

The last time we were together the Queen of Sheba was visiting with Solomon specifically because she had heard of his fame and wisdom.

2 Chronicles 9:1-8 ^{NAU} Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with difficult questions. She had a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and a large amount of gold and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was on her heart. ² Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from Solomon which he did not explain to her. ³ When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house which he had built, ⁴ the food at his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his ministers and their attire, his cupbearers and their attire, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, she was breathless. ⁵ Then she said to the king, "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. ⁶ "Nevertheless I did not believe their reports until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You surpass the report that I heard. ⁷ "How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom. ⁸ "Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you, setting you on His throne as king for the LORD your God; because your God loved Israel establishing them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness."

This is the same queen that our Lord Jesus Christ acknowledges when the Pharisees wanted a sign from Him to verify His claims.

Matthew 12:38-42 ³⁸ Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." ³⁹ But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and *yet* no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; ⁴⁰ for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ "The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. ⁴² "*The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom*

of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

And so, our Lord uses the Queen of Sheba, a Gentile, along with the men of Nineveh, also Gentiles, as those who would condemn the very chosen of God, as they sought the Lord and yet God's own people, Israel, wouldn't.

The Queen of Sheba heard about God's grace given to Solomon and wanted to learn more of his God. The Jews during Christ's ministry saw the wonders of God in His Son through miracles and the word of truth and they would have none of it and in turn would condemn Him to death. Yes, there will be a reckoning.

But as we continue with the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon there is one more thing I want to point out and that is what she recognizes about the throne of Solomon and to whom it belongs.

2 Chronicles 9:8 ⁸ "Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you, setting you on His throne as king for the LORD your God; because your God loved Israel establishing them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness."

Solomon may have been reigning on the throne in Israel but it was not his throne, nor his kingdom, nor his fame that was meant to be highlighted. Rather it was God's throne and kingdom and fame that was meant to be the thing that people were impressed with. And this is pointed out in the rest of chapter 9 when it shows the wealth of the kingdom of Solomon.

2 Chronicles 9:22-28 ²² So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²³ And all the kings of the earth were seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart. ²⁴ They brought every man his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, weapons, spices, horses and mules, so much year by year. ²⁵ Now Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁶ He was the ruler over all the kings from the Euphrates River even to the land of the Philistines, and as far as the border of Egypt. 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 And they were bringing horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all countries.

And then chapter 9 ends with Solomon sleeping with his fathers. Interestingly enough we're told that his reign was 40 years. I don't think it's a coincidence that the number 40 is used to show how long God allowed Solomon to reign over the Lord's people on the Lord's throne in the promised land in Jerusalem.

Forty has always been a number for the exact time in which God accomplishes particular events in redemptive history.

Genesis 7:4 ⁴ "For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth *forty days and forty nights*; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made."

Acts 7:23-24 ²³ "But when he was approaching the age of *forty*, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel. ²⁴ "And when he saw one *of them* being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian.

Acts 7:30-35 ³⁰ "After *forty years* had passed, AN ANGEL APPEARED TO HIM IN THE WILDERNESS OF MOUNT Sinai, IN THE FLAME OF A BURNING THORN BUSH. ³¹ "When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look *more* closely, there came the voice of the Lord: ³² 'I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB.' Moses shook with fear and would not venture to look. ³³ "BUT THE LORD SAID TO HIM, 'TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND. ³⁴ 'I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO RESCUE THEM; COME NOW, AND I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT.' ³⁵ "This Moses whom they disowned, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?' is the one whom God sent *to be* both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush.

Exodus 16:35 ³⁵ The sons of Israel ate the manna *forty years*, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

Exodus 24:18 - 25:1 ¹⁸ Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain *forty days and forty nights*.

Numbers 13:25-26 ²⁵ When they returned from spying out the land, at the end of *forty days*, ²⁶ they proceeded to come to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; and they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land.

Judges 13:1 ^{NAU} Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, so that the LORD gave them into the hands of the Philistines *forty years*.

2 Samuel 5:4 ⁴ David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned *forty years*.

1 Kings 19:7-8 ⁷ The angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you." ⁸ So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food *forty days and forty nights* to Horeb, the mountain of God.

Jonah 3:4 ⁴ Then Jonah began to go through the city one day's walk; and he cried out and said, "Yet *forty days* and Nineveh will be overthrown."

Matthew 4:2-3 ² And after He had fasted *forty days and forty nights*, He then became hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

Acts 1:3 ³ To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a *period of forty days* and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

Why would the number 40 be important to God in the grand scheme of things? Or maybe a broader question would be why would any specific number be important when it is applied to God accomplishing His will?

