

1 KINGS 10

SOLOMON WAS A GREAT ENTREPRENEUR. HE MADE TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH MANY NATIONS. HE BUILT A NAVY AND HIRED HIRAM'S EXPERT SEAMEN TO MANAGE IT FOR HIM. IMPORTING PRODUCTS FROM THE EAST ENRICHED SOLOMON'S COFFERS AND HELPED TO MAKE THE KINGDOM MORE INTERNATIONAL IN ITS OUTLOOK.

The Queen of Sheba- WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THIS QUEEN? THE COUNTRY SHEBA WAS LOCATED IN ARABIA. MODERN YEMEN. SOME 1200 MILES FROM JERUSALEM . THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE QUEENS VISIT WAS TO VERIFY SOLOMON'S REPUTATION FOR WISDOM. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, JESUS REFERRED TO HER AS THE "QUEEN OF THE SOUTH WHO CAME FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH TO HEAR THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON."

vs 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. (RIDDLES DESIGNED TO STUMP THE HEARER. SUCH TESTING WAS A SPORT AMONG ANCIENT MONARCHS.) THE QUEEN'S PURPOSE WAS TO SEE IF SOLOMON WAS AS WISE AND WEALTHY AS SHE HAD HEARD.

vs 2 So she came to Jerusalem with much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. AND SOLOMON TOLD HER WHAT SHE WANTED TO KNOW. WHAT SHE HEARD AND WHAT SHE SAW LEFT HER BREATHLESS. HER VERY GREAT CARAVAN REFLECTED HER OWN WEALTH AND PRESTIGE. IT ALSO CARRIED HER MONEY AND EXPENSIVE GIFTS FOR SOLOMON.

vs 3 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her.

vs 4 When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built,

vs 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 (BREATH) in her. (SHE WAS BREATHELESS)

vs 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.

vs 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.

vs 8 How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually *and* hear your wisdom. WE WONDER IF SOLOMON'S OFFICERS AND SERVANTS DIDN'T GRADUALLY GROW ACCUSTOMED TO ALL THE GAUDY DISPLAY OF WEALTH.

vs 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." THE QUEEN WASN'T AFFIRMING HER PERSONAL FAITH IN JEHOVAH. PEOPLE IN THOSE DAYS BELIEVED IN "TERRITORIAL DEITIES" AND WHEN YOU LEFT YOUR LAND, YOU LEFT YOUR GOD'S BEHIND. (1 SAM 26:19).

vs 10 She gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, (ABOUT 25 TONS 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. THE QUEEN WAS QUITE WEALTHY HERSELF.

NOTE: THESE VERSES, WHICH SEEM OUT OF PLACE HERE, MAY REFLECT A TRADE AGREEMENT THAT RESULTED FROM THE QUEEN'S VISIT. OPHIR MAY HAVE BEEN CLOSE TO OR PART OF THE QUEEN'S KINGDOM OF SHEBA.

vs 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. ALMUG WOOD- PROBABLY THE STRONG , LONG-LASTING SANDALWOOD, WHICH IS BLACK ON THE OUTSIDE AND RUBY RED ON THE INSIDE.

vs 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. NOTE: "TO THIS DAY" IS A PHRASE USED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ONE WHO LIVED AND WROTE BEFORE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE IN 586 BC.

vs 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. THE RECORD OF HER VISIT GIVES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET A GLIMPSE OF LIFE IN THE PALACE.

Wealth, Splendor and Wisdom

vs 14 Now the weight of gold which came in to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, (ABOUT 25 TONS OF GOLD)

vs 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.

GOLD ALSO CAME TO SOLOMON FROM TOLLS AND TARIFFS FROM TRADERS, REVENUES FROM LOYAL ADMINISTRATORS, AND TAXES FROM ARABIAN KINGS WHO USED CARAVAN ROUTES UNDER SOLOMON'S CONTROL. SO WHAT WILL SOLOMON DO WITH ALL HIS GOLD? LET'S SEE....

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

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. FROM HIS GOLD REVENUES, SOLOMON MADE 200 LARGE SHIELDS CONTAINING ABOUT 7.5 POUNDS OF GOLD EACH, AND 300 SMALL SHIELDS HAVING 3.75 POUNDS OF GOLD EACH, THEY WERE ORNAMENTAL IN DESIGN AND RESTRICTED TO ORNAMENTAL USE. BUT SOLOMON IS NOT FINISHED.....

