; Prov. 1:6; Ezek. 17:2; Dan. 8:23; Hab. 2:6

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## **"THE NAME" OF YHWH (OT)**

**NAME OF THE LORD - 105X/105V** - Gen. 4:26; Gen. 12:8; Gen. 13:4; Gen. 16:13; Gen. 21:33; Gen. 26:25; Exod. 20:7; Exod. 33:19; Exod. 34:5; Lev. 24:16; Deut. 5:11; Deut. 18:5; Deut. 18:7; Deut. 18:22; Deut. 21:5; Deut. 28:10; Deut. 32:3; 1 Sam. 17:45; 1 Sam. 20:42; 2 Sam. 6:2; 2 Sam. 6:18; 1 Ki. 3:2; 1 Ki. 5:3; 1 Ki. 5:5; 1 Ki. 8:17; 1 Ki. 8:20; 1 Ki. 10:1; 1 Ki. 18:24; 1 Ki. 18:32; 1 Ki. 22:16; 2 Ki. 2:24; 2 Ki. 5:11; 1 Chr. 16:2; 1 Chr. 21:19; 1 Chr. 22:7; 1 Chr. 22:19; 2 Chr. 2:1; 2 Chr. 2:4; 2 Chr. 6:7; 2 Chr. 6:10; 2 Chr. 18:15; 2 Chr. 33:18; Job 1:21; Ps. 7:17; Ps. 20:7; Ps. 102:15; Ps. 102:21; Ps. 113:1; Ps. 113:2; Ps. 113:3; Ps. 116:4; Ps. 116:13; Ps. 116:17; Ps. 118:10; Ps. 118:11; Ps. 118:12; Ps. 118:26; Ps. 122:4; Ps. 124:8; Ps. 129:8; Ps. 135:1; Ps. 148:5; Ps. 148:13; Prov. 18:10; Isa. 18:7; Isa. 24:15; Isa. 30:27; Isa. 48:1; Isa. 50:10; Isa. 56:6; Isa. 59:19; Isa. 60:9; Jer. 3:17; Jer. 11:21; Jer. 26:9; Jer. 26:16; Jer. 26:20; Jer. 44:16; Joel 2:26; Joel 2:32; Amos 6:10; Mic. 4:5;

Mic. 5:4; Zeph. 3:9; Zeph. 3:12; Zech. 13:3; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 23:39; Mk. 11:9; Lk. 13:35; Lk. 19:38; Jn. 12:13; Acts 2:21; Acts 8:16; Acts 9:28; Acts 19:5; Acts 19:13; Acts 19:17; Acts 21:13; Rom. 10:13; 1 Co. 6:11; Col. 3:17; 2 Tim. 2:19; Jas. 5:10; Jas. 5:14

The use of "the name" as a substitute for YHWH Himself is parallel to the Exod. 23:20-33 use of "angel," who is said to have "My name is in him." This same substitution can be seen in the use of "His glory" (e.g., John 1:14; 17:22; see [Special Topic: God Described As Human](#)). All are attempts to soften the personal anthropomorphic presence of YHWH (cf. Exod. 3:13-16; 6:3). YHWH is surely spoken of in human terms, but it was also known that He was spiritually present throughout creation (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 139:7-16; Jer. 23:24; Acts 7:49 quotes Isa. 66:1).

There are several examples of "the name" representing YHWH's divine essence and personal presence.

1. Deut. 12:5; 2 Sam. 7:13; 1 Kgs. 9:3; 11:36
2. Deut. 28:58
3. Ps. 5:11; 7:17; 9:10; 33:21; 68:4; 91:14; 103:1; 105:3; 145:21
4. Isa. 48:9; 56:6
5. Ezek. 20:44; 36:21; 39:7
6. Amos 2:7
7. John 17:6,11,26

The concept of "calling on" (i.e., worshipping) the name of YHWH is seen early in Genesis.

1. Gen. 4:26, the line of Seth
2. Gen. 12:8, Abraham
3. Gen. 13:4, Abraham
4. Gen. 16:13, Hagar
5. Gen. 21:33, Abraham
6. Gen. 26:25, Isaac

and in Exodus:

1. Exod. 5:22-23, speak in Your name
2. Exod. 9:16, proclaim My name through all the earth (cf. Rom. 9:17)
3. Exod.20:7, do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (cf. Lev. 19:12; Deut. 5:11; 6:13; 10:20)
4. Exod. 20:24, where I cause My name to be remembered (cf. Deut. 12:5; 26:2)
5. Exod. 23:20-21, an angel ("since My name is in him")
6. Exod. 34:5-7, Moses calls on (or "called out") the name of the Lord. This is one of a handful of texts that describe YHWH's character (cf. Neh. 9:17; Ps. 103:8; Joel 2:13)

Knowing someone by name implies an intimacy (cf. Exod. 33:12); Moses knows YHWH's name and in 33:17, YHWH knows Moses' name. This is the context where Moses wants to see God's glory (cf. v. 18), but God allows him to see "His goodness" (v. 19), which is parallel to "the name" (v. 19).

The Israelites are to destroy "the names" of Canaan's gods (cf. Deut. 12:3) and call on Him (cf. Deut. 6:13; 10:20; 26:2) at the special place He causes His name to dwell (cf. Exod. 20:24; Deut. 12:5,11,21; 14:23,24; 16:2,6,11; 26:2).

YHWH has a universal purpose involving His name.

1. Gen. 12:3
2. Exod. 9:16
3. Exod. 19:5-6
4. Deut. 28:10,58
5. Micah 4:1-5

## Related Resources:

- [The Names of God](#)
  - Study of Hebrew [Jehovah \(Yahweh\)](#)
  - Study of Hebrew ['adonay](#) (Adonai)
  - Study of Hebrew [Elohim](#) (God)
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## QUESTION - [Who was the Queen of Sheba?](#)

**ANSWER** - The Queen of Sheba, according to the biblical narrative, was a woman of great wealth, beauty, and power. Sheba, believed to be either in Ethiopia or Yemen by most biblical scholars, was a well-established city, and, although there is little evidence outside the Bible as to the nature of the monarchy and how it was established, it is clear that the Queen of Sheba ruled alone and was not enamored with the religions in her own land.

The Queen of Sheba traveled to Jerusalem as she had “heard about the fame of Solomon and his relationship to the LORD, [and] came to test Solomon with hard questions” (1 Kings 10:1). As God had granted Solomon the gift of wisdom (1 Kings 3:5–12), “nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her” (1 Kings 10:3). After a meal together, the Queen of Sheba declares how impressed she is with Solomon’s answers, hospitality, and the reputation that preceded him. The story ends with an exchange of resources and the Queen of Sheba returning “with her retinue to her own country” (1 Kings 10:13).

Sources outside the Bible suggest that the Queen of Sheba conceived a child in secret with King Solomon, while some Bible commentators have suggested that the nameless woman in the Song of Solomon is the Queen of Sheba (with the man being King Solomon). Both are speculative and, while interesting, cannot be declared factual. Whether she has any relation to the “Sheba” mentioned in Genesis 10:7 and 28, or if she was the ancestor of “Candace, queen of the Ethiopians” (Acts 8:27), is, again, open to speculation.

The Queen of Sheba is mentioned again in the New Testament by an alternative title, the Queen of the South (Matthew 12:42; Luke 11:31). Jesus refers to her, reaffirming her historical personage, as a means to illustrate the point that, despite being originally pagan in belief and Gentile in race, the Queen of Sheba recognized the truth and reality of God, unlike the religious leaders who opposed Jesus. As such, they would be condemned for their ignorant and defiant nature.

Two lessons can be learned from the story of the Queen of Sheba. First, like King Solomon, believers are to show evidence of God’s favor in their lives, whatever their role, profession, or environment. Second, the reputation of believers should precede them by their godly words and actions, for we are “Christ’s ambassadors” (2 Corinthians 5:20). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**G Campbell Morgan** - The fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord.—1 Kings 10.1

It is well to notice these words, as they reveal the real reason of the visit of the queen of Sheba. Her coming shows how far the fame of this king of Israel had spread, and these words teach us the nature of that fame. The reports of him had evidently accounted for his greatness and his wisdom, by his relationship to Jehovah. It was not the story of his magnificence which attracted this Arabian queen. but his fame concerning the name of Jehovah. Her visit revealed to her what the government of God really meant. Arriving, as she did, in the time of the nation's peace and prosperity, she was constrained to employ words which set forth her sense of the greatness of all she saw, as exceeding all reports concerning the prosperity of the kingdom and the happiness of the people. She saw clearly that the secret of everything was that of the reign of God, This she expressed in words which revealed the clearness with which this had been manifested : "Blessed be Jehovah thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because Jehovah loved Israel for ever, therefore made He thee king, to do judgment and justice." These were the great days in Solomon's reign. That is true fame for the servant of God, then people are attracted through him, not to him, but to the God whom he represents. It is an evil hour when, concerning the servants of God, men are attracted by them, and by what they are, rather than directed through them to God.

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**Herbert Lockyer** speaking of the Queen of Sheba says: We know nothing of her beauty, but it is certain she was all that could be desired in this respect....**What She Came For** What was the quest of this queen of the South? She did not take her long journey from vanity nor out of any feminine curiosity because she had heard of the much heralded greatness of Solomon. Hers was not a State visit to make a new treaty of some sort nor to behold the magnificence of the court of Solomon. No, she was a seeker after wisdom and so made the tedious journey from her own palace to that of Solomon's to increase her knowledge. She was inspired to make the visit because the fame of Solomon as the wisest man in the East had reached her. The Bible distinctly says that “she came to prove Solomon with hard, or perplexing questions,” and her questions were both numerous and varied. This nameless queen had

heard that Solomon knew all about “the name of the Lord,” and it was this particular aspect of his wisdom that attracted her to Jerusalem. She had not come to see the king’s material possessions and trappings of wealth, for as a queen of considerable importance she had plenty of these herself. She came to see and hear “the Wisdom of Solomon,” as Christ said of her. As, centuries later, wise men came from the East to Bethlehem to worship Him who appeared as, “the Wisdom of God,” so Sheba’s queen came to the Holy City in search of higher knowledge. She was not only a woman of enterprise and affluence but also of a penetrating mind. Cultured, she had a thirst for wider intellectual pursuits, and therefore represented the desire in the hearts of all princely characters for a deeper understanding of the true knowledge.

Josephus the Jewish historian says of the queen that “she was inquisitive into philosophy and on that and on other accounts also was to be admired.” Word had reached her that it was Solomon’s God who had made him so remarkably wise, and as a worshiper of other gods she wanted to know about this Jehovah who had favored the king in an outstanding way. Thus, there was no mere sensation seeking in her visit. The renown of such unparalleled wisdom drew her to Solomon and in going to him she revealed how wise she was. Possibly she had read some of Solomon’s great proverbs, and the one affirming that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” gripped her and prompted her to seek out the king occupying the throne of Israel. She was seeking for a deeper knowledge of his God. While she gave utterance to religious expression such as “Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, and set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made thee king to do judgment and justice,” we have no Bible evidence that she was converted from her heathen gods to worship the God of Solomon. Her acknowledgment of God does not imply the acceptance of Him. “It expresses the belief that He, as the tutelary God of Israel, is to be held in reverence, proportionate to the extraordinary glory which He has given to His nation.” We can but trust that the spiritual truths Solomon enunciated found a lodgment in the queen’s heart and bore much fruit in her life after she returned to her own country.

(BORROW [ALL THE WOMEN IN THE BIBLE - PAGE 198](#))

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#### **Loins Girded - Hard Questions**     1Ki. 10:1

The Queen of Sheba, who had heard rumours of Solomon’s wisdom, belonged to the deeper natures who ponder about the often so fearful and incomprehensible things, with which the earthly life is filled. She was not counted amongst those who have no questions, but she was clearly pained by the difficult problems that presented themselves to her mind, but which she failed to find an answer for. Therefore she went to the wise Solomon to prove him with hard questions. She looked to him for a solution of the riddles of life that oppressed her, and she was not disappointed, because we read, that “Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king which he told her not.”

“A greater than Solomon is here,” the Lord Jesus once declared. Indeed, His wisdom far surpasses the wisdom of the king of the Ancient. Whosoever seeks counsel with her, as she is freely available for all in the Gospel, hears as if out of His mouth the satisfying explanation of the dark secrets that can oppress the awakened heart.

First of all, there is that great mystery of life. If we may call life a song, there sounds to every one whose soul’s ear has been opened, a shrill dissonant through it that painfully disturbs the beautiful harmony, namely the note of sin. There is sin, there is guilt,—that cannot be denied. However, where are the wise who can tell us how that sin can be covered and that guilt be paid? There is only One who can explain that riddle, Jesus Christ, who does not only just give us the solution of it, but who is the solution, when He presents Himself as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Next, there is the great mystery of suffering. Why all this suffering that clouds the joy, the bitter cups of sorrow, all those cried-red eyes and heaving hearts? No thinker has been able to give an acceptable answer to this, but Jesus Christ does not leave us here either. His Gospel explains us that all suffering, to the measure that it is not a punishment, is meant for our preparation for eternity. Like the artist hits the marble with the chisel, so the Almighty One chisels away much from us to bring forth in us the image of God more clearly.

Finally, there is the great mystery of death. To all the wise of the world eternity is a question mark; nobody knows what is awaiting us, nor whether there is even an eternity; but in the wisdom of Christ she is full of melodies on the harp and play on the cither, full of glory and praise, full of angels and redeemed, full of the glory of God!

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#### **QUESTION - [Who was the Queen of the South?](#)**

**ANSWER** - The Queen of the South is mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 12:42 and its parallel passage, Luke 11:31. Jesus says the Queen of the South will bear witness on the Day of Judgment, condemning those Israelites who rejected Jesus as Lord. Jesus identifies the Queen of the South as a queen who visited King Solomon to benefit from his wisdom. From this, we can deduce that she is the Queen of Sheba who came to test Solomon with difficult questions (1 Kings 10:1).