Because it tells us and assures us that there is a beginning and an end to what God is accomplishing. Things will not go on forever for this cursed world. When God uses numbers in the word of God to count out His will we can be assured that He will be faithful to fulfill all in His own time frame.

But it is a time frame none the less that has an exact number for God to do all that He desires. Whether it's a trial in our lives or blessings, or even our own time on this earth it is an exact number and hour in which God will bring it to pass.

The only thing that will not come to an end are the new heavens and new earth. Until that time we are told to wait on Him and remain faithful in the time frame He has assigned to us.

Matthew 24:42-44 ⁴² "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think *He will*.

After Solomon's reign of 40 years his son Rehoboam would take his place. Unfortunately, when the people asked for mercy in the way he ruled he listened to the wrong counsel.

He had originally asked Solomon's elders who said this.

2 Chronicles 10:7 "If you will be kind to this people and please them and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever."

But then he asked the younger men, those with whom he grew up, and their counsel was this.

2 Chronicles 10:10-11 ¹⁰ The young men who grew up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you shall say to the people who spoke to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter for us.' Thus you shall say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins! ¹¹ 'Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I *will discipline you* with scorpions.'"

How is it that people can be so cruel and forget the kindness that the Lord bestowed on them and yet not turn around and administer that kindness to God's people?

Needless to say when Rehoboam told Israel how he would rule them there was a revolt.

2 Chronicles 10:14 - 11:1 ¹⁴ He spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father disciplined you with whips, but I *will discipline you* with scorpions." ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn *of events* from God that the LORD might establish His word, which He spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. ¹⁶ When all Israel *saw* that the king did not listen to them the people answered the king, saying, "What portion do we have in David? *We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Every man to your tents, O Israel; Now look after your own house, David.*" So all Israel departed to their tents. ¹⁷ But as for the sons of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. ¹⁸ Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was over the forced labor, and the sons of Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

So, as we come to 2 Chronicles 11 we see that Rehoboam fortifies the main cities and he pursues his rule with a rod of iron. He marries and has children and unlike his father he does something which would seem to make no sense in light of the way the Lord had blessed his father Solomon.

2 Chronicles 12:1 ^{NAU} When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the LORD.

To forsake the law of the Lord is to essentially say that God will not rule over me as I rule this people. This is apostasy. Essentially they are saying, 'I will establish my own law and I will be accountable to no one.'

Well, people can think that all they want, but that doesn't make the 800 pound gorilla in the room go away. When God speaks people must listen and if they don't listen you don't want to be on the wrong side of the Lord's wrath. And so, notice what happens in the next verse.

2 Chronicles 12:2 ² And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.

Now this is an interesting statement in that it appears that Shishak is the one concluding that Rehoboam had been unfaithful to the Lord, therefore he will go against him.

Why would Shishak even think this way, and then decide to attack Rehoboam, especially when Rehoboam had one of the mightiest armies in the world at that time?

Keep in mind that it wasn't that many years before when the entire region was aware, not unlike the Queen of Sheba, that the God of Israel was mighty and was blessing His people precisely because they were faithful to Him.

2 Chronicles 9:22-23 ²² So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²³ And all the kings of the earth were seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart.

The kings of the earth respected Solomon, not because Solomon was so wise but because the God of Israel had made him so wise.

But now the king of Egypt sees how Rehoboam has forsaken the Lord and just like Samson, who derived his strength from his hair as God had ordered it, Rehoboam is seen as bald if you will. And it appears that Shishak knows that this would be a good time to come up against Rehoboam.

The other thing which cannot be taken out of the equation is that while Shishak may see an opening here it is God Himself who places it on Shishak's heart to consider such a thing. It is ultimately God who will use Shishak to accomplish His will. And notice what God's will is.

2 Chronicles 12:5-8 ⁵ Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, 'You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you to Shishak.'" ⁶ So the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is righteous." ⁷ When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves *so* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some *measure* of deliverance, and My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak. ⁸ "But they will become his slaves so that they may learn *the difference between* My service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries."

There is no escaping the will of God. We can either submit and be blessed or rebel and not be blessed.

2 Chronicles 12:13-16 ¹³ So King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Now Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. ¹⁴ He did evil because he did not set his heart to seek the LORD. ¹⁵ Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer, according to genealogical enrollment? And *there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.* ¹⁶ And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David; and his son Abijah became king in his place.