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Solomon and the Queen of Sheba

First Kings 10:1-13 and Second Chronicles 9:1-12

Solomon and the Queen of Sheba DIG: How should the current-day believer view the splendor of Solomon? What impressed the queen? Why did she come? How did she “see” wisdom? How did the queen complement Solomon? What did she say about the God of Solomon?

REFLECT: What does this story stir up in you? Who truly admires you or seeks out your opinion? How is love for God evident in your walk? What one question would you ask the wisest man in the world? What will you do this week to thank someone you admire?

We respond to Yeshua by honoring His breathtaking wisdom, worshiping His royal majesty, and offering Him our golden treasure.



See for yourself: Solomon and the queen of Sheba are a study in contrasts. Arab meets Israelite; a curious woman visits a wise and wealthy man. Their encounter was full of diplomatic intrigue. Although state visits are more common today, it was somewhat unusual

in those days for a reigning monarch to make such a journey in person. Typically, someone like **the queen of Sheba** would have sent emissaries to **Solomon's** court. Instead, **she** traveled more than a thousand miles through the desert to meet **Isra'el's king** in person. **King Solomon** is more famous today, of course, but **the queen of Sheba** was an important person in her own right. As a reigning monarch, **the queen** had a **large entourage**. **She** was worth a fortune. **She arrived in Yerushalayim accompanied by a very great entourage, including camels bearing spices and gold in great abundance, and precious stones (First Kings 10:2a).** **The queen of Sheba**, who ruled a kingdom in what is now the country of Yemen, was one of the most powerful and influential people in the world.²⁰⁷

Yet the true source of **the woman's** greatness was **her** intellectual curiosity. It was not simply what **she** owned that made **her** important, but also what **she** wanted to know. **When the queen of Sheba heard what was being said about Solomon because of the name of God, she came to test him with difficult questions, or riddles of the wise**, such as those mentioned in **Proverbs 1:6**. **When she appeared before Solomon, she spoke with him about everything in her mind and on her heart (First Kings 10:1 and 2b; 2 Chronicles 9:1).**

And Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. After the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, the palace he had built, the food at his table, the manner of seating his officials, the manner in which his staff served him, how they were dressed, his personal servants and his burnt offering which he offered in the house of ADONAI, it left her breathless (First Kings 10:3-5; 2 Chronicles 9:2-4). **Solomon's** words were matched by **his** deeds. But **she** desired more than intellectual combat and eye candy. **She** recognized that only a great **God** could produce such a great **king**. In other words, **she** sought spiritual insight from one famous for possessing **the wisdom** of **ADONAI**.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, How Awesome **You** are! **Your wisdom** knows no limits, **You** know the future as if it was the past, and you know every heart and the real emotions and feelings behind every act. **Your love** is steadfast and unfailing! It is such a comfort that no matter what is happening in the world or in our lives, **Your love** surrounds us! **Since Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You (Psalms 63:3).***

*How wise was **the Queen of Sheba** to lay aside the important duties of **her** kingdom to seek after **wisdom** that **Solomon** had received from **God Almighty**. May we also put aside earthly time - consuming activities to spend time seeking after **Your wisdom**. To seek after*

***Your wisdom** is true **wisdom**! Only by following what **You** say, can anyone really be **wise**. It is a joy to read **Your Word** and meditate on **Your wisdom** and power! In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

She said to the king, "What I heard in my own country about your deeds and your wisdom is true, but I couldn't believe the report until I came and saw for myself. Actually, they didn't tell me even half of it - your wisdom and prosperity surpass the reports I heard. How happy your people must be, how happy these servants of yours who are always here attending you and get to hear your wisdom! Blessed be ADONAI your God, who took pleasure in you to put you on the throne of Isra'el. Because of ADONAI's eternal love for Isra'el, He has made you king. Because of your God's love for Isra'el, to establish them forever, He has made you king over them to administer justice and righteousness fairly." Then she gave the king four tons of gold, a huge amount of spices, and precious stones; never again did there arise such an abundance of spices as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon (First Kings 10:6-10; Second Chronicles 9:5-9).

