

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 9

The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon

When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions. Arriving with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she came to Solomon and talked with him about all she had on her mind.² Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for him to explain to her.³ When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the palace he had built,⁴ the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, the cupbearers in their robes and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed.⁵ She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true.⁶ But I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half the greatness of your wisdom was told me; you have far exceeded the report I heard.⁷ How happy your men must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!⁸ Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the LORD your God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them, to maintain justice and righteousness."⁹ Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. There had never been such spices as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.¹⁰ (The men of Hiram and the men of Solomon brought gold from Ophir; they also brought algumwood and precious stones.¹¹ The king used the algumwood to make steps for the temple of the LORD and for the royal palace, and to make harps and lyres for the musicians. Nothing like them had ever been seen in Judah.)¹² King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for; he gave her more than she had brought to him. Then she left and returned with her retinue to her own country.

9:1–12 See 1Ki 10:1–13 and notes. The visit of the queen of Sheba portrays the fulfillment of God's promise to give Solomon wisdom and wealth (1:12). Although the themes of Solomon's wisdom and wealth are here put to the fore, a major motive for the queen's visit may have been commercial, perhaps prompted by Solomon's naval operations toward south Arabia (8:17–18). (CSB)

Highlights Solomon's wealth and wisdom. Expansion of Israel's interests toward the southern part of Arabia may have prompted the queen's visit. (TLSB)

9:1 *queen*. Her visit to the temple builder was evidence that, in addition to providing safety and peace at home, Solomon had friendly and profitable relations with a country as distant and rich in resources as Sheba (vv 1–12). See notes on the parallel account in 1Ki 10:1–13. (TLSB)

test. Reports of Solomon's wisdom seemed too good to be true. (TLSB)

9:8 *his throne.* The most significant variation from the account of the queen's visit in 1 Kings (10:9) is found here. The queen's speech becomes the vehicle for the Chronicler's conviction that the throne of Israel is the throne of God, for whom the king ruled. (CSB)

A major difference between Chronicles and Kings regarding the queen of Sheba's visit is noted here. The Chronicler reports her stating that God has "set you on His throne as king for the LORD your God," whereas Kings reports her words as "set you on the throne of Israel" (1Ki 10:9). This reflects the Chronicler's emphasis on the Davidic throne as the divine throne (1Ch 17:14; 28:5; 2Ch 13:8) (TLSB)

Solomon's Splendor

¹³ The weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents, ¹⁴ not including the revenues brought in by merchants and traders. Also all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon. ¹⁵ King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred bekas of hammered gold went into each shield. ¹⁶ He also made three hundred small shields of hammered gold, with three hundred bekas of gold in each shield. The king put them in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. ¹⁷ Then the king made a great throne inlaid with ivory and overlaid with pure gold. ¹⁸ The throne had six steps, and a footstool of gold was attached to it. On both sides of the seat were armrests, with a lion standing beside each of them. ¹⁹ Twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any other kingdom. ²⁰ All King Solomon's goblets were gold, and all the household articles in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold. Nothing was made of silver, because silver was considered of little value in Solomon's day. ²¹ The king had a fleet of trading ships manned by Hiram's men. Once every three years it returned, carrying gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons. ²² King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. ²³ All the kings of the earth sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart. ²⁴ Year after year, everyone who came brought a gift—articles of silver and gold, and robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules. ²⁵ Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horses, which he kept in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem. ²⁶ He ruled 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 cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. ²⁸ Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from all other countries.

9:13–28 Both Solomon's wealth (vv 13–21, 24–28) and wisdom (vv 22–23) were beyond the degree of any king before or after him. He was the ideal king. (TLSB)

9:13 *weight of gold.* The gold and silver lavished by Solomon on the temple did not exhaust his supply. He had enough of the precious metal for ornaments and drinking vessels in his palace (vv 13–21). (TLSB)

9:14 *brought gold.* As trade or tribute. (TLSB)

9:18 *lions.* Symbols of regal strength. Chem: “Solomon made two lions for his ivory throne and 12 small lions for the steps. This example established the civil use of images” (*LTh* 2:374). (TLSB)

9:21 *Tarshish.* Indicates that he had ships capable of going a long distance. The Chronicler emphasizes Solomon’s glory by accenting not Hiram’s ships but the sailors sent as crews for the ships given to Solomon (8:18). (TLSB)

9:22 For the parallel of this final reference to Solomon’s illustrious reign, cf 1Ki 10:23–29. (TLSB)

9:26 **9:26** *ruled over all the kings.* They were his vassals. (TLSB)

9:27 See 1:15. (CSB)

9:28 The Chronicler omits the accounts of Solomon’s wives and the rebellions at the end of his reign (1Ki 11:1–40), both of which would detract from his uniformly positive portrayal of Solomon. (CSB)

horses ... Egypt. See note on 1:16. (CSB)

Solomon’s Death

29 **As for the other events of Solomon’s reign, from beginning to end, are they not written in the records of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat?**
30 **Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.** **31** **Then he rested with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son succeeded him as king.**

9:29–31 See 1Ki 11:41–43. (CSB)

The Chronicler doesn’t raise the issues of Solomon’s apostasy (1Ki 11:1–10) and adversaries (1Ki 11:11–40). Significantly, this excludes the dramatic prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite and his condemnation of Solomon for the splitting of the kingdom after his death (1Ki 11:28–40). The Chronicler will emphasize the blame of Solomon’s son Rehoboam. (TLSB)

9:29 *acts of Solomon.* The writer of Chronicles refers his readers to records kept by three prophetic writers (cf 1Ki 11:41). From these sources, no longer in existence today, he selected accounts that served his immediate purpose: to teach the people after the exile that they cannot be God’s people without honoring Him in worship acceptable to Him. (TLSB)

9:29–31 Solomon begins and finishes his reign under the watchful eyes of the Lord’s prophets (cf 1Ki 1:45), who reviewed his accomplishments and likely also reviewed his failures. Today, treasure the faithful spiritual leaders the Lord provides for your wisdom and counsel. Both their rebuke and their blessing stem from the Lord’s good purposes for you: to call you to repentance and to make you wise unto salvation in Christ. • Grant me ready ears and a sincere heart, O Lord, to welcome the counsel You provide. Amen. (TLSB)