

Something Greater Than Solomon

Luke 11:29-31

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1. **Let's begin by establishing a bit of context** for our opening text of Luke chapter 11:
 - a. There is a great deal happening in this chapter, but our story really begins in vs 14. Here Jesus has just finished casting out a demon, much to the amazement of the crowds:
 - i. However, not everyone in the crowd was suitably impressed. There was another part of those gathered that fell into one of two categories: There were some who thought that Jesus was simply in cahoots with the demons He was casting out, and there were others who weren't satisfied with witnessing only one miracle, demanded that He show them more signs from Heaven:
 - ii. Jesus knew the thoughts of all who were present and He began to expose the foolishness in their thinking; but by the time we get to vs 29, the crowds have continued to grow as the commotion has started to increase, Jesus transitions from explaining to condemning: **READ 29-31**
 1. It is likely that many in the crowds that were gathered had heard Jesus teach more than once, and that they had also either seen or heard about other miracles that He had performed.
 2. But instead of allowing their hearts to be affected by what they heard and saw, they either made foolish accusations or demanded more proof.
 3. Part of Jesus' denouncement of them centers on events from **II Chronicles 9**, where the Queen of Sheba, having heard rumors about Solomon that she couldn't quite believe, made the long journey to Jerusalem to confirm the facts for herself;

4. And yet these people who were present had virtually nothing in common with that woman... and something GREATER than Solomon was there!
- b. **Something greater than Solomon:** Let's stop and think about that for a moment: Jesus is obviously referring to Himself, but think about how that would have sounded to those who were gathered there.
 - i. It takes more than your average man on the street to claim to be greater than the wisest and wealthiest king the nation had known. He would have seemed to have been consumed with vanity.
 - ii. By extension—if this man thinks He is better than Solomon; what must he think about the rest of us!
 - iii. For those who didn't recognize that Jesus was telling the truth—this would have seemed an unwise and arrogant proclamation to make.
 - c. **But something greater than Solomon WAS** there; and for those in the crowd who failed to see this, they blinded themselves to witnesses something truly amazing:

2. **The Wisdom of Solomon:**

- a. The story of Solomon's wisdom begins in **1 Kings 3**. At this point we are still in the very early stages of his reign, and in chapter 3 he has gone to offer sacrifice to the Lord at the altar in Gibeon. In verse 5 Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and told him to "ask what you wish Me to give you" Many are familiar with Solomon's humble response, and picking up in verse 7 of chapter 3:
 - i. *"Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. "Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted. "So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?" (1 Kings 3:7-9)*

- ii. An example of Solomon's shrewd ability to discern is given almost immediately as chapter 3 also tells us the story of the two harlots who were both laying claim to being the mother of the surviving child.
 - 1. Solomon's solution at exposing the callous nature of the lying woman caused all Israel to acknowledge in vs 28 that Solomon possessed the wisdom of God to administer justice.
- iii. We know that Solomon wrote the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, as well as a few of the Psalms, but 1 Kings 4:32 tells us that the total number was 3,000 Proverbs, and 1,005 Psalms: Vs 34 says that *"Men came from all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom."*
- iv. What the Queen of Sheba said to Solomon on her visit is a good summary of his wisdom:
 - 1. *It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. "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. II Chron. 9:5b-6"*

b. **I think that if we wanted to**, we could look at the ministry of Jesus and offer up several different examples of the Lord showing great wisdom: There are certainly many opportunities to show this in the different answers that He gave to the Pharisees, Sadducees and other elites of His day: We could look at examples of His teaching like the Sermon on the Mount.