Most biblical scholars believe that Sheba was a city in modern-day Ethiopia or Yemen, and that the Queen of the South was the ruler of that city, a woman of amazing wealth and power. Having heard reports of King Solomon's wisdom, the Queen of Sheba wanted to find out if what she had heard was true, if there really could be a king that wise. So she traveled to Jerusalem to quiz Solomon with [riddles](#). She also brought a wealth of gifts and spices and jewels from her own land to give to him (1 Kings 10:10; 2 Chronicles 9:9). Solomon answered all her questions (1 Kings 10:3) and repaid her in gifts of equal value. The Queen of the South then returned home (2 Chronicles 9:12).

The Queen of the South has been the subject of many artistic works and legends. Some people also speculate that the Queen of the South is the same woman as the [Shulammitte](#) mentioned in the Song of Solomon, because of the reference to the Shulammitte's dark skin (Song of Solomon 1:5). However, there is stronger evidence to suggest that the Shulammitte came from Shunem, a region near Israel.

Jesus mentions the Queen of the South in the context of Israel's rejection of their True King. Though she was a Gentile, she traveled a long distance to hear Solomon, and the treasures she brought showed her respect for him and the wisdom he possessed. In contrast, the Jews of Jesus' time were unwilling to travel any distance to hear the King of kings. The Queen of Sheba's lavish respect for Solomon stood in stark contrast to Israel's flat-out rejection of Christ. Yet Christ is greater than Solomon (Matthew 12:42). Solomon was a son of David, but Jesus is *the* Son of David. Solomon was rich, but Jesus is the Creator of all riches. Solomon possessed the gift of wisdom, but Jesus is wisdom personified (1 Corinthians 1:30). [GotQuestions.org](#)

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**C H Spurgeon - Sermon Notes - 1 Kings 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."

We may profitably consider the Queen of Sheba in her visit to Solomon, for she is given as a sign to us. Matt. 12:42. Surely she came from Arabia the Happy; but it is to be feared that many around us are dwellers in Arabia the Stony, for their hearts are hard as rocks. Jesus is greater than Solomon in wisdom, for he knows the Father himself, and all the riches of wisdom and knowledge are treasured up in him. It will be to our advantage to go to Jesus with all our doubts and troubles, and prove his love and wisdom.

#### **I. LET US ADMIRE THE QUEEN'S MODE OF PROCEDURE.**

1. She would prove the king's wisdom by learning from him. The best way of knowing Christ is by becoming his disciple.
2. She would prove him with many questions. Many are the knots in the line of life. "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God."

3. Those she asked were hard questions.

Beyond herself.

Beyond her wise men.

But not beyond the capacious mind of Solomon.

To ask such questions was to use the rare opportunity before her.

Great wisdom deserves hard questions.

Use Jesus as he is. "An Interpreter, one among a thousand."

To be asked such questions would please Solomon.

Would show her belief in the report of his glory and learning.

Would also ease her own mind; for many a perplexity would be removed for ever. The same is true of Jesus.

#### **II. LET US IMITATE HER EXAMPLE, AND PROVE OUR GREATER SOLOMON WITH HARD QUESTIONS.**

Here are a few of them to begin with,—

1. How can a man be just with God?
2. How can God be just and the Justifier of him that believeth?
3. How can a man be saved by faith alone without works, while yet it is true that a saved man must have good works?
4. How can a man be born when he is old?
5. How is it that God sees all things, and yet no more sees the sins of believers?
6. How can a man see the Father, who is invisible?
7. How can it be true that that which is born of God sinneth not, and yet men born of God daily confess sin?
8. How can a man be a new man, and yet have to sigh because of the old man?
9. How can a man be sorrowful yet always rejoicing?
10. How can a man's life be in heaven while yet he lives on the earth?

We read that Solomon told her all her questions, and we may rest assured that Jesus will teach us all that we need to know, for "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge": Col. 2:3.

#### **III. LET US ATTEND TO CERTAIN QUESTIONS OF A TRULY PRACTICAL CHARACTER.**

How can we come to Christ?

How can we ask hard questions of Christ?

How can he reply to us?

By his Word, his Spirit, his Providence.

How is it that none can come but those whom Jesus draws, and yet him that cometh to him he will in no wise cast out? Try both truths in your own experience, and they will prove themselves.

How is it that there is a set time and a limited day, and yet the Lord bids us come to Jesus at once? Come and see.

How is it that we have not come long ago?

Why should we not come at this very moment?

## **APPLES OF GOLD FOR BASKETS OF SILVER**

Philosophy was born a Pagan; but she may become a Christian, and should be christened "Mary." She may be proud to sit at Jesus' feet Hellas coming to Judea's Messiah is a rarely beautiful sight.—Dr. Duncan.

Questioners must be teachable. When Haydn was in London, a nobleman came to him for lessons in music, but found fault with all that Haydn said. At last, out of patience, the musician exclaimed, "I see, my lord, that it is you who are so good as to give lessons to me, and I am obliged to confess that I do not merit the honour of having such a master."

Do not suppose that Wisdom is so much flattered at having you for a pupil that she will set you easy lessons, and yet give you the gold medal.—T. T. Lynch.

An example of the strange riddles of Christian experience is given in one of Ralph Erskine's "Gospel Sonnets":—

"I'm sinful, yet I have no sin;  
All spotted o'er, yet wholly clean;  
Blackness and beauty both I share,  
A hellish black, a heavenly fair."

The pilgrims when staying in the house of Gaius spent their time in asking and answering such riddles.

Those who lose their way because they will not ask are rather to be blamed than pitied. Men pay a great deal to obtain the opinion of a great physician; what shall we say of sick persons who will not consult the infallible Healer, though his cures are without fee? Jesus waits to be enquired of; but the most of men had rather follow their own crude thoughts than accept his infallible teachings. Let us not be among, these; but having the golden opportunity of intercourse with such a Teacher, let us bring before him every difficulty, and, like Mary, sit at Jesus' feet, and learn of him.

The hard questions of life prove us, and make us see our own ignorance and folly. Yet we would not be without them, for they also prove Jesus and display to us his knowledge and wisdom. We can remember hard questions in Providence which we could not answer, but he has made them clear as noonday; hard questions of inward conflict, which he has fully resolved; hard questions as to apparently unfulfilled promises, which we now comprehend; and hard questions of gospel doctrine, which we now see to be the truth in himself. Let us go on proving our Lord, but yet never tempting him. Every fair test, though it be far more stringent than those which Sheba's Queen imposed upon Solomon, Jesus is more than able to endure.

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## **James Smith - SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA; OR, CHRIST AND HIS SERVANTS 1 KINGS 10:1–10**

A greater than Solomon is here (Matt. 12:42). We have perhaps a picture here of the glory that shall yet characterise the "Greater Solomon" and His servants in the age to come (Isa. 60:1–6). What brought the Queen of Sheba to behold the wisdom and glory of Solomon has brought many a humbler one to behold the greater glory of Jesus, viz., "the hearing of faith." We might consider—

### **I. What She Heard. "She heard of his fame."**

1. THE FAME OF HIS RICHES. "Silver was nothing accounted in his days" (v. 21). But what are the riches of Christ? (Eph. 3:8; Col. 2:9).
2. THE FAME OF HIS WISDOM. This was the wisdom that cometh from above (1 Kings 3:12). Many seek after wisdom (v. 24) who reject Christ, the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24–30; James 1:5).
3. THE FAME OF HIS POWER. Concerning the Name of the Lord. If Solomon's intimacy with God made him great, what must we say of Him who was "God manifest in the flesh?" (Phil. 2:9).

### **II. What She Did. She did not make light of it, like those in Matthew 22:5. Nor postpone it like Felix (Acts 24:25).**

1. SHE CAME TO HIM. This was much better than merely thinking about him. When the prodigal came to

himself he came to his Father (John 6:37).

2. SHE COMMUNED WITH HIM. "She told him all that was in her heart" (v. 2), and the king hid nothing from her (v. 3). A full confession brings fullness of blessing (Psa. 32:5–7). Oh, the joy of telling Jesus! Cast thy burden on the Lord (Matt. 14:12).

### III. What She Saw.

1. SHE SAW HIS WISDOM. Having come to Christ, the wisdom of God in the scheme of redemption has greatly amazed us (Eph. 1:4–8).

2. SHE SAW HIS HOUSE. The Church of Christ as an house fitly framed together is the next marvel (Eph. 2:19–22).

3. SHE SAW HIS TABLE. The great and liberal provision God has made in Christ for His own (2 Cor. 9:8).

4. SHE SAW HIS ASCENT. (Probably the arched viaduct that led from his house to the Temple.) The ascent of the "Greater than Solomon" was much more glorious (Acts 1:9).

5. SHE SAW HIS SERVANTS. (a) Their position—"Sitting" (Luke 10:39). (b) Their privilege—"Continually with thee hearing thy wisdom" (v. 8; John 6:45). (c) Their pleasure—"Happy are these, thy servants" (v. 8; Psa. 100:2; Rom. 5:11).

### IV. What Followed. The results were manifest—

1. SHE WAS HUMBLLED. "There was no more spirit in her." Seeing the Lord means a downfall (Acts 9:4; Rev. 1:17).

2. SHE CONFESSED. "It was a true report." Those who come to Jesus will be forced to acknowledge the truth of the Gospel.

3. SHE PRAISED. "Blessed be the Lord." This is the result of a satisfied soul (Psa. 103:1–5).

4. SHE GAVE. "She gave the king gold" (v. 10) "Yield yourselves unto God" (Rom. 12:1, 2).

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## James Smith - A ROYAL INQUIRER 1 Kings 10:1–13

"You are not guilty because you are ignorant, but you are guilty when you resign yourself to ignorance."—MAZZINI.

The coming of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon may be a fore-glimmering of that time when a "Greater than Solomon" shall reign, and when kings shall come to the brightness of His rising (Isa. 60:1–3). The wisdom of Solomon was the wisdom of God, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh (chap. 3:12). There would be more anxious inquirers everywhere if there were more of God's servants in possession of this rare gift—a "hearing heart" (chap. 3:9, margin). The Queen of Sheba is mentioned by our Lord and Saviour, as a warning and example to those who, after, should hear of the wisdom of Him who is the wisdom of God (Matt. 12:42).

### I. She Heard.

"The Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon" (v. 1). It should be specially noted that this fame was "concerning the Name of the Lord." In the report which came to the ears of the "Queen of the South" the wisdom of Solomon was vitally connected with the Name of Jehovah. Is it not so also with the Gospel which has been brought to our ears? There is a oneness between the wisdom and power of Jesus Christ, and the NAME or character of the Eternal God and Father. The secret of His fame was concerning the Name of His Father. Blessed are the ears that so hear (Matt. 13:16).

### II. She Inquired.

"She came to prove him with hard questions" (v. 1). She did not make light of it (Matt. 22:5). She felt that this Heaven-born wisdom of Solomon's might bring light and comfort to her own beclouded mind; and although she hardly believed all that she heard she would satisfy herself with a personal inquiry. So she came just as she was, with a "very great train" of camels and servants, and "communed with him of all that was in her heart" (v. 2). She was both an anxious and an honest inquirer. Go thou and do likewise. You have heard of the saving fame of Jesus. Go and prove Him by telling Him all that is in thine heart. You have more encouragement than this queen had, for you have a pressing invitation (Matt. 11:28).

### III. She Received.

"Solomon told her all her questions" (v. 3). There was nothing hid from the king that she required to know. We cannot believe that her questions were in the nature of puzzles. Such trifles would be entirely beneath the dignity of the wisdom of God. We believe that her riddles contained real intellectual difficulties, and that the

darkness in her mind was dispelled by the light of Heaven. Oh, how she would marvel as her difficulties one after another disappeared in the dawning of the truth of God as revealed by the Lord's anointed! So shall it be when a troubled soul communes with Jesus. He is the Truth. He knows what is in man, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Him.

#### IV. She was Humbled.

"When the Queen of Sheba had seen all there was no more spirit in her" (vv. 4, 5). When she contrasted Solomon's wisdom, his house, his table, his servants, and his way up with her own, all her pride and self-esteem withered up within her. There was no room for boasting left; it was excluded by the law of heavenly grace and wisdom. When the self-righteous Saul of Tarsus met the Lord of Life on the way to Damascus, and was made to see His power and glory, there was no more spirit in him to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. It will ever be a humbling to us when our own wisdom and righteousness is brought into contrast with His.

#### V. She Confessed.

"She said to the king, It was a true report that I heard ... Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and, behold, the half was not told me" (vv. 6, 7). Who hath believed our report? The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, concerning His wisdom, power, and glory, is true, whether men believe it or not. Like the Queen of Sheba, we cannot understand or share personally in this heavenly wisdom until we come. But if we have come and got our own eyes opened, let us not be ashamed or afraid to make full confession to the honour of His glorious Name.

#### VI. She Testified.

"Happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom" (v. 8). The enlightened soul covets earnestly the best gifts. The servants of Solomon had a privilege that none others had on the face of the earth. So also has the servants of King Jesus. They see and hear things which many prophets and righteous men desire to see, but did not (Matt. 13:16, 17). But are there not many to whom this high honour is conferred who are not happy in their close relationship to the King of kings? Worldly Christians who have but a poor appreciation of the written Word, which is the wisdom of our God. The happy servant hears the words of wisdom from the King's own lips.

#### VII. She Praised.

"Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee" (v. 9). It is a comely thing for those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious to render praise and thanks unto His holy Name. Yes, blessed be the Lord our God, who delighted in Jesus Christ as our Atoning Sacrifice, and set Him on the throne, "because He loved us for ever." Every manifestation of His grace and wisdom should awaken every faculty within us to praise and adoration. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

#### VIII. She was Abundantly Satisfied.

"Solomon gave her all her desire, whatsoever she asked" (v. 13). He supplied all her need. But the grace of the "Greater than Solomon" is greater, for He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask. No seeking soul will ever go hungry away from Him. He satisfies with good. "Ho, every one, Harken diligently unto ME, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in His fullness (Isa. 55:2).

