

The Books of 1 and 2 Chronicles

Lesson 15: Solomon's Splendor and Death -- 2 Chronicles 8:1-9:31

These two chapters read like a tour through the golden age of Israel. Solomon finishes his great building projects, fortifies cities, organizes the priests and Levites for worship as the duty of each day required, and sends ships to bring back gold from distant ports. Then comes the famous visit of the queen of Sheba, who travels a great distance to test Solomon with hard questions and goes home breathless, confessing that the half had not been told her. Gold, wisdom, fame, peace: by every earthly measure, Solomon stands at the summit.

And yet, if you read carefully, there is a quiet warning woven through the splendor. The Chronicler notes that Solomon's wisdom and riches exceeded all the kings of the earth, that silver was as common as stones, that everyone sought his presence to hear his wisdom. It is dazzling. But we know, from the larger story of Scripture, where unchecked prosperity can lead a heart. The gold that fills a kingdom can also fill a heart and leave little room for God. Glory and drift often travel closer together than we think.

What grips us most in these chapters is the way Solomon's wisdom keeps pointing beyond himself. The queen of Sheba is not finally amazed at a man; she is moved to bless the Lord his God, who delighted in Solomon and set him on the throne. The wisdom that astonished the nations was a gift, on loan from God, meant to point the watching world back to its Giver. Solomon at his best is a signpost, not a destination.

And the signpost points to One greater. Jesus said the queen of the South came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. All of Solomon's wisdom was a faint sketch of the wisdom of God made flesh, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. As we walk through this golden age and watch even the great king die and be buried, we are being trained to set our hearts not on splendor that fades but on Christ, the wisdom of God, who never fails and never dies.

Group Discussion: Solomon's prosperity was real and God-given, yet it carried hidden spiritual dangers; what are the specific perils that accompany seasons of success and comfort for God's people?

Personal Reflection: In your current season, whether of plenty or of want, where is prosperity or the desire for it quietly drawing your heart away from wholehearted devotion to God?

Read 2 Chronicles 8:1-9:31

Study Questions

1. What does Solomon's organizing of worship so that the service was carried out as the duty of each day required teach us about God's concern for ordered, regular, and obedient worship?
2. How disciplined and regular is your own worship and devotion to God, and where do you need to recover daily faithfulness rather than sporadic bursts?
3. When the queen of Sheba responded to Solomon's wisdom by blessing the Lord his God, what does that reveal about the true purpose of the gifts and abilities God gives His people?
4. How are you using the abilities, resources, and opportunities God has given you to point others to Him rather than to yourself?
5. What does the Chronicler intend us to learn from the description of Solomon's unmatched wisdom, wealth, and fame, and how does he present these as gifts from God rather than human achievements?
6. Where are you tempted to take credit for what is actually a gift of God's grace, and how would genuine gratitude reshape your attitude?

7. What hidden spiritual dangers accompany prosperity and success, and how does the larger witness of Scripture warn that comfort can quietly erode faithfulness?
8. What practical safeguards can you put in place so that increasing comfort, security, or success does not weaken your devotion to God?
9. How does true wisdom come from God and point beyond Solomon to Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, so that we see the peril of prosperity without continued faithfulness and the need to seek the wisdom of God rather than the splendor of this world?
10. Looking back across Solomon's splendor and death, name one specific way the Lord is using this passage to reorder your heart around the wisdom of Christ rather than the fading glory of this world.

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Matthew 12:42, where Jesus declares that one greater than Solomon is here, identifying Himself as the true and final wisdom; 1 Corinthians 1:30, which says Christ became to us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; Colossians 2:3, which teaches that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; James 1:5, which promises that God gives wisdom generously to those who ask in faith; Deuteronomy 8:11–18, which warns that prosperity can tempt God's people to forget the Lord who gave it.

More studies available on ChurchOfChristBibleStudies.com