

Day 363 - FRIDAY: February 9th

2 Chronicles 9:1 – 28, 1 Kings 10 & 2 Chronicles 1:14 – 17

2 Chronicles 9:1-28 NKJV

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. So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 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. Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 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. Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! 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." 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. Also, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought alnum wood and precious stones. And the king made walkways of the alnum 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. 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. The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, 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. And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of hammered gold went into each shield. 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. Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. 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. Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. 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. For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys. So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of

the earth in riches and wisdom. And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. Each man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year. 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. So he reigned over all the kings from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. 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. And they brought horses to Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

1 Kings 10:1-29 NKJV

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. She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! Blessed be the LORD your God, who

delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness." Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great quantity, and precious stones. There never again came such abundance of spices as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. Also, the ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought great quantities of almug wood and precious stones from Ophir. And the king made steps of the almug wood for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers. There never again came such almug wood, nor has the like been seen to this day. Now King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, besides what Solomon had given her according to the royal generosity. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants. The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, besides that from the traveling merchants, from the income of traders, from all the kings of Arabia, and from the governors of the country. And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. He also made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three minas of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round at the back; there were armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom. 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. For the king had merchant ships at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys. So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in

riches and wisdom. Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. Each man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year. And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. 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. Also Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh; the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the current price. Now a chariot that was imported from Egypt cost six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse one hundred and fifty; and thus, through their agents, they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.

2 Chronicles 1:14-17 NKJV

And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. Also the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland. And Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh; the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the current price. They also acquired and imported from Egypt a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred and fifty; thus, through their agents, they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "Here we have the famous visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon's court. Sheba was located in what is today the southwestern corner of Saudi Arabia, roughly in the region occupied by Yemen, but also possibly occupying territory on the adjacent African coast in Ethiopia as reported in Ethiopian tradition. The ancients called the area of Yemen *Arabia Felix*, "Happy Arabia," because of its healthful climate and its riches in gold, incense, precious stones and spices. That the Queen of Sheba would hear of Solomon is evidence of the briskness of trade between Sheba and Israel, much of which was doubtless carried on through Solomon's southern fleet. Mention of the "ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir" (1 Kings 10:11), has been taken to indicate that the fabled land was located on Africa's eastern coast. There *is* a phonetic similarity between Ophir and Africa. Others have speculated that it was further south—in southern Africa—while still others have identified it with India or even the Americas (in the latter case noting a similarity between the words Ophir and Pirua, the first Incan dynasty from which the country of Peru ultimately derives its name).

The vast wealth of Solomon is attributed to his far-flung trading empire. Not only did wealth pour in from the eastern desert traders, the Arabian traders and the governors of subject satellite nations, but on top of that Solomon's annual inflow of gold bullion was 666 talents (more than 125,000 pounds, with a current value of more than U.S. \$500 million). Where did Solomon get all this gold? Ophir was a major source, but so was Tarshish, a Phoenician port in southern Spain. It was to this western port that Jonah was trying to escape when he set sail on a ship from Joppa.

This section of Scripture also notes that Solomon obtained horses and chariots from Egypt and other places. Again, this fact points to an amicable if not military alliance between Egypt and Israel, for chariots were the high-tech weaponry of the day. No doubt the alliance with Israel provided Egypt with a strong and secure ally to the north, well able to prevent incursions into Egypt from Syria and Mesopotamia. But militarizing Israel in this way was contrary to God's will—for, as He decreed through Moses in Deuteronomy 17:16-17, Israel's king was not to multiply horses (i.e., an army) nor wives (i.e., a harem, the tokens of alliances with foreign nations), nor silver and gold to himself. Though Solomon did all three, God was patient and gave him space to repent. The repentance, however, never came—unless the book of Ecclesiastes was written after a very late repentance, as many speculate.” [END]

2 Chronicles 9:

Verse 1 – The NKJV states that Queen of Sheba had a great “retinue”. This word means “a force”. Here it’s used to mean she had a lot of people, a company, with her.