**1 Kings 10:2 So she came to Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart.**

- **a very large retinue:** 2Ki 5:5,9 Isa 60:6-9 Ac 25:23
- **spices:** Ex 25:6 2Ki 20:13
- **she spoke with him:** Ge 18:33 Job 4:2 Ps 4:4 Lu 24:15

## FAR TO MEET SOLOMON

**So she came to Jerusalem with a very large [retinue](#), with camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones -** With camels indicates that she came over land, not by sea. A very large retinue is probably an understatement in some ways. Just considering the number of camels necessary to carry over 4 tons of gold (over 9000 pounds!) is difficult to imagine (the depiction above may not be an exaggeration). And think of travel in those days which was plagued by bandits and raiders. This means she must have had a significant military accompaniment to travel 1400 plus miles with a very extravagant cargo (not just gold but spices and precious stones)!

If Sheba was in Yemen → The Queen of Sheba traveled approximately 1,400–1,500 miles (2,250–2,400 km) north to Jerusalem. If Sheba was in Ethiopia → The distance would be around 1,600 miles (2,575 km). The estimated travel time by camel caravan would have taken two to three months depending on the route and conditions.

**When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart.**

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**Spurgeon** - We may speak of the queen of Sheba coming to Solomon as a type of our coming to Christ. She wanted to prove whether Solomon was as wise as she had been led to believe, and her mode of proving it was by endeavoring to learn from him. She put difficult questions to him in order that she might be instructed by his wisdom. And if we want to ascertain what the wisdom of Christ is, the way to know it is to come and sit at his feet and learn from him. He has himself said, "Take up my yoke and learn from me" (Mt 11:29). The queen came to ask Solomon many questions, and "Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too difficult for the king to explain to her" (v. 3). She questioned him about all sorts of things, but I am persuaded she also talked about higher things, things of God; for the text says she came because of "Solomon's fame connected with the name of the LORD." So we may rest assured that she put to him many difficult questions concerning the state of her heart, her character, her present position before God, and her future relationship to Israel's God. Likewise, if we want to know the wisdom of Christ, we must ask him many questions. He knows the things of God as nobody else knows them, for he is one with the Father and with the Spirit. We may come to him, then, with every question that has ever puzzled us and with every doubt that has ever staggered us. When the night is darkest, we may ask him for his light. When the way is roughest, we may lean more than ever on his arm. When the storm is the most fierce, we may trust the Pilot of the Galilean lake. When all around us rocks and reels to and fro like a drunken person, we may find a sure shelter and hiding place in the Rock of ages. We may prove the Lord Jesus in every possible way, for he loves to be tested.

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### **John Butler - Fame of Solomon (1 Kings 10:1)**

SOLOMON became a very famous king. Our verse speaks about this fame spreading to other nations and how one person reacted to it. In this verse is the publicity of his fame, the piety of his fame, and the proving of his fame.

Publicity of his fame. "When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon." The nation of Sheba has been mostly identified as either Ethiopia of Africa or Yemen of southern Arabia. Regardless of which nation it was, it says the fame of Solomon had spread over a wide area. Traders would be the logical ones to spread the fame. Coming to Jerusalem to do business, these merchants would observe the greatness of Solomon's reign and would carry the story of Solomon's greatness to nations far off from Israel.

Piety of his fame. "Concerning the name of the LORD." The fame of Solomon was inseparably connected with God. How noble then was his fame. This fame was probably connected to the grand Temple that he built for Jehovah God. But whatever the case, Solomon's fame honored the Lord. His fame was related to his achievements on behalf of God. We hear little of that sort of fame today. Few are famous because of their faith. Few have a fame that honors God. Most fame today is fleshly and does nothing to honor God.

Proving of his fame. "She came to prove him with hard questions." All fame needs to be tested to determine its character. And it needs to be tested by "hard" questions that will indeed reveal the character of the fame. People are greatly influenced by what is famous and popular. Therefore, we need to know the character of the fame and its popularity lest we are swept off our feet by evil. Why is a politician, book, preacher, movement, or film famous and popular? Is it because of promotion and propaganda or because of genuine merit. Do not be deceived, defrauded, or defiled by artificial fame and popularity. Solomon's fame was tested and proved of high character. That is the only fame that is acceptable.

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**Spurgeon's Sermon Notes** - 1 Kings 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."

It is not generally a wise thing to tell out all your heart. Samson reached the climax of folly when he did this to Delilah. Yet if we could

meet with a Solomon who could solve all our difficulties, we might wisely do so.

We have a greater than Solomon in Jesus, who is incarnate Wisdom. The mischief is, that with him we are too silent, and with worldly friends too communicative. This evil should be rectified.

#### I. WE OUGHT TO COMMUNE WITH HIM OF ALL THAT IS IN OUR HEART.

1. Neglect of intercourse with Jesus is very unkind; for he invites us to talk with him, saying, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely": Solomon's Song 2:14. Shall our heavenly Bridegroom be deprived of the fellowship of our souls?

2. To conceal anything from so true a Friend betrays the sad fact that there is something wrong to be concealed.

3. It shows a want of confidence in his love, or his sympathy, or his wisdom, if we cannot tell Jesus all that is in or upon our hearts. Between bride and Bridegroom there should be no secrets, or love will be wounded.

4. It will be the cause of uneasiness to ourselves if we withhold anything from him. The responsibility will all rest with us, and this will weigh heavily.

5. It will involve the loss of his counsel and help; for when we unbosom ourselves to him, he meets our case. If we hide our trouble, he may leave us to fret until we confide more fully in him.

6. Reticence towards Jesus is greatly aggravated by our usual eagerness to tell our troubles to others. Will we make a confidant of man, and hide the matter from our God?

#### II. WE NEED NOT CEASE COMMUNING FOR WANT OF TOPICS.

1. Our sorrows. He knows what they are, will comfort us under them, help us to profit by them, and in due time remove them.

2. Our joys. He will sober and salt them. Joy without Jesus is the sun without light, the essence of it is gone. Joy without Jesus would be as evil as the golden calf which provoked the Lord to jealousy.

3. Our service. He was a Servant, and therefore he knows our heart, and will sympathize with our difficulties. Let us speak freely.

4. Our plans. He had zeal and ardour, and was quick of understanding in the fear of the Lord: he will gladly commune with us concerning all that is in our hearts to do for the Father.

5. Our successes and failures should be reported at head-quarters. The disciples of the martyred John took up the body, and went and told Jesus. Matthew 14:12. Our Lord's own evangelists returned and told what had been done: Luke 9:10.

6. Our desires. Holiness, usefulness, heaven: all these awaken the sympathy of Jesus: he prays for us about these things.

7. Our fears: fears of falling, needing, failing, fainting, dying. To mention these to Jesus is to end them.

8. Our loves. Of earth and of heaven, towards others and to himself. That love which we dare not tell to Jesus is an evil lusting.

9. Our mysteries: incomprehensible feelings, undefinable uneasinesses, and complex emotions, will be all the better for being ventilated in Jesus's presence.

#### III. NOR SHALL WE CEASE COMMUNING FOR WANT OF REASONS.

1. How ennobling and elevating is intercourse with the Son of God!

2. How consoling and encouraging is fellowship with him who has overcome the world!

3. How sanctifying and refining is union with the perfect One, who is the Lord our righteousness!

4. How safe and healthy is a daily walk with the ever-blessed Son of man!

5. How proper and natural for disciples to talk with their Teacher, and saints with their Saviour!

6. How delightful and heavenly is rapturous converse with the Beloved of our souls!

Warning to those who never speak with Jesus. Will he not say at the last, "I never knew you"?

Complaint of those who seldom commune with him. "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?"

Hint to those who usually live in communion with him. Be sure to keep up the holy intercourse; and to this end be very thorough, unlock every room in your house, and let Jesus enter.

Congratulation of those who have long enjoyed his fellowship.

#### THINGS TO STRIKE AND STICK

A workman in time of need would part with everything before his tools; for to lose them would be to lose all. Reading the Word of God and prayer are the tools of the Christian's craft: without them he is helpless. How is it, then, that when time presses, he so often foregoes these, or shortens them? What is this but to sell his tools?

If there be anything I do, if there be anything I leave undone, let me be perfect in prayer.—Henry Martyn.

Blessed be God that I may pray.—David Brainerd.

He oft finds help who doth his grief impart.  
And to tell sorrow halfens sorrow's smart.—Spenser.

What would be said of a member of a family who refused to speak with his father or his brother? What a source of unhappiness to have such a person in the house! What, then, must be thought of a professed spouse of Jesus who has had no personal intercourse with him by the month together? Lack of holy communion is a very grievous thing. True love is communicative; it cannot bear to keep its secrets from its Beloved, nor to be restrained in its converse with him. Let the believer see to it that he is not like one of whom we asked, "How long is it since you had fellowship with Jesus?" and he answered, "It is so long ago that I have almost forgotten it." Was not this an evil sign?

"Let us be simple with him then,  
Not backward, stiff, or cold;  
As though our Bethlehem could be  
What Sinai was of old."

The believer should be familiar in the house over which Christ is set, and draw near with full assurance of faith. Come and tell him all your wants and desires freely, without concealing anything from him, for that would argue distance and distrust. The stronger faith is, the more wants it tells, and the more fully it tells them. Do you want anything of which you cannot tell your Lord? It argues either no real need, or else little faith. Strong faith hath free communion with heaven, and conceals nothing, but tells all. Eph. 3:12. "In whom we have boldness." The word translated boldness is "telling all."—Thomas Boston.

Sing a hymn to Jesus, when the heart is faint;  
Tell it all to Jesus, comfort or complaint:  
If the work is sorrow, if the way is long,  
If thou dread'st the morrow, tell it him in song;  
Though thy heart be aching for the crown and palm,  
Keep thy spirit waking with a faithful psalm.

E. Paxton Hood.

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**F B Meyer** - She came to the right place, for Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in wisdom; and all the kings of the earth sought his presence, to hear the wisdom that God had put into his heart. Bring your hard questions to Christ; He is greater than Solomon. To Him is given riches and wisdom, and He is made unto us wisdom. Before the touch of His light the darkest perplexities must resolve themselves. Though He speak no audible word, the hardest questions are answered to the eyes and ears of such as wait before Him.

She came in the right spirit, bringing him gold and spices and precious stones. Those who would get from Christ must be willing to give to Him. There must be a reciprocity; and if we hope to receive from Him from those infinite stores of which He has the key, we must count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and must be prepared to count them as refuse if only we may will Him.

She came to a right conclusion. He answered all her questions, and she returned congratulating his servants and blessing God. To each of us, life is full of perplexities, to which we can find no solution, however much we strain our eyes and weary our minds. But away there in the light Christ stands, with the perfect plan of every maze in His possession, with a key for every riddle, and solution for every enigma. Wait patiently. Each tough knot will be untied; and there will come into our hearts a radiancy, a bounding joy like that with which the Queen of Sheba turned to go to her own home. The half of the greatness of thy wisdom, O Word of God, can never be told!

**1 Kings 10:3 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her.**

- **Solomon answered all her questions:** 2Ch 9:2 Pr 1:5,6 13:20 Isa 42:16 Mt 13:11 Joh 7:17 1Co 1:30 Col 2:3
- **nothing was hidden:** 1Ki 10:1 3:12 2Sa 14:17,20 Da 2:20-23 Heb 4:12,13

**Related Passage:**

2 Chronicles 9:2+ Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from Solomon which he did not explain to her.

## SOLOMON SCORED 100%

**Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her-** NLT paraphrases **nothing was hidden** as "nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her."

**J Vernon McGee** - 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.....You can see that the nation of Israel was successful in witnessing to the world. (See [Thru the Bible](#))

**Tom Ascol:** In all these ways the queen of Sheba is an example to us. She investigates what she has been told in order to determine if it is true. Once she sees that it is, she rejoices in it. This is the kind of nobility that marked the Jews in Berea who eagerly received the word that Paul and Silas preached, "examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so" (Acts 17:11+). It is the attitude that every honest hearer of the Gospel should possess. But the queen of the South is not only an example worth emulating, she also is an indictment on many who have spiritual privileges and opportunities that exceed what she possessed. In her we see a great response to very little opportunity whereas too often today we see very little response to great opportunities.

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**Herbert Lockyer - What She Heard**- Accustomed to gorgeous finery, the queen of Sheba was an eager student of a more coveted adornment — truth for the mind. What the true nature of her "hard questions" was we are not told. What the narrative does say is that "Solomon told [or answered] all her questions, there was not anything hid from the king, which he told her not." What did he tell? Did he recite the facts of creation of the earth and man, the Fall, the promise of the Redeemer, the significance of the law and the sacrifices, and of how the glorious "house of the Lord" she saw was designed to honor God? Did he unfold the significance of Israel's choice and destiny and how she herself was connected with his God-honored nation? How is a descendant of Sheba, the son of Abraham by Keturah had wandered off and settled in the country bearing her name and from which she had come?

The queen "communed with Solomon of all that was in her heart." Her heart! All the deepest questions within had been answered. Learned herself, she found Solomon's knowledge supreme. How she would listen as the king opened his lips and gave utterance to truths that left her speechless! How the minds of these two royal persons must "have struck sparks in each other, their mutual attraction a leaping flame between them"! The lines of Addison are appropriate as we think of this king and queen, desiring above all else, wisdom and understanding —

Great souls by instinct to each other turn,  
Demand alliance, and in friendship burn.

