Message for posting

 **He Has Made You King to maintain justice and righteousness**

**1 Kings 10:1-29**

**Key verse 10: 9b**

**“Because of the Lord’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness”**

Today’s passage demonstrates the Lord’s faithfulness. The Lord kept his promise to Solomon. He gave him wisdom, wealth, and honor as he promised, and it was witnessed by the queen of Sheba.

But king Solomon failed to be faithful to the Lord to the end because he did not know the Lord. God has made him king in his inner world. When the Lord has made Solomon king he also made him king in his inner world. When he had faith in God at first, the king Solomon was the king in his inner world. But as he lost his faith in the Lord little by little he failed to be king in his inner world. Then he began to disobey the commands of God.

So today we would like to know the Lord’s faithfulness and the reason why Solomon failed. We also want to see how the Lord has made us king.

My message has two parts. **Part I. When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon (v.1-13) Part II. King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth (v.14-29)**

**Part I. When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon (v.1-13)**

**Verses 1-5
“When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relationship to the Lord, she came to test Solomon with hard questions. 2Arriving at Jerusalem 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 that she had on her mind. 3Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her. 4When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, 5the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the Lord, she was overwhelmed."**

The Sheba is generally known as Yemen in our days. The queen of Sheba heard about two things. They are the fame of Solomon and his relationship to the Lord. So his fame and his relationship to the Lord were already well known internationally. When she heard them, she wanted to verify it. She wanted to test him with hard questions. What kind of hard questions were they? We don’t know. But if you are a leader of a nation like her, you will have many hard questions. If you are a president of America you will have a lot of hard questions. For example, how can I maintain justice and righteousness among all American people? How can I maintain justice among the rich and the poor, the black and the white people, men and women, young and old?

She arrived in Jerusalem with a very great caravans with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold and precious stones. She went straight to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind. Solomon answered all her questions. Nothing was too hard for him to explain.

The scene reminded me of the scene between Jesus and the Samaritan woman recorded in John’s gospel chapter 4. She said, “When the Messiah comes he will explain everything to us.” Jesus said, “I, the one speaking to you, I am he.” **John 4:25-26 “25The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” 26Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”**

Now that was only the conversation part. We don’t know how long it lasted the conversation. But I guess pretty short because nothing was too hard for Solomon to explain any hard questions.

 Now she had to see with her own eyes all things. When she saw the wisdom of Solomon, the palace he had built, his food, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, and the burnt offering he made she was overwhelmed. But she did not mention the temple itself. So the temple itself was not that appealing compared to the palace.

 Then she confessed to Solomon.

**Verses 6-10
“6She said to the king, “The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. 7But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard. 8How happy your people must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! 9Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness.”
10And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.”**

The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. 7But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard.

She did not believe until she saw. But when she saw she believed. Jesus used the example of the queen of Sheba to rebuke the people of his times who saw his wisdom and did not believe.

**Matthew 12:38-42.**

**38Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.” 39He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here. 42The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.**

The people in Jesus’ days saw the wisdom of Jesus with their eyes. But they could not see it in their hearts. Some of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law saw many miraculous signs from Jesus. But still they wanted more to know who he was. Why do you think they could not see them? Isn’t it strange? Yes, it is very strange. You see with your eyes but you don’t see in your hearts. What is this? What is happening here? What blocked them to see? What blocks us to see?

It is unbelief. They could not see because they did not believe. Unbelief blocked their spiritual eyes and they could not see.

That is why Jesus worked so hard while he was here on earth to plant faith in his people. When his disciples cried out during a storm thinking that they would be drowned to death, he said to them, **“You of little faith. Why are you so afraid?” (Matthew 8:26)**

When two blind men cried out to Jesus as Jesus went on, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!” Jesus did not do anything. He pretended as if he did not hear anything. When Jesus had gone indoors, they followed him there. Then Jesus asked them, **“Do you believe that I am able to do this?”** When they replied, “Yes, Lord.” Jesus said, **“According to your faith let it be done to you.” (Mt 9:27-29)**

 Do you know what it means, “According to your faith let it be done to you.”? He was saying, “I didn’t do anything. Your faith has healed you.” Jesus wanted his people to have faith in him so much that he was saying to the point of “If you have faith in me, your faith will heal you. I do not need to do anything.”