Between the confession of **Solomon's** greatness and the offering of **her** gifts, **she** makes an important statement about **ADONAI**. **She** claims that **God** deserves praise for choosing **him** to rule **Isra'el**. In fact, the presence of **Solomon** on **the throne** proves **ADONAI's eternal love for Isra'el**. This **love** had motivated **God's** choice of **Isra'el (Deuteronomy 7:7-8), David (Second Samuel 7:15-16),** and now **Solomon**. How must **Solomon** reflect **God's love**? By maintaining **justice and righteousness in the Land**, the very gift **Solomon** requested in **First Kings 3:1-9**. Those comments were similar to those that **Hiram** made in **First Kings 5:7**. Both Gentile monarchs recognized **ADONAI's** supremacy in **Isra'el's** history. Quite ironically, **Solomon** and **the future kings** of both **Isra'el** and **Judah** chose to ignore what even **Gentile** rulers seemed to understand: **God** ruled **Isra'el** and **He blessed obedient Israelite kings**.

Hiram's servants who had brought the gold from Ofir, or Yemen today, now brought sandalwood and precious stones. The king used the sandalwood to make walkways for the house of ADONAI and for the royal palace, also lyres and lutes for the singers. None like these had been seen before in the land of Judah (First Kings 10:11-12; Second Chronicles 9:10-11). These verses remind readers of the **Hiram-Solomon** trading practices in **9:26-28**. The author probably wanted to remove any doubts the preceding verse might raise about **Solomon's** ability to bring **gold** and **spices** to **Jerusalem**. **He** and **Hiram** were able to accomplish this task effectively on **their own**. Therefore, **the queen's** gift grew in significance given the magnitude of **Solomon's** trading

success.²⁰⁸

Now the story ends on good terms. **King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba everything she wanted, whatever she asked, more than what she had brought to the king.** Although **Solomon** benefited from **his** relations with others, **he** was always the dominant partner. **After this, she returned and went back to her own country, she and her servants,** richer than **she** came. **Solomon** had received **blessing from her**, but **he**, in turn, was a **blessing to her**. This theme recalls the patriarchal promise to the same effect in **Genesis 12:2b-3: I will make your name great; and you are to be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you . . . and by you all the families of the earth will be blessed (First Kings 10:13; Second Chronicles 9:12).**²⁰⁹

The queen of Sheba is a wonderful example to follow in coming to trust in **Messiah**. **She** moved from unbelief (or disbelief) to faith in the Kingdom of **ADONAI**. At the same time, **she** also shows us how to respond to **the King** of that **Kingdom**. Keep in mind that **Solomon** is a type of **Messiah**. Therefore, in the story of **Solomon** and **the queen of Sheba** we see how to respond to **Yeshua: by honoring His breathtaking wisdom, worshiping His royal majesty, and offering Him our golden treasure.**

Honor the King's breathtaking wisdom: Since **godly wisdom** was what **the queen of Sheba** was seeking, **godly wisdom** was exactly what **she** found. Questions that were hard for others were easy for **Solomon**. With the divine gift of **wisdom**, **he** knew all the answers. We can still see **Solomon's wisdom** today by contemplating **his** famous **Proverbs**, reading **his love** letters in **the Song of Solomon**, or studying **his** philosophy in the book of **Ecclesiastes**. **The queen of Sheba** recognized that **Solomon's wisdom** was not simply for **his** own benefit, but for the **blessing** of **his people**, who found **their** greatest joy in the service of **their** worthy **king**.