By instinct the Queen of Sheba was drawn to Israel's wise king, and we can imagine how, after they had parted, any further questions the queen had received a ready answer from Solomon. (BORROW [ALL THE WOMEN IN THE BIBLE - PAGE 198](#))

**1 Kings 10:4 When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built,**

- **all the wisdom of Solomon:** 1Ki 3:28 4:29-31 2Ch 9:3,4 Ec 12:9 Mt 12:42
- **the house:** 1Ki 6:1-7:51

### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 9:3+ When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house which he had built,



**When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built** -Given the following context (1Ki 10:5), **the house** is apparently Solomon's personal house not the House of God. Josephus says she was especially astonished at the house of the forest of Lebanon.



**Adrian Rogers** - Now, think of the mansion that Jesus Christ is building. And I'm going to tell you something, folks—and this is not exaggeration: the mansion that Jesus Christ is building for you is going to make Solomon's house look like a tarpaper shack. That is true—that is true. (Jn 14:1-2+)

**1 Kings 10:5 the food of his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his waiters and their attire, his cupbearers, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.**

NET 1 Kings 10:5 the food in his banquet hall, his servants and attendants, their robes, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings which he presented in the LORD's temple, she was amazed.

CSB 1 Kings 10:5 the food at his table, his servants' residence, his attendants' service and their attire, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he offered at the LORD's temple, it took her breath away.

ESV 1 Kings 10:5 the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his **burnt offerings** that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her.

NIV 1 Kings 10:5 the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the **burnt offerings** he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed.

NLT 1 Kings 10:5 she was overwhelmed. She was also amazed at the food on his tables, the organization of his officials and their splendid clothing, the cup-bearers, and the **burnt offerings** Solomon made at the Temple of the LORD.

- **the food of his table** 1Ki 4:22,23
- **cupbearers:** 2Ki 16:18 1Ch 9:18 26:16 2Ch 23:13 Eze 44:3 46:2
- **the food of his table:** Jos 5:1 2Ch 9:4

#### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 9:4+ the food at his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his ministers and their attire, his cupbearers and their attire, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, she was breathless.

## QUEEN OF SHEBA OVERWHELMED BY OPULENCE

**The food of his table** - Recall the incredible provisions described in 1Ki 4:22-23+ where "Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour and sixty kors of meal, ten fat oxen, twenty pasture-fed oxen, a hundred sheep besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl."

**The seating of his servants, the attendance of his waiters and their attire, his cupbearers, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her** - The excellence of Solomon's wisdom and the extravagance of his regal lifestyle took the Queen's breath away! The seating of his servants is paraphrased by NLT as "the organization of his officials" perhaps referring to state officials (note this group is seated, whereas the waiters are standing = Lxx of "attendance" = stasis = basically means standing). The literal Hebrew supports this distinction of officials seated and waiters standing for it reads "the seating of his servants and the standing of his attendants."

Note that a number of translations translate "**his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD**" as "his burnt offerings which he presented in the LORD's temple" (NET, similarly in ESV, NIV, NLT) The Septuagint translates "went up" with the Greek word holokautmois (English - "holocaust") which describes the whole burnt offering (Ex 29:25, Lev 4:34). If this is indeed translated as burnt offerings, it would have been witnessed by the Queen of Sheba and apparently made quite an impact on her.

**1 Kings 10:6 Then she said to the king, "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom.**

- **report:** 2Ch 9:5,6+

### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 9:5-6+ 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 "Nevertheless I did not believe their reports until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You surpass the report that I heard.

## THE REPORTS OF SOLOMON WERE NO EXAGGERATION

**Then** - Normally this marks progression in a narrative, but in this case **then** functions more like a term of conclusion, introducing a logical consequence, in this case the queen's conclusion regarding the veracity of Solomon's fame.

**She said to the king, "It was a true report (Hebrew = "Truth was the word") which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom.**

**Wiseman:** Solomon's display of his own wealth and trust in riches will be condemned, as it can lead to trust in things other than God alone (cf. Pr 11:28). The historian includes it as a by-product of wisdom, but later rejects it when vanity is involved (as in Hezekiah's display to Babylonian visitors, 2 Kgs 20:13). (SEE [1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 140](#))

**Alan Carr:** Have you ever met someone who just left you in awe? I mean, they were so great and so wonderful that you were left shaking your head and saying, "There's nobody else like that!". Well, those kinds of meetings are rare, but they do happen occasionally. The Bible records for us the account of one such meeting. In this passage, the Queen of Sheba was left in amazement when she met King Solomon. She went away saying, "There's nobody like him!". Many years later, when Jesus was ministering here on earth, He mentioned this very event. He spoke of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and He reminded His listeners that He was even greater than Solomon, Matt. 12:42. If an earthly king left that queen astounded at his glory and greatness, how much more will King Jesus amaze those who meet Him? ([1 Kings 10:1-13 - Sermon](#))

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**Ron Daniel ([1 Kings 10](#))** - Here is an interesting thought: She doubted what she heard, yet she was open to find out, and even pursued the knowledge. Jesus spoke about this very thing in the gospel of Luke. When the scribes and Pharisees were in unchangeable disbelief, Jesus told them,

Luke 11:31+ "The Queen of the South will rise up with the men of this generation at the judgment and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here."

The queen will be commended for her search for truth. Those who refuse to believe in Jesus Christ will be condemned because they have made no effort to learn the truth. Too many people today view the gospel with doubt until someone takes the initiative to pursue them, addressing every one of their doubts. And yet, the Queen of Sheba didn't mail a letter saying, "Hey Solomon, I don't believe a word I'm hearing about you. If I'm going to believe any of it, you're gonna have to come down here and prove yourself." Instead, Jesus said that "she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon." Never forget that God has promised,

Jer. 29:13 "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."

**1 Kings 10:7** "Nevertheless I did not believe the reports, until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. You exceed in wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard.

- **believe:** Isa 64:4 Zec 9:17 Mk 16:11 Joh 20:25-29 1Co 2:9 1Jn 3:2

## SEEING & HEARING IS BELIEVING

**Nevertheless** (term of contrast) **I did not believe the reports, until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. You exceed in wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard** The queen told Solomon that she initially thought Solomon's fame was exaggerated. But now she has come to realize that the stories of his wisdom and wealth were not an exaggeration.

"Fame, as it is always a [blab](#),

so oftentimes a liar"

-- Bishop Hall

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**Herbert Lockyer - What She Saw and Said** - Not only did Solomon's "wisdom excell the wisdom of the children of the east country." God also added to his wisdom, countless precious possessions. Although accustomed to grandeur herself, the magnificence which the queen gazed upon in Jerusalem was beyond her conception. What she saw was almost as remarkable as what she had heard — Solomon's gorgeous palace with its retinue of servants, ministers and cupbearers with their conspicuous apparel and also the most beautiful house of the Lord, in which gold was everywhere. Such external wealth and prosperity overwhelmed her until "there was no more spirit in her," implying an almost speechless condition because of all the wonders she had seen. Her highest expectation had been outstripped by the abundant rich stateliness she had witnessed. Seeing Solomon in all his glory enraptured the queen's senses, and so overcome she confessed to the king 1Ki 10:7-8. Ellicott says of these sincere sentiments, "They breathe at once the spirit of Oriental compliment, and a certain seriousness of tone, as of a mind stirred by unusual wonder and admiration." (BORROW [ALL THE WOMEN IN THE BIBLE - PAGE 198](#))

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**Robert Hawker** - IF the Queen of the South was so astonished in the view of Solomon's wisdom, what ought to be thy surprise, my soul, in the contemplation of Jesus, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? When thou didst first hear of Jesus, and when constrained by necessity to come to him, a poor, blind, ignorant sinner, how little didst thou conceive either of thyself or him! He told thee, indeed, all that was in thine heart, and made thy very spirit, like her's, to faint within thee, when he shewed thy sin and his salvation. Surely then, and often since, even now hast thou been constrained to say, as she did, the half was not told thee by others, of what sweet discoveries he hath made to thee of himself. Think then, my soul, what holy surprise and joy will burst in upon thee in the day when, at the fountain-head of glory in his courts above, he will unfold all his beauty, love, and wisdom; when thou shalt see him as he is, and know even as thou art known!

**1 Kings 10:8 "How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom.**

- **How blessed are your men:** 2Ch 9:7,8 Pr 3:13,14 8:34 10:21 13:20 Lu 10:39-42 11:28,31

### **GODLY WISDOM IS A BLESSING TO HEARERS**

**How blessed** ([barak](#); Lxx - [makarios](#)) **are your men, how blessed** ([barak](#) Lxx - [makarios](#)) **are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom.** Why Are Solomon's Men and Servants "Blessed"? The Queen of Sheba recognizes that Solomon's advisors and servants are fortunate because (1) they have constant access to Solomon's wisdom, (2) Solomon's divinely-given wisdom (1 Kings 3:12) was unparalleled (3) His court members could hear and learn from him every day (4) They live in a kingdom of prosperity and order (5) Solomon's rule was marked by peace, wealth, and international fame. (6) The people under his leadership experienced stability and abundance. (7) They serve a righteous and wise king. In contrast to oppressive rulers, Solomon's leadership was admired worldwide. His fear of the Lord (initially) made his governance just and beneficial. His fear of the LORD would soon be dissipated leading to disaster, but for now the Queen of Sheba witnessed the height of his kingdom.

**Peter Pett:** She declared that his wisdom was such that all who served him should count themselves fortunate. How this fulsome praise must have delighted Solomon's heart. And how dangerous it was for him. It is little wonder that he began to believe that he could do anything that he liked with impunity. He saw himself as the centre of his world, and as being beyond requiring advice or rebuke.

**1 Kings 10:9 "Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the LORD loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness."**

- **Blessed:** 1Ki 5:7 Ps 72:17-19, delighteth, Ps 18:19 22:8 Isa 42:1 62:4
- **because the:** De 7:8 1Ch 17:22 2Ch 2:11
- **to do justice and righteousness:** 2Sa 8:15 23:3 Ps 72:2 Pr 8:15,16 Isa 9:7 11:4,5 32:1,2 Jer 23:5,6 Ro 13:3,4

## Related Passages:

Psalm 72:1-2<sup>+</sup> A Psalm of Solomon. Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your **righteousness** to the king's son. 2 May he judge Your people with **righteousness** And Your afflicted with **justice**.

## QUEEN SEES GLORY OF SOLOMON & HIS GOD

**Blessed** ([barak](#) Lxx - [makarios](#)) **be the LORD your God Who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the LORD loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness** This pagan queen is now praising God! She did not receive just earthly wisdom, but wisdom from on high.

Many think that the Queen of Sheba became a believer in Jehovah and her "theology" would support that premise. The phrase **LORD loved Israel forever** implies that Solomon had explained to her the Davidic Covenant where Nathan speaking for God stated "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me **forever**; your throne shall be established **forever**." (2Sa 7:16) She recognizes that it was not Solomon's wisdom which gained the throne, but it was Yahweh Who made him king! And finally she acknowledges that the purpose of Solomon's rule was to **do justice and righteousness**. Jewish writers believe that she was converted to the worship of the true God.

**William Barnes:** it is nothing less than Yahweh's reputation that underlies all these Solomonic blessings. (Solomon's role, as it were, is clearly to rule "with justice and righteousness" (cf. Ps 72:1-2, not coincidentally entitled "a psalm of Solomon"). (See [1-2 Kings - Page 102](#))

**Herbert Lockyer** on Luke 11:31+ - The Queen of Sheba was superior to the generation Jesus wrestled with in that she journeyed some 1,200 miles to hear and see Solomon, yet a greater than Solomon was in their midst and they would not listen to His God-given truths. They failed to appreciate Christ as Wisdom incarnate. "A greater than Solomon is here." How blind were the religious enemies of Christ to the fact that the manifold wisdom of God, some of which Solomon had been made the recipient of, was before them personified in Him who was made unto us Wisdom! So, the illustrious Queen of Sheba "rises up in judgment," and is poised in mid-air for all to see. She does not say a word, but Jesus voices her appreciation and appropriation of the divine wisdom to which Solomon gave utterance. The Queen of Sheba will not rise in judgment to condemn any of us, if only in our hearts there reigns the One who is, in every way, greater than Solomon. She sought the wisest and most wonderful teacher she knew of. Loving wealth and wonders, she loved wisdom more, and made the long and patient journey to the throne-city of the king. Is it not the height of folly to despise all which the King of kings, who is closer to us than breathing, so freely offers us out of His royal bounty? (BORROW [ALL THE WOMEN IN THE BIBLE - PAGE 198](#))

**Utley** on **justice and righteousness** - This pair of terms first appears in connection to David's reign in 2 Sam. 8:15 (cf. 1 Chr. 18:14).

1. Here, they are used of Solomon (cf. 2 Chr. 9:8).
2. In Isa. 9:7 they are used of the coming Davidic King, the Messiah (also note Isa. 32:16; 23:5).
3. They are used of idolatrous Israel in Isa. 59:14.
4. In Jer. 9:24 they describe YHWH's character.

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**F B Meyer** - 1 Kings 10:9 Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee.

There were two reasons why Solomon was on the throne. First, because of God's love to him; secondly, because of God's love to Israel. May we not address our Savior with similar expressions of gladness as those which the queen addressed to a less than He?

How well it is, now and again, to let ourselves go in exuberant adoration! Prayer is good, but it may revolve too largely about our own needs and desires: thanks are right, when we have received great benefits at His hands; but praise is best, because the heart forgets itself and earth and time, in enlarged conceptions of its adorable Lover and Savior.

We are reminded in this connection of a noble hymn of old John Ryland:—

"Thou Son of God, and Son of Man,  
Beloved, adored Emmanuel,  
Who didst, before all time began,  
In glory with Thy Father dwell:  
"We sing Thy love, who didst in time,

For us, humanity assume,  
To answer for the sinner's crime,  
To suffer in the sinner's room.  
"The ransomed Church Thy glory sings,  
The hosts of heaven Thy will obey;  
And, Lord of lords, and King of kings,  
We celebrate Thy blessed sway."