Actually that is true. When we believe Jesus’ authority and power in his words, we have what we want from Jesus. One centurion demonstrated his faith when he was asking Jesus to heal his sick servant. Jesus asked, “Shall I come and heal him?” He said, “Just say the word, and my servant will be healed.” Then Jesus said, **‘Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would”**. And his servant was healed. **(Matthew 8:5-13)**

 Again why do you think Jesus worked so hard to plant faith in him? It is because people are able to see who he is only when they believe!

 When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon because she believed, she was able to see other things. Happiness of Solomon’s people and who has made Solomon king and with what purpose. She said, “**8How happy your people must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! 9Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness.”**

 She already saw that the justice and righteousness was there. That is why she was talking about maintaining “justice and righteousness.” It requires a tremendous power and authority to maintain justice and righteousness in this world because the world is under the influence of the devil who is the prince of this world. But the Lord gave such power and authority to Solomon when he made him king.

Then the queen of Sheba gave a lot of money out of her gratitude. It is like tuition in our terms. **10And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.”** Her country was famous for spices.

120 talents of gold is about 4 tons of gold. The price of 1 ton of gold is about $46.5 million dollars in 2019. $46.5 X 4 = $186 million dollars

**Verses 11-13
“11(Hiram’s ships brought gold from Ophir; and from there they brought great cargoes of almugwood and precious stones. 12The king used the almugwood to make supports for the temple of the Lord and for the royal palace, and to make harps and lyres for the musicians. So much almugwood has never been imported or seen since that day.)
13King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for, besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty. Then she left and returned with her retinue to her own country.”**

I do not know why suddenly the passage talks about Hiram’s ships bringing gold from Ohpir. If we believe the map I am presenting, Sheba and Ophir are close in location. The passage mentioned Hiram’s ships as another source of gold.

They brought almugwood. It is a special wood. So the king used for the temple and the palace and make harps and lyres.

After the king Solomon gavethe queen of Sheba all she desired and asked for, besides what he had given her out of his royal bounty. Then she left and returned with her retinue to her own country.

**Part II. King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth (v.14-29)**

**Verses 14-17
“14The weight of the gold that Solomon received yearly was 666 talents, 15not including the revenues from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the territories.
16King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. 17He also made three hundred small shields of hammered gold, with three minas of gold in each shield. The king put them in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.**

Part II demonstrates Solomon’s wealth. The yearly weight of the gold Solomon received was 666. It is about 25 tons and equivalent of 50,000 pounds. The current price is something around 11 billion dollars. But that was not all of Solomon’s revenue. Verse 15 says, “**15not including the revenues from merchants and traders and from all the Arabian kings and the governors of the territories.”**

Since Solomon had so much gold he was thinking about how to store them. Then he got an idea. He wanted to save in the form of shields.

 **16King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. 17He also made three hundred small shields of hammered gold, with three minas of gold in each shield. The king put them in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.**

600 Shekels of gold: 15 pounds of gold. About $400,000
$400,000 X 200 (large shields) = $80 million

1 mina is about $100,000. $100,000 X 300 (small shields) = $30 million

He also wanted to use the gold in his throne and his goblets, and all the household articles of his residence, the palace of the forest of Lebanon. Still Solomon had another source of gold. That is, this fleet of trading ships. Once every three years, they brought gold, silver, ivory, apes, and baboons.

**Verses 18-22
“18Then the king made a great throne covered with ivory and overlaid with fine gold. 19The throne had six steps, and its back had a rounded top. On both sides of the seat were armrests, with a lion standing beside each of them. 20Twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any other kingdom. 21All 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 days. 22The king had a fleet of trading ships at sea along with the ships of Hiram. Once every three years it returned, carrying gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons.**

**Verses 23-25
“23King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. 24The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart. 25Year after year, everyone who came brought a gift—articles of silver and gold, robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules.**

Verse 23 is the conclusion about Solomon’s wealth and wisdom.

Solomon’s wealth only increased all the more year after year. He was richer than any kings of the earth. But his wealth continued to grow year after year because people brought all kinds of gift as their payment to listen to Solomon’s wisdom which God gave him. Their gifts are **articles of silver and gold, robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules.**

Verse 24 shows the demonstration of Solomon’s honor. “**24The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.”**These unbelieving people saw the wisdom of Solomon did not come from Solomon but it was the wisdom God had put in his heart.

Indeed Solomon’s wisdom, wealth, and honor demonstrates the Lord’s faithfulness. The Lord was faithful to keep his promises by giving him wisdom, wealth and honor.

