



Sheba's queen marveling at Solomon's glory

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem

(2 Chronicles 9:1-9)

"The ends of all the earth shall hear, and turn unto the Lord in fear."

Those words were already being fulfilled in the visit of this stranger at Jerusalem. Isn't Solomon a type of Christ in His glorious kingdom? And won't saved sinners come from the north and south, east and west to hear of the wisdom and to see the riches of the greater than Solomon? And they will forever be amazed at the wisdom and riches and glory of Christ Jesus our Lord.

The queen of Sheba came principally for one thing, to hear of and to see the wisdom of this famous king of Israel. In at least six different places mention is made that she came to hear of this great wisdom. But when she came to the capital city she heard not only of his wisdom but was also utterly amazed at his riches, and glory.

What kind of wisdom was that? Surely, it was more than what we usually call wisdom, and different from mere intellectual acumen. When Solomon became king he asked for wisdom that he might be able to discern between good and bad because he wanted to do what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Who, being acquainted with Scripture, does not think of Solomon's proverbs in this connection? Isn't the fear of the Lord the beginning, the very principle of wisdom?

"Happy is he that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver and the gain thereof than fine gold."

All this wisdom therefore had to do with serving the Lord, the fear of His name. When this queen approached him with many difficult questions and problems, taken right out of real life, Solomon no doubt answered them in such a way that the fear of the Lord was the answer and gave the solution to all the basic problems of life.

Where Sheba was we don't know. Possibly in Africa. If so, she may have been colored. But surely that would have made no difference to the Lord. In fact, it would have given the entire history added meaning, foreshadowing the bringing in of the Gentiles. Jesus does say later that she came from the ends of the earth, indicating that she did travel a great distance. The point is that Solomon was so famous that people, at least this queen, traveled such a tremendous distance to hear of this king's wisdom and to see his glory.

We may also conclude from the sacred narrative that her conversations with the king were not principally about secular or political matters, but about spiritual truths, the things that pertain to the Lord and to the fear of His great name.

And doesn't the Lord always bless those who fear Him. The queen must also see this. She came to hear of Solomon's wisdom but, in connection with it, she also saw his riches and glory. When she saw it all there was no spirit left in her. She just couldn't believe it. It was "out of this world." It just didn't seem possible to her, it just wasn't real. But then, there it all was, right before her eyes. Utter amazement and overwhelming astonishment were the reaction. The half of it had not been told her. Usually in life, the opposite is true, rumors are greatly exaggerated compared with the reality. But never so with the blessings of the Lord.

And, according to custom then already, the queen brought Solomon many gifts.

From all this we certainly may consider her to have been a child of God. Isn't she already the fulfillment of Psalm 72, when it speaks of people coming from Sheba to worship the Lord. But the strongest proof we find in Jesus' words later, that she will rise up in judgment against the generation of His day. Surely, unbelieving, wicked people will not rise in judgment against other unbelievers!

But we must see Christ in all this. Don't all things in the Old Testament either work towards His coming or point directly to Him?

The glory of Solomon's kingdom certainly is typical of the glory of Christ in His kingdom. Isn't all wisdom found with God as it is revealed in His Son? And is there really any wisdom outside of Him? He alone has the answers to all the riddles and problems of life. He alone can explain life and give it true meaning. The riches of Solomon are only a shadow of the riches and glory of Christ in His exaltation. And what is a shadow compared with the reality? The glories of heaven surely cannot be described in human words. The coming of this queen is the beginning of saved sinners coming from the ends of the earth to adore that wisdom of God's salvation in Christ Jesus our Savior. They will come from all nations, from Greenland's icy mountains as well as from India's coral strand, and also from where Africa's sunny fountains roll down their golden sand.

That kind of glory awaits all who are in Christ Jesus. Our glory will be to know Him in His glory and enjoy Him forever. The queen of Sheba being overwhelmed said that not the half of Solomon's glory was told her, but of the glory of heaven we surely can say that not one thousandth has been told us. Human language cannot begin to describe it. Such glory awaits us. The Scriptures tell us that there is no searching of His understanding (wisdom). Also, in speaking of His forgiving grace that it is as far as the east is from the west (not as far as north is from south, which is measurable). Also, as high as the heavens are upon the earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him. And how far is that? No one really knows. All told, when Paul approaches this subject, and tries to put into human words how rich that love and wisdom of God is, he says that it is something that no eye has seen, no ear has heard, nor has it ever arisen in the heart of any man. This really means that no human eye *can* see it, no human ear *can* hear it, nor *can* any human being begin to imagine its greatness. That is awaiting all those who are in Christ and love Him. And our glory will be to worship and to adore Him in all that greatness and beauty.

And what a testimony this queen gives to the church throughout the ages!

Jesus speaks of her in Matthew 12, stating that she will rise up in judgment with the generation of His day and condemn it. First of all, the people of that day must realize that the greater than Solomon is right in their midst. But it also means that we, of the New Testament, have so much more than the queen of Sheba ever had or saw. In fact there is no comparison. We have the full Bible, and we also know about the wisdom of the cross, and the glory of the empty tomb and the blessings of Pentecost with the fulness of the Spirit. This queen came a long way, no doubt hundreds of miles, traveling with her primitive means of transportation, to see Solomon, while we have right with us, in our homes, the full Bible which tells us about this great Son of God.

Look at her faith ... and the unbelief of many of Jesus' day, and of so many thousands who in the New Testament know about Him, but reject and negate Him. In the judgment day they will be condemned.

What does all this mean for us? That the greater than Solomon is right in our midst in the complete revelation of the Word and in the preaching of the Word every Sunday. Possessing this Word we find the true wisdom that is in Christ, in His blood and Spirit.

And if the queen of Sheba traveled hundreds of miles to see the shadow, how enthusiastic we should be to witness of Him to those right next to us! And also to bring our gifts to Him, not just material things but dedicated Christian lives.

*Blessed be His great and glorious Name.
Evermore, Amen,
And let His glory fill the earth
From shore to shore, Amen.*

And many "blacks" and "whites" and "reds" and "yellows," from the ends of the world in singing that song will rise up in judgment, condemning thousands who lived and died in unbelief with the greater than Solomon in their very midst.

Believe, therefore, in Him.

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