We can never praise Him enough. Our furthest thoughts fall short of the reality. His wisdom and prosperity exceed His fame. No question He cannot answer; no desire He cannot gratify; no munificence He cannot excel. Happy are they who stand continually before Him. Let us see that this is our happy privilege; not content to pay Him a transient visit, returning to our own land, but communing with Him always of that which is in our heart.

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### **James Butler - THE QUEEN'S WORDS** 1 Kings 10:9 [Butler's Sermon Starters](#)

"Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice" (1 Kings 10:9).

The Queen of Sheba came a great distance to see Solomon. After she had been shown around, she made this great statement in our text. Solomon may have excelled her in wisdom but her statement said she was no fool.

#### FIRST—THE PRAISE FOR GOD

"Blessed be the LORD thy God." Solomon had lived in such a way that the Queen of Sheba honored God by her words here. Will people speak highly of God because of the way we live or will they speak dishonorably of God. The Queen of Sheba spoke well, but we must remember that it was Solomon's life that prompted her speech.

#### SECOND—THE POSITION FROM GOD

"The LORD thy God ... set thee on the throne of Israel." Position comes from God. Men may appear to appoint to elect but no one gets position without God's permission. We may sometimes think it is hopeless to think of some position for us, but if God wants you in that position, He will put you there. "The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." (Daniel 4:17). This statement embodies the Divine principle of every position of service.

#### THIRD—THE PASSION OF GOD

"The LORD thy God, which delighted in thee ... the Lord loved Israel." The Queen of Sheba recognized God as loving. Scripture says, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). God does not love us because of what we are but because of what He is. His love far exceeds our love. The greatest exhibition of His love and of any love for that matter was Calvary. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

#### FOURTH—THE PROMISE FROM GOD

"The LORD loved Israel forever." The Queen of Sheba recognized the unique place of Israel among the nations. They have the greatest future of any nation. Israel will never cease. Israel will survive every attack by its enemies today and everyday in the future.

#### FIFTH—THE PURPOSE OF GOD

"Made he thee king, to do judgement and justice." God does not give us position for our own aggrandizement. He always has a noble purpose in where he places us. Solomon was made king primarily so he would execute judgment and justice. This is what God wants all rulers to do but few do it. They are put in position to execute judgment and justice. But most rulers look at their position in terms of what advantage they can get out of the position for themselves not what they can do for others. Oh, yes, at election time they appear to be running for office to do the people justice, etc. but once the election is over the elected politician begins maneuvering for his own advantage.

**1 Kings 10:10 She gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and a very great amount of spices and precious stones. Never again did such abundance of spices come in as that which the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon.**

- **she gave:** 1Ki 10:2 9:14 Ps 72:10,15 Mt 2:11

- **spices:** Ge 43:11 Ex 30:34
- **and precious:** Pr 3:13-15 20:15 Rev 21:11

## QUEEN LAVISHES SOLOMON WITH EXTRAVAGANT GIFTS

**She gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and a very great amount of spices and precious stones. Never again did such abundance of spices come in as that which the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon** - 120 talents of gold would be about 4.1 metric tons is approximately 9,038.94 pounds, which would be valued at about \$237,134,896, based on a gold price of \$1,800 per troy ounce.

The verse says no such amount of **spices** ever came again, suggesting it was an unprecedented trade event. Spices in the ancient world were extremely valuable, used for: Religious rituals (e.g., incense in the Temple). Perfumes and anointing oils. Medicinal and culinary purposes. The spices likely included frankincense, myrrh, cinnamon, and other rare Arabian or African spices.

The **precious stones** likely included onyx, beryl, sapphire, and other gemstones, used in: Temple decorations. Royal jewelry and treasury. Ornamental items in the palace.

[SPECIAL TOPIC: ANE WEIGHTS AND VOLUMES.](#)

**1 Kings 10:11 Also the ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir a very great number of almug trees and precious stones.**

- **from Ophir:** 1Ki 9:27-28 2Ch 8:18 Ps 45:9
- **almug:** 2Ch 2:8 2Ch 9:10-11

### Related Passages:

1 Kings 9:26-28 King Solomon also built a fleet of ships in Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. 27 And Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, sailors who knew the sea, along with the servants of Solomon. 28 They went to Ophir and took four hundred and twenty talents of gold from there, and brought it to King Solomon.

2 Chronicles 8:18 And Hiram by his servants sent him ships and servants who knew the sea; and they went with Solomon's servants to Ophir, and took from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon.

Psalms 45:9 Kings' daughters are among Your noble ladies; At Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir.

2 Chronicles 2:8 "Send me also cedar, cypress and alnum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants know how to cut timber of Lebanon; and indeed my servants will work with your servants,

2 Chronicles 9:10-11 The servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir, also brought alnum trees and precious stones. 11 From the alnum trees the king made steps for the house of the LORD and for the king's palace, and lyres and harps for the singers; and none like that was seen before in the land of Judah.

**Also the ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir a very great number of almug trees and precious stones** - King Hiram of Tyre (a Phoenician king) provided ships and sailors to assist Solomon in maritime trade. These ships were part of a joint fleet between Israel and Tyre, sailing to Ophir to acquire luxury goods (1 Kings 9:26-28).

**Ophir** was a distant and wealthy land famous for its gold, exotic wood, and precious stones. Its exact location is unknown, but scholars suggest southern Arabia (modern Yemen), eastern Africa, or India.

**Almug trees** (sometimes called Alnum trees) were rare and highly valued. Used for making musical instruments (harps, lyres) for the Temple (1 Kings 10:12), constructing fine furniture for the palace and temple. It was possibly sandalwood (used for fragrances and high-quality woodwork).

1 Kings 10:12 The king made of the almug trees supports for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also lyres and harps for the singers; such almug trees have not come in again nor have they been seen to this day.

- harps: 1Ch 23:5 25:1-31 Ps 92:1-3 150:3-5 Rev 14:2,3

## ALMUG TREES FOR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

The king made of the almug trees supports for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also lyres and harps for the singers; such almug trees have not come in again nor have they been seen to this day - See [blog note](#) on Almug trees and harps. **To this day** This is a literary marker of a later editor or an author living after the events described.

**MacArthur on to this day** - The phrase is used from the perspective of one who lived and wrote before the destruction of the temple in 586 b.c. The writer of 1 Kings incorporated such sources into his book (cf. [1Kin 9:13, 21; 10:12; 12:19](#)). (See [The MacArthur Bible Commentary: A Faithful, Focused ... - Page 404](#)) (See longer note at 1Ki 8:8)

**Wikipedia** - **Algum** (Hebrew: אֲלֻמִּים, *romanized*: 'algūmmīm) or **almug** (Hebrew: אֲמֻגִּים, *romanized*: 'almuggīm)<sup>[1]</sup> is a type of [wood](#) referred to in the [Hebrew Bible](#). According to the [First Book of Kings](#) (1 Kings 10:12), and the [Second Book of Chronicles](#) (2 Chronicles 2:8; 9:10–11), it was used, together with [cedar](#) and [pine](#), in the construction of the pillars of [Solomon's Temple](#) and the crafting of musical instruments for use in the temple. Some [English translations](#) say that it was used for the steps rather than the pillars<sup>[2]</sup> and biblical commentators [Carl Friedrich Keil](#) and [Franz Delitzsch](#) suggest that "we should have to think of steps with [bannisters](#)" to make sense of the text.<sup>[3]</sup> It is likely that the wood was brought by the ships of [Tarshish](#), sent from the [Red Sea](#) port of Ezion-Giber, from the distant country of [Ophir](#), and was very valuable.

**Utley** - "almug trees" The UBS Helps for Translator Series entitled "*Fauna and Flora of the Bible*", p. 81, notes there are two spellings of this tree.

1. alummim (2 Chr. 2:7)
2. almuggim (only here)

It is often called "sandalwood" (from Sanskrit), which was imported from southern India. It was a hard wood of reddish color.

1 Kings 10:13 King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she requested, besides what he gave her according to his royal bounty. Then she turned and went to her own land together with her servants.

[AMP](#) King Solomon [in turn] gave to the queen of Sheba everything that she wanted, whatever she asked, besides what he gave to her from his royal bounty. So she returned to her own country, she and her servants.

[CSB](#) King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba her every desire—whatever she asked—besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty. Then she, along with her servants, returned to her own country.

[CEB](#) King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba everything she wanted and all that she had asked for, in addition to what he had already given her from his own personal funds. Then she and her servants returned to her homeland.

[ESV](#)

And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired, whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of King Solomon. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.

[EXB](#) King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba everything she wanted and asked for, in addition to what he had already given her -of his wealth [according to his royal bounty; or out of his royal treasury]. Then she and her -servants [attendants; retinue] returned to her own country.

[TLB](#) In exchange for the gifts from the queen of Sheba, King Solomon gave her everything she asked him for, besides the presents he had already planned. Then she and her servants returned to their own land.

[MSG](#) King Solomon for his part gave the queen of Sheba all her heart's desire—everything she asked for, on top of what he had already so generously given her. Satisfied, she returned home with her train of servants.

- **all her desire:** 1Ki 10:2 9:1 Ps 20:4 37:4 Mt 15:28 Joh 14:13,14 Eph 3:20

## SOLOMON RECIPROCATES AND QUEEN RETURNS

**King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she requested, besides what he gave her according to his royal bounty** - She had brought quite a largess to Solomon and here Solomon reciprocated by giving her whatever she asked for out of his royal bounty. This reciprocation could also represent formation of a political alliance.

**Then she turned and went to her own land together with her servants** - Thus concludes Solomon's second interaction with women, the first being with two prostitutes to demonstrate his wisdom and the second with a foreign royal woman to also demonstrate his wisdom (as well as his wealth). This female encounter provides a segue into chapter 11 where foreign women signal his decline and demise and the division of the nation of Isr

**William Barnes** on Solomon and Sheba consorting - In Ethiopian tradition she is famously depicted as a most noble queen who ended up being seduced by Solomon, and giving birth to a son Menelik, the founder of the Ethiopian dynasty (See [1-2 Kings - Page 101](#))

**Iain Duguid:** Solomon's reciprocal giving of gifts (as would be expected in international relationships) concludes the account of the queen's visit. The wording gives no details beyond the fact that he "**gave [her] all that she desired**" (cf. the earlier similarly general answered all her questions"; 2 Chron. 9:2). It is a much later tradition that speaks of a union resulting in the birth of Menelik I, the founder of the Ethiopian dynasty that persisted with some gaps into the twentieth century as the "house of Solomon."

[Wikipedia - Menelik I](#) (Ge'ez: , *Mənilək*) was the claimed first [Emperor of Ethiopia](#). According to [Kebra Nagast](#), a 14th-century national epic, in the [10th century BC](#) he is said to have inaugurated the [Solomonic dynasty](#) of Ethiopia, so named because Menelik I was the son of the [biblical King Solomon](#) of [ancient Israel](#) and of [Makeda](#), the [Queen of Sheba](#).<sup>[4][5]</sup>

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### The Royal Bounty By Frances Ridley Havergal

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 10:13

INTRODUCTION: When God answers our prayers, we are greatly humbled and we cry out, "Who am I, O Lord, that You have so wonderfully answered my prayer." But it is more humbling still when we stand face to face with great things which the Lord has done for us and given us, for which we never asked at all, nor even thought of asking—Royal Bounty. Let us give things today for the overwhelming mercies for which we never asked.

1. We did not ask Him to choose us in Christ Jesus before the world began (Eph. 1:4).
2. We did not ask Him to call us by His grace (2 Tim. 1:9).
3. We did not ask to be taught to pray. Jesus put into our sinful hearts the thought of asking Him for that which we need (Job 37:19).

CONCLUSION: In addition to granting her requests, King Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba from his "royal bounty." Psalm 68:19 says: "Blessed be the LORD, who daily loads us with benefits."

**1 Kings 10:14 Now the weight of gold which came in to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,**

- **666 talents of gold:** 1Ki 9:28

#### Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 9:13 Now the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,

## THE WEIGHT AND WINGS OF GOLD

**Now the weight of gold which came in to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold**([note](#)) - This describes the revenue



Solomon received from trade routes and vassal states in one year. Solomon had so much gold that the writer of Chronicles says "The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the lowland." (2Ch 1:15) Within five years after Solomon's death, [Shishak](#), king of Egypt, came and took all this gold away (1Ki 14:25–26; 2Ch 12:2, 9–11). How ironic that in one of his famous proverbs, Solomon wrote

"When you set your eyes on it, it is gone.  
For wealth certainly makes itself wings,  
Like an eagle that flies toward the heavens."  
-- (Proverbs 23:5)

**THOUGHT** - Beloved of God, do you really believe Solomon's proverb? Perhaps you have experienced this proverb. Believers are those who should now "look not at the things which are seen (LIKE GOLD), but at the things which are not seen (HEAVEN, ETERNAL TREASURES); for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2Co 4:18+) For those who "have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking** ([present imperative](#) = calls for lifestyle, habitual practice - see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your mind** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) on the things above, not on the things that are on earth." (Col 3:1-2+, cf 1Ti 6:17+, Jas 5:1-3+) Jesus' advice (command) is timeless - "**Do not store up** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. "But **store up** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Mt 6:19-21+) Last question beloved, where is your heart? Solomon's heart would soon bring disaster on the entire nation (1Ki 11:3-4+).

*"Riches are like salt water—  
the more you drink, the more you thirst."*  
-- Warren Wiersbe

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**666 TALENTS OF GOLD** - The standard weight of one talent of gold in biblical times was approximately 75 pounds (34 kilograms). 666 talents of gold = 49,950 pounds (almost 25 tons!!!) of gold OR 799,200 ounces of gold AND at 2024 prices of about \$2000 per ounce, the grand total would be about \$1.598 billion USD. There is a touch of irony in the number **666** which is described in Revelation 13:18+ as the symbol of the Antichrist (Beast), the mark of the Beast, which if taken doomed one to eternal punishment and if not taken prevented one from buying or selling and possibly being executed by the Antichrist's henchmen.