We should give even more honor to and find even more joy in **Messiah**, for as wise as **Solomon** was, **he** did not know even a fraction of what **Yeshua** knows. Talk about **breathtaking**! The Bible says that in **Messiah** are **hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3)**! There is nothing to be known that **the Lord** doesn't already know. **He** is absolutely omniscient; **His wisdom** is infinite; **He** is **the only wise God (First Timothy 1:17)**. **How happy** we should be to serve this all-wise **King**, and to hear **His** words of **wisdom**! We honor **His wisdom** by praising **Him** for everything we see in creation. We honor **His wisdom** by listening to what **He** says and then doing it as best we can in our fallen state. We honor **His wisdom** by trusting in **His** plan of salvation, fully believing in the cross and the empty tomb.

We also honor the **wisdom** of **God** by trusting what **He** is doing in our lives right now. Sometimes it is easy to think that **ADONAI** could or should be doing a little better than **He** is at managing our affairs. When we consider our family situation, our work situation, or our financial situation, it can be tempting to think that we know some **wiser** way for **Him** to run our lives. This too is **breathhtaking** . . . **breathhtaking** in its arrogance. If **Yeshua Messiah** is the all-**wise God** of creation and salvation, then we honor **His wisdom** by fully trusting **His** plan for our lives. How much **happier** we are when we learn to believe in **the wisdom** of our **King** without doubting, complaining, or second-guessing **His** will.

Worship the King's royal majesty: As soon as **the queen of Sheba** caught **her breath**, **she** had something to say. Here was **her** response of praise: **Blessed be ADONAI your God, who took pleasure in you to put you on the throne of Isra'el. Because of your God's love for Isra'el, to establish them forever, He has made you king over them to administer justice and righteousness fairly.** Thus, **the queen of Sheba** worshiped **the king's** royal majesty. With high praise, **she** rejoiced in **Solomon, the ruler of God's** kingdom, and in that rejoicing, **she** worshiped the royal majesty of **YHWH Himself - the King of all kings.**

By **her** good example, **the queen of Sheba** draws us into the worship of **ADONAI**. Whatever **she** said about **Solomon** is something we can say even more emphatically about **Yeshua Messiah** as **the King of God's** everlasting Kingdom. As much as **the Father** delighted in **Solomon**, **He** delights even more in **His** eternal **Son** (**Matthew 3:17** and **17:5**). **He** is so pleased, in fact, that **He** has **placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the Church** (**Ephesians 1:20-22**). **The Father** has done this because **He** loves us and because **He** wants to establish **His justice and righteousness** on the **earth**. **He** has given us **Messiah** to be our **King**, to rule and defend us. So we worship **His** royal majesty, saying, "**Blessed be ADONAI Your God, who has delighted in You and set You on the throne in heaven!**" In saying this, we worship both **the Father** and **the Son** who is the proof of our **Father's love**.

What made **the queen's** worship especially significant is that **she** came from **Sheba**, which was outside the covenant community. This made **Sheba** one of the first fulfillments of the ancient prophecies that **God** would **bless all the nations of the world** with **His** saving grace. **She** became the answer to **Solomon's** prayers. In **Psalm 72**, **he** prayed that **ADONAI** would **bless his** royal kingdom. **He** specifically asked that **the desert tribes** would **bow down before Him**, that **kings would fall at His feet**, and that **all nations would call Him blessed** (**Psalm 72:9, 11 and 17**). Earlier, in **his** prayer of dedication for the Temple, **Solomon** prayed that **all the peoples of the earth will know that**

ADONAI is God (First Kings 8:60). With the arrival of **the queen of Sheba**, **his** prayers were coming true.

This is why **the queen of Sheba** is so significant, and why **her** journey to **Jerusalem** is one of the most important state visits in the history of **the world**. **His royal** highness is a Gospel sign pointing us to the global worship of **Yeshua Messiah**. Already in the TaNaKh we see **Ha'Shem** working **His** plan for all nations and all peoples to worship **Him**. The international fame of **Solomon** anticipates the Second Coming of **Yeshua Messiah** and **the worldwide** scope of **His** Kingdom. When we worship **Yeshua** in **His** royal majesty - whoever we are and wherever we are from - we fulfill the purpose of **ADONAI** in **the world**.