**Verses 26-29**

**26Solomon accumulated chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he kept in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem. 27The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. 28Solomon’s horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue—the royal merchants purchased them from Kue at the current price. 29They imported a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty. They also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and of the Arameans.”**

When we look at how Solomon accumulated an excessive gold and silver and chariots and horses, we are reminded of the Lord’s commands to the king of Israel.

**Deuteronomy 17:16-17**

**16The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the Lord has told you, “You are not to go back that way again.” 17He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.**

The words of the Lord for the kings of Israel shows the king should not do three things. First, the king should not accumulate a great number of horses or make people return to Egypt to get more horses. Second, the king must not take many wives in order that his heart may not be led astray. Third, the king must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.

Why did the Lord command the king of Israel not to accumulate a lot of silver and gold and horses and wives? It is because the Lord wants his king to keep their faith in him. Silver and gold refer to wealth. The Lord wants his king to believe in the Lord’s provision instead of provision from gold and silver. Silver and gold cannot guarantee the financial security of the nation. But the Lord can bring financial security of the nation.

The same is true for horses. Accumulating horses means to depend on the military powers for the national security. The Lord wants his king to depend on him rather than horses and chariots.

The word ‘accumulate” refers to excessive amount. For the same reason the Lord asks us to pray for our daily bread rather than yearly bread or monthly bread. The Lord wants his king to believe his protection and provision. The commands of the Lord require the faith of the king of Israel. As we see the Lord’s command, the faith in the Lord is so essential for the king of Israel.

So why did Solomon fail to obey the commands given to the king of Israel? He might have been deceived that it would be okay since he was obeying other commands of the Lord such as making burnt offerings and appearing three times before the Lord. Or he might have thought that it is a small compromise compared to his other obedience.

But the core part of Solomon’s failure comes from his unbelief. Like the people of Jesus’ days who saw Jesus’ wisdom but could not see in their hearts, all the power and authority of the Lord for Solomon to be king in his outer world and in his inner world was available. But he could not use it because he did not believe the Lord’s power anymore. He began to believe the power of horses and gold.

When Solomon had faith in the Lord first, his spiritual eyes were sharp. He could discern the wickedness of Adonijah when he asked Abishag the Shunammite to be his wife.. Bathsheba did not notice what was going on in the heart of Adonijah. But Solomon could see it so clearly that he executed Adonijah in that every day.

But he did not maintain his faith in the Lord. As he accumulated so much gold and silver and horses and chariots his faith moved from the Lord to those visible things.

When we think about ourselves, the Lord our God has made king spiritually. We do not have any visible land for us. But the Lord has made us king in our inner world. Our inner world is larger than the Solomon’s territory and it is more precious to our God.

He has made us king spiritually by giving us all his authority and power. Through faith in him, all of his power and authority is ours.

1 Peter 2:24 shows how he has made us king.

**1 Peter 2:24**

**““He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.””**

The Lord our God has made us king through his own sacrifice. He bore our sins in his body on the cross. He has made us king in this way. He has made us king in our inner world. Now we are king having his authority and power. So we can die to our sins and live for righteousness. We can experience his healing.

I claim and declare the Lord our God has made us king in our inner world because our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has all authority and power in heaven and on earth. And he has given all of his power and authority to us so that we can die to sins and live for righteousness.

However, if we do not experience of our death to our sins and new life for righteousness, let us think about the reason why? Why all the powers and authorities our Lord and Savior gave us does not work? What blocks his power in our lives?

What blocked Solomon to live as king in his inner world? It was unbelief. In the same way, our unbelieving can block the power of the Lord in our lives.

We are all kings as if we are all brides of Jesus our Lord and Savior. We can truly live a victorious life by believing he is our Lord and Savior and his power and authority is over all things including the power of sin and death in us. Through faith in his power and love we can live as more than conquerors instead of more than losers.

 In conclusion, we learned the Lord’s faithfulness when we see how much Solomon was blessed with wisdom, riches, and wealth. When the Lord has made Solomon king he has made Solomon king in his inner world too. The Lord God wanted Solomon to maintain justice and righteousness not only in his kingdom and but also in his inner world. But he failed to do so because he lost his faith in the Lord his God as he develops his faith in the gold and silver and horses and chariots.

 Let us remember that the Lord has made us king in our inner world and keep our faith in him and live as powerful king who can maintain justice and righteousness in our outer world and in our inner world.

One word: He has made you king.