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### **Coram Deo - The Fall of King Solomon**

The weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents. [1 Kings 10:14]

Before he became King, David collected wives in violation of the laws of kingship found in Deuteronomy 17:16–17. Graciously, God did not allow these sins to disqualify David or destroy the order of the kingdom. The prophet Nathan announced the new kingdom covenant God established with David and his house. Shortly after this new covenant was set up, David fell into adultery with Bathsheba, a new fall that threatened to destroy the kingdom.

We see the same pattern in the life of Solomon. At the beginning of his reign, Solomon entered into a politically expedient marriage with the royal house of Egypt, and he worshiped carelessly on the high places (1 Kings 3:1–3). Yet God did not hold these sins against him, but instead appeared to him at Gibeon and blessed his plan to build the temple. God gave Solomon wisdom and godly influence throughout the world. Then, after the kingdom was settled, Solomon fell further into sin, a fall that disrupted the kingdom.

After the account of the visit of the Queen of Sheba, the pinnacle of Solomon's greatness and influence, we are told that Solomon broke the three laws of kingship. First, he multiplied gold and wealth for himself. Surely the number 666 in 1 Kings 10:14 has prophetic significance (see Rev. 13:18). Second, he multiplied horses and sent to Egypt for them (1 Kings 10:26–29). Third, he multiplied wives and concubines, and they turned his heart away from the Lord (1 Kings 11:1–8). He also instituted forced labor, reducing the people to slavery, thereby "returning them to Egypt" (1 Kings 12:4). Solomon's godly wisdom so declined until he had forgotten the meaning of the temple he so lavishly constructed.

Just as David's great fall brought trouble on his house for the rest of his days, so Solomon's great fall brought war upon the land for the rest of his reign. Hadad the Edomite rose against him, as did Rezon of Zobah. Solomon's greatest threat arose in the person of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who was himself raised up by God through the prophet Ahijah to oppose both Solomon and his son Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:9–40).

**Coram Deo** With God there is forgiveness and abundant mercy. He is long-suffering and slow to wrath. This was evident with both David and Solomon, yet God has appointed boundaries which, when crossed, provoked his anger and discipline. Think of Solomon if you are playing brinkmanship with sin, pushing it to the limit. For how can you tell when you have reached the limit God will tolerate. Repent immediately, before God chastises you in discipline.

**1 Kings 10:15 besides that from the traders and the wares of the merchants and all the kings of the Arabs and the governors of the country.**

- **all the kings:** 1Ch 9:24 2Ch 9:13,14 Ps 72:10 Isa 21:13 Ga 4:25

## SOLOMON'S KINGDOM WAS A TRADE HUB

**besides that from the traders and the wares of the merchants and all the kings of the Arabs and the governors of the country.** Here we see 4 groups from whom Solomon received revenue which helps explain his massive annual accumulation of gold. The **traders** (Hebrew: אַנְשֵׁי הַרְכָּלִים, anshei ha-rochelim) were traveling merchants who engaged in long-distance trade. The word "**wares**" (סַחַר, sachar) refers to imported goods and merchandise. **Merchants** (רְכָלִים, rochelim) were businesspeople who sold valuable commodities like precious stones, metals, and exotic materials. This refers to Arabian tribal rulers who controlled the incense and spice trade routes. They paid tributes or sent gifts to Solomon as a sign of alliance or submission. **Governors** (פְּחוֹת, pachot) were regional officials who ruled under Solomon's authority. They collected taxes and tributes from different provinces and sent them to the king. These **governors** controlled areas such as Edom, Moab, and other territories conquered by David and ruled by Solomon. This verse refers to the various sources of Solomon's wealth, indicating that his income came from multiple channels, including trade, taxes, and tributes from foreign rulers.

These verse about Solomon's wealth reflect a fulfillment of God's promise in 1 Kings 3:13- "I have also given you what you have not asked, both **riches** and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days." Sadly, although Solomon was immensely wealthy, his extravagance and heavy taxation later contributed to Israel's division (1 Kings 12:4-16).

**1 Kings 10:16 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 shekels of gold on each large shield.**

- **two hundred:** 1Ki 14:26-28 2Ch 9:15,16 12:9,10

### Related Passages:

Proverbs 23:5 "When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings, Like an eagle that flies toward the heavens."

## CEREMONIAL SHIELDS OF GOLD

**King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 shekels of gold on each large shield** Gold is a soft metal and so these could hardly be meant for defense in battle but more for decoration. Although it is only an approximation, each large shield overlaid with 600 shekels of gold would contain about 15 pounds of gold, valued at approximately \$637,500 based on current gold prices. Decorative shields were common in the Ancient Near East, serving both ceremonial and symbolic purposes. These shields were often displayed in palaces, temples, and treasuries to signify power, wealth, and divine protection (THIS LATTER NOT APPLYING TO SOLOMON BUT TO THE PAGAN KINGS).

Egyptian temples and tombs depict ceremonial shields carried by Pharaohs or placed in sacred sites. Shields were often gold-plated or decorated with divine imagery (e.g., gods, animals, or hieroglyphic inscriptions). Example: King Tutankhamun's tomb contained ceremonial shields adorned with religious motifs. Reliefs from Assyrian palaces (e.g., Nineveh, Nimrud) show soldiers carrying decorated shields, sometimes with intricate patterns or embossed figures. Babylonian temples housed gold and bronze shields, likely as offerings to deities. Hittite carvings depict kings holding large decorative shields in processions.

**1 Kings 10:17 He made 300 shields of beaten gold, using three minas of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.**

- in the house: 1Ki 7:2

#### **Related Passages:**

1 Kings 14:26+ He ([SHISHAK PHARAOH OF EGYPT](#)) took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and he took everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

2 Chronicles 9:16 He made 300 shields of beaten gold, using three hundred shekels of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

### **SMALLER GOLD SHIELDS FOR HOUSE OF FOREST OF LEBANON**

**He made 300 shields of beaten gold, using three minas of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon** - The approximate value of each shield overlaid with three minas of gold at about 3.97 pounds would be valued at approximately \$168,650 based on current gold prices.

**Utley** - "the house of the forest of Lebanon" This was a large building for public/state gatherings. It also was the place for Solomon to judge Israel.

**Peter Pett:** The prophet might well have had a wry smile on his face when he wrote these words, for he would know that in the not too distant future he would be deliberately pointing out that these shields would be appropriated by the Pharaoh, and would be carried off to Egypt (1 Kings 14:26). Solomon's glory would thus not be long lasting. It was a fading glory because of his arrogance and disobedience. What YHWH supplied, YHWH could take away.

**Believer's Study Bible** - The apparent contradiction between this verse and 1 Kin. 10:17 regarding the amount of gold in the 300 shields is resolved in that the figures reflect two different methods of reckoning the same items. The system(s) of ancient weights referred to in the O.T. is complicated. There is evidence of "heavy" and "light" systems employed so that the type had to be specified -- e.g., "according to the king's standard" (2 Sam. 14:26), "according to the shekel of the sanctuary" (Ex. 30:13, 24), and perhaps "currency of the merchants" (Gen. 23:16). Mesopotamia and Ugarit also had different systems. Thus, one scholar suggests that if the three minas in 1 Kin. 10:17 equals 300 shekels in 2 Chr. 9:16, then Chronicles refers to the royal shekel as in 2 Sam. 14:26. The royal shekel weighed only half the "sacred shekel," which was 50 shekels per mina. This is complicated, however, by the Mesopotamian sexagesimal system (numerical system based on the number 60) in which a mina equaled 60 shekels, a system evidenced by Ezek. 45:12 (unless the text of that verse has been corrupted in transmission, as some have suggested). Another explanation of the difference between the Kings and Chronicles texts begins by noting that the term "shekel" is not explicitly stated in the Hebrew of either. If the unit we are to assume is the bekah, which was a half-shekel (Ex. 38:26), then three minas equal 300 bekahs or 150 shekels, and a mina was its usual 50 shekels. The difficulty with this explanation is that the Hebrew word beqa` or "bekah" is only mentioned twice in the Bible -- in Gen. 24:22, where it is translated "half," and in Ex. 38:26--so when the unit is unspecified, the shekel is usually assumed.

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

- a great throne: 2Ch 9:17-19 Ps 45:6 110:1 122:5 Heb 1:3,8 Rev 20:11
- ivory: 1Ki 10:22 22:39 Ps 45:8 Eze 27:6 Am 6:4 Rev 18:12

**Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with refined gold** - Three verse are used to describe the magnificent of Solomon's throne, something not found elsewhere in the Bible except in the description of the "Throne of thrones" in Revelation 4:2-6+

Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. 3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around

the throne, like an emerald in appearance. 4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. 5 Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; 6 and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.

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### **Loins Girded - Throne of Ivory 1Ki. 10:18**

Solomon was not only a type of Jesus Christ because of the wisdom that lured kings of the south to him to prove him with hard questions, but also because of his reign of peace. His name meant king of peace. His father David had established the kingdom in a bloody struggle, but after the era of the suffering and fighting king followed the era of the king of peace. Beautiful was the throne upon which he was seated. The Bible describes it as a throne of ivory, either made completely of ivory or profusely inlaid with ivory, and also embellished with pure gold. Everything of this throne witnessed majesty. People had to climb six steps, because a throne should be exalted above all other seats, since it is the only and all-dominating place. Besides, at the railings stood two carved lions, —the kings in the world of the animals, while upon each step there was on both sides such a reclining lion. Upon this majestic throne was not seated an imposing king, but a king of peace in whose mouth were words of mercy.

Who does not think in this instance of the great and exalted throne to which Christ arose to take place at the right hand of the power of God, from where He shall once come to judge the living and the dead? First He established His kingdom as David's Son and Lord upon earth in a way of blood and tears; now the suffering appearance of David has been changed in the ruler's posture of Solomon and He is seated as the King of Peace upon the throne of ivory in the very centre of power of the whole universe, to bless all who look up to Him in respectful faith.

Comfort, never to be taken from us, that His dominion is a dominion of peace. We do not need to remain in fear and trembling at a distance, but that King of Peace attracts us Himself to come nearer, to lay down all our sorrow before Him, to share all our guilt with Him, to look up to Him with an hopeful eye, so that He may command peace in our soul. He looks down, although from so elevated a place, with kindly eye upon them who kneel humbly. He does not reject us, but reaches us the golden sceptre of grace if we reach up pleading hands to Him. However, let us consider that it is a throne full of majesty. Jesus Christ is a King of Peace, yes, but royal lions decorate the throne! This calls us to respect and submission, prevents too much commonality, and keeps us from disrespectful audacity. Let us approach boldly, but with bowed down heads and holy respect, so that we may experience that the white throne of holiness is a throne of grace!

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**1 Kings 10:19 There were six steps to the throne and a round top to the throne at its rear, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms.**

**There were six steps to the throne and a round top to the throne at its rear, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms** Climbing six steps to the throne made the king appear exalted above those seeking judgment, reinforcing his supreme authority. Lions were widely used in the ancient Near East as symbols of strength, courage, and protection. Archaeological findings from Mesopotamia and Egypt show that lion motifs were common in royal thrones.

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**1 Kings 10:20 Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like it was made for any other kingdom.**

- lions: Ge 49:9 Nu 23:24 24:9 Rev 5:5

**Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like it was made for any other kingdom.** The number twelve is significant in the Bible, often representing the twelve tribes of Israel. The lions were placed on each of the six steps leading up to the throne, meaning there were two lions per step (one on each side). This placement created a grand and intimidating approach to the throne, visually reinforcing Solomon's greatness and divine wisdom. Solomon's throne was unmatched in its grandeur, even among other great kingdoms like Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. Indeed this was Israel's golden age and the throne symbolized this truth making Solomon the most renowned king of the ancient near east.

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**1 Kings 10:21 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 was of silver; it was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon.**

- **drinking:** 2Ch 9:20-22
- **the house:** 1Ki 10:17 7:2

## **SOLOMON MULTIPLIES GOLD AND SILVER**

**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 was of silver; it was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon** - This degree of extravagance impresses me as flaunting one's wealth. 1Ki 10:27 adds "The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem."

**THOUGHT** - Oh that God's Spirit would so work in our hearts that we might always be able to hear and heed Jesus' clear warning "No one (HOW MANY?) can serve two masters; for (EXPLAINS ENSLAVEMENT) either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth (GOLD)." (Mt 6:24+) We need to remember that that is only one letter difference between **gold** and **God**. As Solomon's devotion to God declined, it seems to have been replaced by love of gold!

Solomon is now in open rebellion presumptively ignoring the clear prohibition of Dt 17:17+ which states "He (THE KING) shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; **nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.**" Solomon is deceived by and ensnared by sin to the point that he cannot even remember the warning words he himself penned in Proverbs 5:22+

*"His own iniquities will capture the wicked,  
And he will be held with the cords of his sin."*

**Comment** - Solomon at this point is captured and bound fast by his sin. The word for capture in the Septuagint is [agreuo](#) which is a hunting or fishing term that speaks of the animal caught or trapped. In short, [agreuo](#) gives us a vivid picture of the power of [Sin](#) to "hunt down" and "capture" man like prey, whether "the deadly hunter" be sexual sin or any other sin we continue to practice and from which we refuse to repent (Memorize Romans 8:13+!)