18 Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with refined gold. THE GOLD REFLECTED THE KING'S GLORY.

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.

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. THE LIONS MAY HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO REPRESENT THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL?

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. THE WEALTH OF SOLOMON'S KINGDOM COULD BE SEEN IN THE ABUNDANCE OF GOLD WHICH MADE SILVER OF LITTLE VALUE EVEN THOUGH IT WAS A PRECIOUS METAL. THE HOUSE OF THE FOREST OF LEBANON WAS A LARGE RECTANGULAR BUILDING, 150 FEET LONG, 75 FEET WIDE AND 45 FEET HIGH. IT WAS PART OF THE PALACE COMPLEX AND A PLACE WHERE SOLOMON WOULD PUBLICLY HEAR PETITIONS FROM ISRAELITES AND RENDER JUDGMENTS.

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. THE SHIPS OF TARSHISH WERE LARGE, ALL-WEATHER CARGO VESSELS DESIGNED TO MAKE LONG OCEAN VOYAGES. THE APES AND BABOONS MAY HAVE BEEN PETS IN VOGUE AT THE TIME. ALONG WITH THE INFLUX OF FOREIGN MERCHANDISE CAME FOREIGN IDEAS ABOUT RELIGION AND WORSHIP AND EVENTUALLY SOLOMON INFLUENCED BY FOREIGN WIVES SUCCUMBED TO IDOLATRY.

23 So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

24 All the earth was seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart.

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

year. VS 23-25 GOD'S PROMISE TO MAKE SOLOMON THE RICHEST AND WISEST KING OF HIS TIME WAS FULFILLED. THESE GIFTS LED SOLOMON TO MULTIPLY FOR HIMSELF HORSES, AS WELL AS GOLD AND SILVER, PRECISELY THAT WHICH GOD'S KINGS WERE WARNED AGAINST IN DEUT. 17:16-17. **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". **17** He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself or else his heart will turn away; SOLOMON BECAME ENSNARED BY THE BLESSINGS OF HIS OWN WISDOM AND DISOBEYED GOD'S COMMANDS.

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.

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.

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

VS 26-28 WHAT IS THE KING DOING? CHARIOTS WERE THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND DREADED MILITARY MACHINES OF THAT DAY. THOUGH SOLOMON'S WEALTH ENABLED HIM TO PURCHASE LARGE QUANTITIES OF HORSES AND CHARIOTS, THIS PRACTICE WAS SPECIFICALLY PROHIBITED IN THE MOSAIC LAW-DEUT. 17:16 AN OBEDIENT ISRAELITE KING WAS TO DEPEND NOT ON MILITARY STRENGTH BUT ON THE LORD ALONE. THE PRESENCE OF STRONG PHYSICAL DEFENSES IN ISRAEL TURNED THE HEARTS OF SOLOMON AND THE PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE LORD WITH A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY.

TO THE WORLD OF THAT DAY, ESPECIALLY TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE, SOLOMON BECAME A MODEL OF WEALTH AND SPLENDOR AND NO DOUBT MANY ENVIED HIM. WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT SOLOMON AND WEALTH? Matthew 6:28-30 **28** And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, **29** yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. **30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is

thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! VS 33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. VS 34 "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. THE LORD PLACED ISRAEL AMONG THE GENTILE NATIONS TO BE A WITNESS TO THEM OF THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD, A "LIGHT OF THE GENTILES" (ISA 42:6) WHAT IS OUR CHARGE? READ MATTHEW CHAPS 5-7 AND SEE HOW WE ARE DOING AS HIS CHILDREN?

FROM THE VERY BEGINNING OF THE JEWISH KINGS, ISRAEL'S LEADERS MADE IT CLEAR THEY WANTED TO BE "LIKE THE OTHER NATIONS"(1 SAM. 8) AND SOLOMON LEAD THEM CLOSER TO THAT GOAL.

REMEMBER OUR NEED FOR GOD NEVER DIMINISHES..... THE LORD MAKES THE PLANS AND WE WALK IN THEM BY FAITH.....

