

2 Chronicles 9-10 – Thursday, December 15th, 2016

2 Chronicles 9 -- 1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, having a very great retinue, camels that bore spices, gold in abundance, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. 2 So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her. 3 And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 4 the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers and their apparel, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. 5 Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 6 However I did not believe their words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You exceed the fame of which I heard. 7 Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! 8 Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on His throne to be king for the LORD your God! Because your God has loved Israel, to establish them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness."

- So the chapter begins with a most interesting account of the queen of Sheba first hearing of Solomon then coming to see him.
- In order for her to do this, she would end up traveling some 2,000 miles by camel, with what we're told was a huge entourage.
- The reason I mention this is that it points to Christ, our greater than Solomon, and is referenced by Jesus Himself in Matthew.

Matthew 12:42 (NIV) — 42 The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.

F. B. Meyer of this wrote, "Bring your hard questions to Christ; He is greater than Solomon."

- There's something else that I'd like to point out and it has to do with the Queen of Sheba being impressed but not converted.
- In other words, she was so moved by Solomon's wisdom and wealth that she would acknowledge his God but not accept him.
- The reason I point this out is because impressive buildings and professional programs don't bring people to salvation in Christ.

Adam Clarke said it this way, "What happened to the queen of Sheba is a natural and not an uncommon effect which will be produced in a delicate sensible mind at the sight of rare and extraordinary productions of art."

This last week, my wife shared with me a post on my Facebook page from a blogger who wrote about her own experience related to this. Here's some of what she had to say, "As I sat in church all these years I couldn't help but become bored with hours of worship, music, lights, TV cameras and pure emotional hype. ...The worship leader is always pushing you or manipulating the crowd to be more expressive but it seemed so contrived like the more exuberant the crowd was the more validated the worship leader felt in doing God's work. It just looked like and felt like a big show. I was 21 years old when I truly came to know Christ and now I am 40 and let me tell you this stuff gets old."

<https://puresola.wordpress.com/2016/10/19/why-i-left-the-pentecostalcharismatic-movement/>

9 And she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great abundance, and precious stones; there never were any spices such as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. 10 Also, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum wood and precious stones. 11 And the king made walkways of the algum wood for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers; and there were none such as these seen before in the land of Judah. 12 Now King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, much more than she had brought to the king. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants. 13 The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, 14 besides what the traveling merchants and traders brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.

- So if you're anything like me and I suspect that you are, you're as disturbed and troubled by this mention of 666 as I myself am.
- I suppose the question becomes one of why it was 666, and perhaps more importantly, why we have this detail in our Bibles.
- One thought is that the antichrist may initially appear to be someone as grand as Solomon but in the end become purely evil.

15 And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of hammered gold went into each shield. 16 He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 17 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. 18 The throne had six steps, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne; there were armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. 19 Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. 20 All King Solomon's drinking vessels were gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. Not one was silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. 21 For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came, bringing gold, silver, apes, and monkeys. 22 So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. 23 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put it in his heart. 24 Each

man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year. 25 Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. 26 So he reigned over all the kings from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. 27 The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland. 28 And they brought horses to Solomon from Egypt and from all lands. 29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? 30 Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. 31 Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

- The chapter ends with Solomon's willful disobedience of God's commands concerning the Kings of Israel doing what he does.
- Namely, that of Solomon multiplying for himself, horses, wives and gold, which he did in direct defiance of God's command.
- This because, doing so, in the end, would turn him and all of Israel with him against and away from the Lord after other gods.

Deuteronomy 17:16–17 (NKJV) — 16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the LORD has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' 17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.

Adam Clarke of Solomon's death writes, "When we consider the excess in which he lived, and the criminal passions which he must have indulged among his thousand wives, and their idolatrous and impure worship, this life was as long as could be reasonably expected."

G. Campbell Morgan of Solomon's downfall says it best this way, "Yielding to certain lower things of his nature, he became a slave to them, and dragged down his nation with him. So long as he remained on the throne, the people were solaced and drugged by the material magnificence; but underneath, the spirit of rebellion and revolt was at work, ready to break out into open manifestation directly he was removed." ...The story is perhaps one of the most striking illustrations of the fact that opportunity and privilege, even God bestowed, are not enough in themselves to assure full realization."

2 Chronicles 10 -- 1 And Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone to Shechem to make him king. 2 So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it (he was in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon), that Jeroboam returned from Egypt.

- We now turn a corner in this chapter where we're introduced to Solomon's son Rehoboam, who will now succeed him as king.
- It's interesting to note that Rehoboam is the only son of Solomon that is named in scripture. All the other sons are not named.
- Sadly, this one and only son of Solomon who is named, turns out to be as foolish as he is wicked, as we're about to see next.

3 Then they sent for him and called him. And Jeroboam and all Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, 4 "Your father made our yoke heavy; now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you." 5 So he said to them, "Come back to me after three days." And the people departed. 6 Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, saying, "How do you advise me to answer these people?" 7 And they spoke to him, saying, "If you are kind to these people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be your servants forever." 8 But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. 9 And he said to them, "What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten the yoke which your father put on us?'" 10 Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you should speak to the people who have spoken to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us'—thus you shall say to them: 'My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist! 11 And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!'" 12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had directed, saying, "Come back to me the third day." 13 Then the king answered them roughly. King Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders, 14 and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!"

- There are many lessons to be learned from this, chief of which is the importance of those who we allow to speak into our lives.
- I find it interesting that had he heeded the wise counsel of his father's men, his reign would have been blessed all of his days.
- Instead, he heeds the unwise counsel of the younger men, and as such it led to his downfall as well as the destruction of Israel.

- While it is always important to heed wise counsel, we have to be very careful that we don't always listen to what people want.
- By that I mean we should always discern what God wants us to do, especially as leaders, lest we become pleasers of men.
- The problem is we like to be liked, and often times are prone to make decisions on the basis of what's popular to the masses.

Of this one commentator wrote, In this case, Rehoboam clearly should have listened to the people. This is not to say that a leader should always lead by popular vote, but a leader needs the wisdom to know when what the people want is best for them.

15 So the king did not listen to the people; for the turn of events was from God, that the LORD might fulfill His word, which He had spoken by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. 16 Now when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying: "What share have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Every man to your tents, O Israel! Now see to your own house, O David!" So all Israel departed to their tents. 17 But Rehoboam reigned over the children of Israel who dwelt in the cities of Judah. 18 Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was in charge of revenue; but the children of Israel stoned him with stones, and he died. Therefore King Rehoboam mounted his chariot in haste to flee to Jerusalem. 19 So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

- Notice in verse fifteen we're told that the turn of events was from God that the Lord might fulfill His word, which He had spoken.
- To me, this is yet another one of those "but God" moments in scripture, such that Rehoboam did evil, "but God" brought good.
- I would like to close with two quotes from F.B. Meyer and Charles Spurgeon, as they speak to how God works all for the good.

F.B. Meyer - "It seemed to be altogether a piece of human folly and passion; but now we are suddenly brought into the presence of God, and told that beneath the plottings and plannings of man He was carrying out His eternal purpose.... He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and weaves the malignant work of Satan into his plans."

Charles Spurgeon - "Notice also, dear friends, that God is in events which are produced by the sin and the stupidity of men. This breaking up of the kingdom of Solomon into two parts was the result of Solomon's sin and Rehoboam's folly; yet God was in it: "This thing is from me, saith the Lord." God had nothing to do with the sin or the folly, but in some way which we can never explain, in a mysterious way in which we are to believe without hesitation, God was in it all."