### **Related Resources:**

- [Deceitfulness of Sin](#)
- [The Danger and Deceitfulness of a Hardened Heart](#)

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### **Robert Hawker —1 Kings 10:21.**

Behold, my soul! the splendour of Solomon, and figure to thyself what a court and people his must have been, with whom silver was as nothing; and then turn thy thoughts to Jesus, and ask thyself, whether it be possible to suppose that he, with whom are hid "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," can be otherwise than rich himself, and abundantly gracious to enrich his people. Thy Solomon, thy Jesus, hath all things, and all things richly to dispense. He is the universal Lord and proprietor of all. In him dwelleth all fulness; "yea, durable riches and righteousness." And what endears Jesus, and marks the superiority of his kingdom, is, that every thing in it is everlasting. Solomon's splendour was great; but it was limited to the period of his life; yea, less than life. But Jesus is everlasting—the riches and the blessings he hath, and which he gives, are everlasting. Jesus maketh both gold and silver, yea, the riches of grace and wisdom, as the stones of the street for abundance; and their blessedness is, like him, eternal. So that here we find an eternity of blessings. All beside is hollow, transitory, fading. But with Jesus it is solid and substantial. "I will cause them," he saith, "that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasure." Precious Lord! may I never contemplate earthly pageantry, without taking into the view thy glory; and while I behold human grandeur, however splendid, or however shining, which is but for the day, may my soul hasten to the consideration of thy glory, which is a portion for thy redeemed to live upon to all eternity!

**1 Kings 10:22 For the king had at sea the ships of Tarshish with the ships of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.**

- **Tarshish:** 1Ki 22:48 Ge 10:4 2Ch 9:21 20:36,37 Ps 48:7 72:10 Isa 2:16 Isa 23:1,6,10 60:9 66:19 Eze 27:12 Jon 1:3, Tarshish

- **ivory:** 1Ki 10:18 Am 3:15
- **peacocks:** Job 39:13

## SHIPS OF TARSHISH FACILITATE INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**For the king had at sea the ships of Tarshish with the ships of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.** **Ships of Tarshish** does not necessarily mean ships from a place called Tarshish, but rather refers to a specific type of large, sea-worthy trading vessels capable of long voyages. These ships were large, sturdy vessels, possibly Phoenician in design, capable of crossing the Mediterranean and beyond. The phrase "ships of Tarshish" was often used to describe any fleet capable of extensive sea trade, similar to calling modern large cargo ships "ocean liners." This verse shows that Solomon's kingdom was connected to global trade networks.

**Peter Pett:** These large ships regularly set off on their voyages, and would be away 'three years' (one full year and two part years). This does not necessarily signify long voyages. Ships in those days did not just sail away into the sunset and return. They would visit different ports to trade and gather water and provisions, they would often hug the coast, they would be laid up at times because of unseasonal weather, they might remain in some ports for a long time until they had disposed of their produce and filled up with the goods they received in return. Thus it is difficult to know how much actual sailing time was included in the 'calculation'. They then returned with exotic goods such as gold, silver, ivory, and possibly apes and peacocks (the meaning of the nouns is uncertain, especially the latter, but they are presumably exotic creatures), which were a wonder to all who beheld them. These may not all, of course, have been obtained from their original home-lands. They may have been traded on by other vessels which had come from those places. Thus we have no real idea how far Solomon's fleet was able to penetrate. But to Israelites, unused to the sea, it would all have seemed wonderful, and added greatly to Solomon's glory.

**1 Kings 10:23 So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.**

- **became greater than all the kings of the earth:** 1Ki 3:12,13 4:29-34 2Ch 9:22,23 Ps 89:27 Eph 3:8 Col 1:18,19 Col 2:2,3

### Related Passages:

1 Timothy 6:17+ Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. **(SOLOMON SET HIS EYE ON RICHES AND TOOK HIS EYE OFF OF GOD TO HIS DEMISE!)**

Mark 4:19+ but the worries of the world, and the **deceitfulness of riches**, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

## THE GREATNESS OF SOLOMON & THE GOLDEN AGE OF ISRAEL

**So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom-** Solomon was the king whose fame knew no bounds but sadly whose appetite knew no bounds. He was greater than other human kings, but not great enough to control his appetite for wealth and women.

**Henry Morris** - This is an amazing testimony, but there is no reason to doubt it. Some nations may have ruled larger geographical areas at this time, but Solomon was greater in wisdom and wealth than any. For this period of history (about 1000 B.C.), very little extra-Biblical data is available from archaeology or any other sources.

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### The Danger of Finishing Badly By Rev. Peter Grainger

Scripture: 1 Kings 3, 10:23–11:13, especially 11:11 Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.

Introduction: News bulletins which report on marathons usually show two pictures: the beginning of the race with the huge mass of runners “taking off” and the end of the race with the winners breaking the tape at the finish. What we fail to see is the important part of the race: the middle. Many of those who started so well and so cheerfully struggle to keep going. Some limp home long after the first runners have finished and gone home. Others fail to finish at all. I want to look at a striking and sad example from the Bible of someone who started well but finished badly. That person was one of Israel’s greatest kings: Solomon.

1. Divine Favors (1 Ki 3:5–10). Right at the beginning of his reign, the Lord met with Solomon in a dream and the Lord granted him a remarkable favor. Wisely Solomon asked for wisdom (1 Kin. 3:10). Because of this wise choice, the Lord not only granted Solomon wisdom but also wealth beyond that of any other king, which gave to Solomon an international fame far beyond Israel’s borders. No one could have a better start in life and more God-given privileges, gifts, and possessions than Solomon. Yet none of it prevented him from ending his reign in disaster and incurring the Lord’s anger and condemnation and judgment. Indeed, it was because of all these privileges that the Lord judged Solomon all the more severely and held him accountable.

Application: If you are a Christian, you are the privileged recipient of divine favors. God has shown His love and grace to you, blessing you with every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph. 1:3). But none of these things in themselves will ensure our future prosperity as a church or that as individuals we will finish the course well.

The story of Solomon and the subsequent history of Israel is a solemn warning against any such complacency.

2. Divided Loyalties (1 Kin. 11:1–13). After describing the glory of Solomon in chapter 10, the writer of 1 Kings begins the next chapter with a note of contrast: “King Solomon loved many foreign women” (1 Kin. 11:1). The ensuing verses describe the huge number of wives and concubines that Solomon acquired. While polygamy is not specifically condemned in the Law of Moses, it is rarely practiced and almost always leads to disaster—illustrated not least by the lives of the patriarchs—the consequences of which we still live with even today. Most of these women were chosen from royal families of other nations so as to forge political alliances. While Solomon’s reign did enjoy peace, this decision was utterly condemned by the Lord for religious (and not racial) reasons. Verse 4 tells “his wives turned his heart after other gods ...” Solomon had a heart problem.

Application: Do you have a heart problem that’s affecting your running? The best remedy is to start with a healthy heart and keep it that way. And a healthy heart is always and can only be one that is fully devoted to the Lord your God. The first and great commandment is to love Him with all your heart and soul and mind and strength. And any other love which dilutes that love or even displaces it will affect your running and lead to spiritual disaster.

3. Disastrous Consequences (1 Kin. 11:9–13). To all outward appearances, Solomon’s policy seemed to work well as evidenced by Israel’s increasing influence in the region. Everything in Solomon’s life and kingdom seemed to be fine. Everyone in Israel was very happy—except for one person, the only person whose opinion really counted in the final analysis. The Lord became angry with Solomon. The Lord diagnosed his heart-problem and the consequence was that Solomon’s glorious reign would be followed by disaster (v. 11).

Application: Each one of us is fully accountable to the Lord for the choices we make, who we love and His commands that we either keep or disobey. Every day and every choice we make affects our future and whether we will finish well or badly. Old age will usually reveal the truth, how you have been running, and the real state of your heart. May we continue the race faithfully, and finish this year the way we want to finish the race of life: in obedience to our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

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**ILLUSTRATION** - When the Olympic Games were held in St. Louis in 1904, there was an unusual entry in the Marathon. A small Cuban mail carrier named Felix Caracal announced one day to his fellow postal workers he was going to travel to the States and win the Marathon for Cuba. He was without money or backing, yet he quit his job and began begging on the streets of Havana, seeking traveling funds. Somehow he collected enough money, took a boat to New Orleans, and promptly lost his money in a dice game. He hitched rides to St. Louis where he arrived hungry and in rags. Members of the American team befriended him and gave him some food and a place to sleep. He had no running clothes and no running shoes, only heavy street shoes. Nevertheless, he cut off his pants above the knees and there he was at the starting line, street shoes and all. It was a sweltering day; the heat and humidity were oppressive. One by one, many of the other runners collapsed. Felix, however, being from Cuba, thought nothing of the blistering conditions. With only two miles to go, Felix had a huge lead. He was running alongside an orchard and he spotted some apples and stopped to eat some of them. They were green, and soon he was stricken with severe stomach cramps. He lost the lead, though he did come in fourth, doubled-over with pain. Of the thirty-one starters that day, only fourteen finished, and Felix was fourth among them.

- **which God:** 1Ki 3:9,12,28 Pr 2:6 Da 1:17 2:21,23 5:11 Jas 1:5

## **SOURCE OF SOLOMON'S WISDOM - A DIVINE GIFT**

**All the earth was seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart-** The implication is that Solomon could still speak wise sayings. The problem was he was not living wisely before God.

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**J Vernon McGee** - King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (BORROW [Feasting on the Word page 15](#) to see the rest of McGee's discussion)

And all the earth consulted Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. (1 Kings 10:24)\*

The more I read this verse the more it impresses me. I am confident that God wants us to pause a moment and look at the significance of it. "All the earth consulted Solomon, to hear his wisdom." You see, God called the people of Israel to be His witnesses, but to be His witnesses in a different way from what He has called us to be. You recall that He has called us to go into all the world. Just prior to the day of pentecost, Christ told believers to begin at Jerusalem and to go out to Judaea, Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8). There was to be a moving away from Jerusalem.

Today the witness of the church is always outward. We must face out if we are to be witnesses for Him. But that was not Israel's case. Israel was never called to go to any nation outside and witness; Israelites were not called to go as missionaries.

I have always had great sympathy for Jonah because God asked him to do something that He had not asked His people to do in that day. He asked Jonah to go to Nineveh. That was unusual. This exception to the rule was made because God wanted to save that great city, and He wanted to give them this opportunity. However, the method in that day was this: when the nation Israel was faithful and true to God, worshiping and obeying God in Jerusalem, it would be such a witness that the world would come to Jerusalem and would accept the invitation of Israel, which was, "O come, let us go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord." The nations of the world would accept that invitation and would come. Did they ever do it? Was the nation Israel ever faithful to God in this respect?

It certainly was.

There was a brief period during the reigns of David and Solomon, which is approximately eighty years, almost a century, in which the word went out. During the reign of Solomon, we are told that all the earth heard, and that is not an exaggerated statement. All the civilized world, every great nation of that day, heard of the wisdom of Solomon, heard of the greatness of Solomon, and came to Jerusalem. Multitudes came to a saving knowledge of God because of that. (BORROW [Feasting on the Word page 15](#) to see the rest of McGee's discussion)

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**1 Kings 10:25 They brought every man his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, weapons, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.**

- every man: 1Ki 10:10 Jdg 3:15 1Sa 10:27 2Sa 8:2,10 2Ch 26:8 Job 42:11 Ps 72:10,15 Isa 36:16 Mt 2:11
- and mules: 1Ki 1:33 18:5 Ge 36:24 Ezr 2:66 Es 8:10,14 Isa 66:20 Eze 27:14
- a rate: 2Ki 17:4 2Ch 9:24

**They brought every man his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, weapons, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.**

**MacArthur:** The wisdom God had given to Solomon (v. 24) caused many rulers, like the queen of Sheba (vv 1-13), to bring presents to Solomon as they sought to buy his wisdom to be applied in their own nations. These gifts led Solomon to multiply for himself horses, as well as silver and gold; precisely that which God's king was warned against in Dt 17:16, 17. Solomon became ensnared by the blessings of his own wisdom and disobeyed God's commands. (See [The MacArthur Bible Commentary - Page 408](#))

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**1 Kings 10:26 Now Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.**



- **Solomon:** 1Ki 4:26 De 17:16 2Ch 1:14 9:25 Isa 2:7
- **in the cities:** 2Ch 9:25

**Now Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem** Solomon established a strong military force, particularly a chariot corps, which was considered a symbol of power and dominance in the ancient Near East. Chariots were elite military units, used for speed, mobility, and battlefield superiority. The presence of horsemen (cavalry) suggests a highly organized and strategic military setup. Chariots were mainly used for battle, royal processions, and guarding trade routes. Clearly Solomon was transgressing the instructions in Dt 17:16+. It seems Solomon may have been placing his confidence in his mighty army rather than the strong arm of the LORD. This reminds me of David's words in Psalm 20:7±

*Some boast in chariots and some in horses,  
But we will boast in the name of the LORD, our God.*

**THOUGHT** - Where is your confidence beloved, in the LORD or the money and power of this world? Pr 18:10-11+ says "The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous runs into it and is safe. A rich man's wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own imagination." May God give us His enabling grace to "Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight." (Pr 3:5-6+)

**Chariot Cities** were special military bases where chariots and horses were maintained and were strategically located to guard trade routes and borders. Examples of chariot cities (based on archaeology and biblical records) include Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (1 Kings 9:15-19).

**Wiseman:** As did the Assyrians, Solomon dispersed his mobile forces between the capital and outlying, strategically placed, military bases (e.g. Megiddo, Gezer, Hazor). (See [1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 143](#))

**Peter Pett:** Central to this passage is the fact that Solomon trust was now firmly in chariots and horsemen (contrast Psalms 20:7). This was what his greatness and wisdom had led him to, armed might and global arms-dealing. The chariot is, in fact, rarely looked on with favour in the Biblical narratives, being usually in the hands of Israel's enemies, and in Kings such chariots are seen as in direct contrast with the heavenly chariots of YHWH which protect His people (2 Kings 2:11-12; 2 Kings 6:17; 2 Kings 7:6; 2 Kings 13:14; compare Psalms 68:17). The prophetic attitude was that men were to trust in YHWH rather than in chariots (Deuteronomy 20:1; Psalms 20:7; Psalms 46:9; Psalms 76:6; and see especially Isaiah 2:6-7; Isaiah 31:1; Isaiah 31:3; Micah 5:10), and there are no grounds for thinking that the prophetic writer here saw it any differently (he would be familiar with Isaiah and Micah, and with the Psalms). Thus what appeared to be Solomon's high point was really in the writer's view also his low point. He no longer trusted in YHWH, he trusted in chariots.