Give the King your golden treasure: One final thing we can do for our **King** is to give him our **golden treasure**. **The queen of Sheba** did something more than simply feel faint in the presence of **Solomon's** superior **wisdom**, or speak to **him** in words of praise; **she** also did something tangible: **Then she gave the king four tons of gold, a huge amount of spices, and precious stones; never again did there arise such an abundance of spices as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon (First Kings 10:10).** Nor was **she** the only one, for **Hiram's** servants who had brought the gold from Ofir, now brought sandalwood and precious stones. The king used the sandalwood to make walkways for the house of **ADONAI** and for the royal palace, also lyres and lutes for the singers. None like these had been seen before in the land of Judah (First Kings 10:11-12).

Once again, these extravagant gifts remind us what the prophets said about **the Savior** - prophecies about the coming of **the Messiah**. **Isaiah** said: **Nations will go toward Your light and kings toward Your shining splendor . . . caravans of camels will cover Your land, young camels from Midian and Ephah all coming from Sheba, bringing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the praises of ADONAI (Isaiah 60:3 and 6).** This was one of the many promises fulfilled in the birth of **Yeshua Messiah**. The magi from the east came to do something more than merely worship **the newborn King**. They also brought gifts of **gold and frankincense (Matthew 2:11)**. The wealth of **kings** that **God** had promised would come from **camels coming from Sheba**. They would bring **their treasure to the King**.

Messiah is worthy of all our **golden treasure**, and everything else that we can offer **Him**. Not that we could ever add to **His** bank account, of course, as if he needed anything from us (**Romans 11:35-36**). Who has ever given anything to **God**? Whatever we have is from **Him**

and through **Him**. But whatever we have is also *for Him*, and therefore, **He** is worthy of our wealth. So we bring **Him** our **golden treasure**, giving money to **the King** for the work of **His** Kingdom. We support the ministry of **His Word**, the worship of **His** Church, and the proclamation of **His** grace to the nations. We do this because **Yeshua Messiah** is royally worthy to receive our tribute, and because the work of **His** glorious Kingdom is the best investment we can possibly make.

Receive the King's royal blessing: All this talk of **golden treasure** may lead some people to think that it is very costly to be a believer in **Yeshua**. People probably said the same thing about **the queen of Sheba**. After all, **she** gave **Solomon** large gifts from **her** own personal fortune. But in the end, this proved to be for **her** own benefit, because in return **she** received a royal blessing. **King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba everything she wanted, whatever she asked, more than what she had brought to the king. After this, she returned and went back to her own country, she and her servants (First Kings 10:13). Solomon gave the queen everything she wanted - not just wisdom, but also wealth. He sent her home with the bountiful blessing of His kingdom - richer than when she came.**

An even greater **blessing** still awaits **her**, on the last of all days, when **Yeshua Messiah** will come into **His** everlasting Kingdom. Then **the queen of Sheba** will receive **the blessing** of eternal life (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ, to see link click Ms - The Eternal Security of the Believer**). We know this because **Yeshua** explicitly stated that **she** would be present at the final judgment, standing with the righteous. **The Lord** said to the people of **His** own generation who wanted **Him** to give them some sort of a **sign** to prove that **He** was **the Messiah**. They wondered if it was worthwhile to follow **Him**. **He** told them: **The Queen of the South will appear at the Judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Shlomo, and what is here now is greater than Solomon (Luke 11:31).** Therefore, we should come to **Yeshua** the way **the queen of Sheba** went to **Solomon**. We should say of **Messiah** what **the queen** said when she met **Solomon**, "**Blessed be ADONAI**" (**First Kings 10:9**)! Even old **King Solomon** was worthy of some recognition. **The queen of Sheba** proved it by traveling a thousand miles to honor **his wisdom** and give **him her gold**. But if **Solomon** was worthy to receive all of that, then **Yeshua** is worthy even more . . . more honor, more worship, and more **treasure**.²¹⁰