- i. But our point is not to trade examples or compare them: Jesus was not wiser than Solomon because He gave better answers or more of them; Jesus was superior to Solomon in wisdom because Jesus IS wisdom.
- ii. The Lord is the creator of Wisdom; God is the giver of wisdom; Wisdom cannot even hoped to be attained without first coming to know and fear the Lord.
- iii. No matter how wise Solomon may have been, it was simply a drop of water given out of a greater ocean:

- iv. As Paul says of Christ in **1 Cor. 1:24** *Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

3. **The Wealth of Solomon:**

- a. Going back to 1 Kings 3 for a moment; God was pleased with the request for wisdom that Solomon had made of Him, and so because Solomon had not focused on long life and riches God says in verse 13: *I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.*
 - i. Israel certainly enjoyed immense prosperity under Solomon: **Chapter 4:20** tells us that the people were as numerous as the sand and that everyone was able to eat and drink and abundance:
 - ii. All of the nations who surrounded Judah and Israel brought tribute to Solomon throughout his reign. There were horses, chariots, and food stores in abundance: **2 Ch. 1:15** tells us that gold and silver were so plentiful that they were as common as regular rocks.
 - iii. Solomon had 300 golden shields hanging in one of his houses, he sat on a throne made out of ivory and covered in gold, with a golden footstool, that was at the top of six stairs and surrounded by twelve lions. And as he sat on it is drank out of golden cups (**2 Ch. 9:17-20**)
 - I. Solomon wasn't rich; he was *filthy* rich:
- b. What about Jesus?
 - i. The Lord was born into a family of poverty: **Luke 2:24** tells us that when He was presented at the temple His parents made an offering of two turtledoves, the provision given in the Law of Moses for those who were too poor to afford the usual sacrifice:
 - ii. Although He was often invited into the homes of those that He taught, Jesus was not given a generous stipend or support from various synagogues; He wasn't paid for His many sermons: **Luke 8:3** tells us He was supported by and large by a handful of women: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and others out of their own private means:

1. But again, our point is not to strictly compare whatever physical riches Jesus had; He certainly could have had far more than Solomon if He had wanted to;
2. Rather the riches that Jesus possess and the riches that He offers are greater than Solomon's because they do not fade: They cannot be stolen or destroyed because they are eternal:
3. Jesus now sits on a throne in heaven far superior to what Solomon had here; and he offers a better crown to us; not a crown of gold but one of life.

4. **Solomon: The Prince of Peace**

- a. Solomon's very name meant Peace. God told David what to name this child because it was to be a sign of what kind of reign he would have: Solomon was to be a prince of peace.
 - i. King David had originally desired to build a temple for the Lord, and there were many reasons why God said that David could not build it. Among them were the life of violence David had led: **READ 1 CH. 22:6-9**
 - ii. God would make good on His promise: The nation was never as secure and unharmed as it was while Solomon was on the throne:
 1. *So Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.*
1 Kings. 4:25
- b. The peace enjoyed by Israel was truly great; but it was only an outward peace, and it was one that would not last forever: And no matter how calm things may have been physically for the nation, Solomon could never give Israel a peaceful mind or heart: He could not take away the sense of guilt felt by everyone who lived under the Old Law:
 - i. Jesus is the Prince of Peace in the most complete sense: **Hebrews 9:14** tells us that the blood of Christ not only removes our sins and makes us without blemish to God, but it has the ability to cleanse our conscience: Christ's blood takes away the memory of our sin and provides us with the

only real peace that matters!

5. Concluding Remarks:

- a. There are other comparison's that we could make:
 - i. Solomon was a great builder: He constructed the temple as well as a grand place for himself and other great works: Jesus has built the house of God from living stones:
 - ii. Solomon's kingdom had borders that stretched farther than any of the other kings, and nations beyond the borders paid tribute to him: Jesus' kingdom is worldwide and eternal; he has dominion and authority over all:
- b. Our point though is made: Jesus was indeed greater than Solomon:
 - i. It is good for us to take time to meditate on just how great our savior truly is—there are opportunities for growth doing that alone. But what are we going to do with those thoughts?
 - ii. In Luke 11 Jesus was angry at some in the crowds because they refused to be moved by what they heard and saw. His teachings and His power simply washed right over them without affect. They failed to realize who was in their midst.
 - iii. We need to make sure that we don't do the same. We have the teachings. We have the miracles and the great works. Let's not take them for granted and fail to let them drive us to action: We have one who is GREATER than Solomon.