## Bob Utley - [CHARIOTS](#)

Two Hebrew forms are used (*merkabah*, BDB 939; *rekeb*, KB 636)

- Royal or governmental transportation
  - Egypt – Gen. 41:43; 46:29; 50:9
  - Israel – 1 Sam. 8:11; 2 Sam. 15:1; 1 Kgs. 1:5; Song of Songs 3:9; Isa. 22:18; Jer. 17:25
  - Syria – 2 Kgs. 5:21-26
  - Ethiopia – Acts 8:28,29,38
- Often associated with YHWH
  - YHWH Himself
    - (1) incense altar of David's temple was shaped like a "chariot" is linked to "*Cherubim*" in 1 Chr. 28:18
    - (2) YHWH Himself rode on chariot clouds (cf. Ps. 18:10; 104:2)
    - (3) Ezekiel 1; 10 describe YHWH's portable Throne Chariot
  - YHWH's angels – 2 Kgs. 2:11; 6:17; Ps. 68:17; Hab. 3:8; Zech. 6:1-3
- Military weapon (selected examples)
  - Egypt – Exod. 14:6,7,9,17,18,23,26,28; 15:4,9; Deut. 11:4; Josh. 24:6; Isa. 31:1
  - Canaanite – Deut. 20:1; Josh. 11:4; 17:16,18; Jdgs. 1:19; 4-5
  - Philistine – Jdgs. 1:19; 1 Sam. 13:5; 2 Sam. 1:6
  - Israelite – 2 Sam. 15:1; 1 Kgs. 10:26-29

4. Hunting vehicle for the rich and powerful
5. They seem to be connected to "Sun" worship (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:5,11; Ezek. 8:16)

**1 Kings 10:27 The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland.**

- **the king:** 2Ch 1:15-17 2Ch 9:27 Job 22:24,25

#### **Related Passages:**

2 Chronicles 9:27 The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland.

### **SILVER AS COMMON AS STONES**

**The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem** - This is quite a comparison for if you have ever been to Jerusalem, there are rocks literally everywhere in the areas that are not urban streets.

**And he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland** Cedars were highly prized and rare, mainly growing in Lebanon, while **sycamore trees** were common in the lowlands of Israel. This comparison means that **cedars**, once rare and expensive, became as easily available as **sycamore trees**, which were abundant and ordinary. Rare, luxury materials became commonplace, demonstrating the incredible economic growth, vast trade, and an unmatched level of wealth in this "golden era" of Solomon's reign.

**1 Kings 10:28 Also Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's merchants procured them from Kue for a price.**

- **horses:** De 17:16 2Ch 1:16,17 9:28 Isa 31:1-3 36:9
- Ge 41:42 Pr 7:16 Isa 19:9 Eze 27:7

#### **Related Passages:**

2 Chronicles 9:27 And they were bringing horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all countries.

Deuteronomy 17:16 Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.'

2 Chronicles 1:16 Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue; the king's traders procured them from Kue for a price.

### **SOLOMON'S IS WISE BUT LACKS "HORSE SENSE!"**

**Also Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's merchants procured them from Kue for a price-** Solomon may have know about horses but [lacked "horse sense."](#) good common sense, in this case the common sense to not overtly (surely knowingly) transgress Yahweh's instruction. The prohibition in Deuteronomy 17:16 could not have been clearer!

**Kue** was a wealthy, horse-breeding region in Anatolia (modern Turkey) that supplied Solomon's army with warhorses. Kue provided high-quality warhorses, strengthening Israel's chariot army. It highlights Israel's economic power during Solomon's reign but also hints at his disobedience to God's warning against relying on foreign military strength. **MacArthur** adds "Kue was in Cilicia, an area S of the Taurus Mountains in Asia Minor. In antiquity, Cilicia was fabled for breeding and selling the best horses." (See [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

**1 Kings 10:29 A chariot was imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150; and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of the Arameans.**

- **the kings:** Jos 1:4 2Ki 7:6
- **means:** Ho 12:10 Mal 1:1

## **SOLOMON A TRADER IN CHARIOTS AND HORSES**

**A chariot was imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150; and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of the Arameans** - 1 biblical [Shekel](#) = ~11 grams (0.35 oz) of silver. 600 shekels = ~6,600 grams (6.6 kg or ~14.5 lbs) of silver. 150 shekels = ~1,650 grams (1.65 kg or ~3.6 lbs) of silver. The price of silver fluctuates daily. If silver is, for example, \$0.75 per gram (just an estimate, check live prices for accuracy): 600 shekels (6.6 kg) = ~\$4,950 USD and 150 shekels (1.65 kg) = ~\$1,237.50 USD. Solomon seems to have set in mind on the things of this passing world rather than on the eternal things above (cf Col 3:1-2+).

**William Barnes:** The curious conclusion of the present set of texts in chapter 10 is also to be noted. Why such comments on horses and their prices? Again, they indicate Solomon's wealthy status both as a horse trader and a worthy king among his peers; but they also rest uneasily for the readers of the larger Deuteronomic texts (see Dt 4:20–34+, especially concerning the "law of the king" in Deut 17:14–20+). There are three things that the godly king is not to do: multiply horses (and especially go back to Egypt to get them), multiply wives, and amass large amounts of silver and gold! (See [1-2 Kings - Page 107](#))

**MacArthur** - The majority of Hittites lived in Anatolia (Asia Minor). From ca. 1720-1200 b.c. a unified kingdom ruled over the Hittites. These kings spread the influence of the Hittites throughout the ancient Near East; the Hittite empire reached the peak of its power ca. 1380-1350 b.c. When the Hittite empire collapsed, ca. 1200 b.c., many Hittite city-states developed, each with its own king. These rulers were called "the kings of the Hittites" and were scattered in Solomon's day throughout Anatolia and northern Aram (Syria). **Arameans.** The geographical area within the bounds set by the Taurus Mountains in the N, the western bend of the Euphrates River and the edge of the desert in the E, the Litani River to the S and the Mediterranean Sea to the W, had as its major city, Damascus. Later known by the Gr. term "Syria," the land was known in OT times as Aram. (See [MacArthur Study Bible](#))

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### **J R Miller - The Fame of Solomon 1 Kings 10**

Solomon's fame spread widely. Everywhere flew the stories of the splendors of his kingdom, and his great wisdom. It was not the fame of his piety and godliness that men heard, his generosity and kindness, his courage and heroism. His fame was rather that of the material splendor of his reign, than of fine personal and moral qualities. He sought to do brilliant things.

We are not to understand that Solomon did not contribute in any way to the good of his kingdom, that all his work was sensational. He did a great deal that was substantial. He gave his people a place among the nations which they had never dreamed of attaining. He made Jerusalem a great city in its beauty, its wealth, its brilliance. His wisdom, too, became famous. Wonderful stories of it were told near and far. From other countries, people came to see Solomon and his great buildings, and to hear his words, and to pay homage to him.

Of all his visitors, the queen of Sheba seems to have made the greatest impression. She was a much more important personage than the kings and princes of the near-by tribes or nations who came to see Solomon. She came from afar, from "the ends of the earth." She came in great state with a majestic splendor that excited much attention. She had heard the strange stories about the Israelitish king, and came to see for herself what foundation there was for them. "I wonder if these reports are true?" she began to ask. She would go and see for herself. The distance was great—but her curiosity and eagerness overcame all thought of the hardship of the journey.

Jesus taught us one use to make of this story, "Behold, one greater than Solomon is here!" He said, referring to Himself. In every way He was greater than Solomon. He was the eternal Son of God, Solomon's Lord. His wisdom infinitely surpassed Solomon's. Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are attributed to Solomon. There is a great deal that is practical in these books. Proverbs contain much that is helpful in common life. But the wisdom of Christ's teachings far surpasses the best that Solomon ever spoke! Christ's ability to enlighten and help excelled Solomon's, as divinity excels humanity. If, then, one woman came so far, at such cost, to see Solomon and hear his wisdom—the whole world should come to see and hear Jesus!

We have ever fresh illustrations of the same lesson. In every age, in every country, there are men and subjects who attract attention and draw people from far and near—to see and study them. Yet all the while, there stands One among us whom many men know not, nor desire to know—who surpasses in interest and wisdom—all the objects of attraction in the world. People throng to see and

hear the scientist, the novelist, the explorer, the discoverer, the orator, or the singer—but only a sparse few gather about the blessed Divine Teacher! Men are interested in the questions of the day, in politics, in railroads, in inventions; but how few sit down to study the profound and eternal truths of Christ's redemption! They think these things suited only to children and women, and to the old and the dying, forgetting that they are the things which the "angels desire to look into."

The queen of Sheba came with "spices, and very much gold, and precious stones." Solomon need not in every sense be regarded as a type of Christ—yet this visit of the queen furnishes an illustration of the way we should come to Christ our King. We should bring presents to Him.

A tourist in Southern California tells of looking with much admiration at the wonderful flowers which grew about a fine residence. The lady of the house, seeing the visitors, came out and spoke to them very cordially, asking them questions about their home and their tour. Then taking a pair of scissors, she snipped off a fine handful of flowers, which she gave them. They noticed, however, that the flowers she cut were all past ripe, and when they turned away they gently shook the bouquet, and the petals nearly all fell to the ground.

That is the kind of gifts too many give to Christ. But we dishonor Him when we bring Him our fading flowers. This queen did not give trifles of little value—but the richest things she could find in all her kingdom. We should bring to Christ not the poorest and least things we can find—but the best—the most precious hours of our time, the finest gold of our youth, the sweetest fragrance of our heart's love. Nothing less than the best—is worthy of Him. Thus the wise men when they came from the Far East, brought their treasures and laid them at the feet of the new-born King. Thus Mary brought her alabaster box of precious nard, broke the box, and poured the ointment on the head and feet of her Lord. So should we all do.

The queen of Sheba brought spices, gold, and precious stones as a present to Solomon, and "behold, one greater than Solomon is here!" Solomon was rich and did not need the queen's gifts—yet he accepted them. Christ is infinitely rich; He owns all things, the gold of the mines, all the gems of the world. Yet He gladly accepts our smallest gifts. Even the poorest things, if they are our best, and if given with love—He will receive with joyful acceptance. The widow's two mites—He takes from the offerer's thin, wasted hand, with blessed words of recognition.

A gentleman worth millions accepted a bunch of withered flowers from a ragged child in a mission Sunday-school, and could not have manifested more real pleasure, if he had received from a jeweled hand the choicest flowers from the florist. Thus our blessed Divine Lord accepts our poorest gifts—if they are prompted by true love for Him and are indeed the best we can bring. He wants our best, however, and is worthy of our best. The queen brought spices and much gold and precious stones to King Solomon. We should bring to Christ—the sweetest fragrance of our heart's love and the richest jewels of our life!

The queen of Sheba brought to Solomon all her questions, her problems—and he answered them all. "She came to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind. Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her." She seems to have had many questions to ask the wise king. Some of them may have been mere silly puzzles with which she sought to test his wisdom; others of them may have been real questions, concerning which she wanted answers. To every question she asked, Solomon gave her patient and satisfying answer.

We should learn to take all our questions—to our Heavenly King. No matter what it is that troubles or perplexes us, whatever we cannot understand, we should carry it to Him. Nothing can be too small, and nothing too great—to lay before Him, for He condescends to our least affairs and has wisdom for the greatest. Perhaps we are too formal and restrained in our secret prayers. It is better that we should break away from all forms—and just talk to God as a child talks to its father or mother, telling Him everything that is on our mind or heart, all our worries, our needs, our temptations, the things that vex and try us, the matters that are mysterious to us and hard to be understood, the questions that arise in our reading and conversation and thinking. In a word, we should commune with Him of all that is in our heart—and take His counsel about everything.

Then He will always answer all our questions. He will do this in different ways. Some of our questions He answers in His Word, and we have to search there for what we seek to learn. Some of them He answers through wise, loving, human friends, whom He sends to us to counsel and advise us. Sometimes our difficulties are met by words that we hear, or by books that come into our hands. Some of our questions, He solves in His Providence by opening or shutting doors for us, if we quietly go on in duty. He will always find some way to answer our questions, if we will do His will as it is made known to us—and wait His time.

"When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, 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. She said to the king—The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. 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!" 1 Kings 10:4-7

Here again we have an illustration of the experience of those who come to Christ. People often doubt when they read or hear about

Him and His love, whether the reality can be so wonderful as they are promised it shall be. They think that at least, His friends must exaggerate the greatness of the blessings which He bestows upon them. But when they come and see for themselves, when they have experienced the riches of Christ's grace and love, they learn that instead of the reports being too highly colored—that the half has not been told!

No one is ever disappointed in coming to Christ. We need never be afraid to say to those who doubt or question, "Come and see for yourselves!" If they will only come and try Christ, accept His friendship, experience His love, let His grace into their hearts, trust His promises—they will find that the truth far surpasses the report! It will be the same also of heaven's glories—when we come to enjoy them. We read wonderful things about the blessed home which Christ has gone to prepare for us; but when we reach it—we shall find that the half was never told us!

The queen's witness to Solomon, as she concluded her visit and turned homeward, was very complimentary: "How happy your men must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! 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!" It is a privilege to be among the friends of any good and wise man. There are people whose close companions we may almost justly envy. They live near to the godly, the wise. They hear their words, they see their life, they have their friendship.

We may think of the disciples of Jesus, who had the privilege of being with Him continually, hearing the wonderful words which fell from His lips, seeing the sweetness, gentleness, purity, and holiness of His life and witnessing the wonderful works which He did. What a privilege was John's—leaning on Jesus' bosom, and Mary's—sitting on a stool at His feet, listening to His teachings! It is a privilege to be a member of a godly man's family, living in the midst of refinement and culture. It is a far greater privilege to be a Christian, a member of the Heavenly Father's family. "A greater than Solomon is here!"