

Solomon and Christ

When we examine the Reign of Solomon, we find that in a number of particulars, we have a foreshadowing of the future reign of Jesus Christ: in this study we shall examine some of those parallels.

The record of 1 Kings chapter 1 describes the anointing of Solomon to be king in Jerusalem over Israel:

“Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon” (1 Ki. 1:39).

These events marked the end of David’s reign, and the beginning of Solomon’s. David the mighty warrior had established the kingdom in Israel, centred around Jerusalem. His dominion foreshadows the way in which the kingdom of Messiah will be established by conquest—again centred around Jerusalem. There Jesus the Christ will be established upon the ancient Davidic seat of power, styled “The Throne of his father David” (Lu. 1:32). David established the kingdom by the shedding of blood, and because of this he was not permitted to erect the Temple and its associated procedures for worship. As he testified himself: “the word of Yahweh came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.” (1 Chron. 22:8). The task of building the House of God was therefore conducted by Solomon, David’s Son, whose peaceful reign typifies the future reign of the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6), when kings and princes shall be subjected to his world wide dominion.

PRELIMINARY JUDGMENTS

But before Solomon could become established upon David’s throne, it was necessary for him to commence his reign by carrying out certain judgments upon particular individuals. David himself gave him commandments to this effect:

“Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.” (1 Kings 2:5-6).

He similarly gave commandment regarding Shimei (verse 8-9). But these judgments, whilst being to the condemnation of certain individuals, were also to the blessing of others. For example, the sons of Barzillai:

“But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother” (1 Kings 2:7).

So it will be that at the first appearance of Messiah upon the earth, there will be judgments upon those who comprised his Household: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word ...” (2 Tim. 4:1).

At the commencement of Messiah's Kingdom, there will be personal judgments upon individuals according to their deeds. Indeed, just as Solomon was told to condemn particular persons, even so it is written of Messiah's judgments: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works ..." (2 Tim. 4:14).

A GENTILE BRIDE

Two features of Solomon's early reign, were his union in marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh—a Gentile bride—and the building of "the house of Yahweh":

"And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of Yahweh, and the wall of Jerusalem round about" (1 Kings 3:1).

Even so, our Master will become united to his ecclesial "bride" (Eph. 5:27-32) made up of individuals called out from the gentile peoples, spiritually called "Sodom and Egypt" (Rev. 11:8) for the glory of His Name (Acts 15:14). Moreover, like Solomon, Christ will be a builder of the temple of the Age to Come: "he shall build the temple of Yahweh: Even he shall build the temple of Yahweh; And he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne" (Zech. 6:12-13).

SEEKING FIRST THE KINGDOM

In his early reign, it is testified that "Solomon loved Yahweh, walking in the statutes of David his father" (1 Kings 3:3). His love was expressed by the offering up of many sacrifices at Gibeon, even a thousand burnt offerings. In response, "Yahweh appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, Ask what I shall give you." Here was the opportunity for Solomon to ask whatever he desired, but his primary desire was to rule well over Yahweh's people. He asked: "give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" (1 Kings 3:9). Here, Solomon established a precedent: his concern was solely to do with the kingdom over which he would reign, and that he might have the necessary wisdom and understanding to judge justly. This being so, Yahweh also gave him the things that he did not seek after: riches and wealth:

"And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy words ... and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days" (1 Kings 3:12-13).

The same principle is established by Messiah himself:

"see ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:33).

The context of this saying is also significant:

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon (i.e. riches-CAM). Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on ... Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these ..." (Mat. 6:28-29).

Solomon did not accrue his glory by seeking after material things. His concern was to have wisdom, so that the Kingdom would benefit from a just ruler, and Yahweh blessed him with the other things besides. Even so, we, who hope to be part of the kingdom of Messiah must not seek after the riches of this life: we seek after the glories that pertain to the age to come, and not present personal advantage.

Again, interestingly, the next chapter of Matthew's Gospel narrates the words of Messiah: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Mat. 7:7-8). Solomon asked, and it was given to him. Amongst the things that we ought to ask for is Wisdom, even as James wrote: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (Jas. 1:5-6).

The wise rule of Solomon typified the wise rule of Messiah over the kingdom to come: "he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, Neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth ..." (Isa. 11:3-4).

GIVING GIFTS TO SOLOMON

A characteristic of Solomon's wise reign, was that he ruled over the neighbouring territories, and the kings of those nations brought gifts in recognition of his position:

"Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life" (1 Kings 4:21).

Again, this foreshadows the way in which nations shall be subjected to Christ, and shall bring presents to him:

"Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles. And that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish ..." (Isa. 60:11-12).

"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: All nations shall serve him" (Psa. 72:10-11).

Amongst those who came with gifts to Solomon was the queen of Sheba:

"And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not" (1 Chron. 9:1-3).

Having heard from others about the wisdom of Solomon, she came to hear it first hand for herself. And according to Christ, she provides an example to others:

“The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here” (Luke 1:31).

The queen of the south went to great lengths to see Solomon, travelling from afar to hear his wise words, and to see his glory. What an example to us! Those in Christ’s day (who lived in the vicinity, who had the word directly spoken to them) exerted no effort to hear his wisdom, and he was “greater than Solomon”. Even so, we have the teaching of the inspired Word before us, readily available for all to read—yet how much effort do we go to, in order to dig out its wisdom? Would we travel from the ends of the earth to hear and receive it?

UNDER THE VINE AND FIG TREE

Describing the blessedness of Solomon’s kingdom, we read that:

“Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon” (1 Kings 4:25).

And speaking of Messiah’s reign, it is written:

“they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of Yahweh of Hosts hath spoken it” (Mic. 4:4).

The picture here is one of contentment, each man having his own possession, and being content with such things as they had.

SATAN BOUND

Contrasting his dominion with that of his Father David’s Solomon said that:

“now Yahweh my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent” (1 Kings 5:4).

And speaking of Messiah’s reign, the revelator describes how that:

“he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is the devil and satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years be fulfilled” (Rev.20:2-3).

Here, the word “satan” literally means “adversary”: that is to say, there will be no adversary during the reign of Messiah, with sin being suppressed during the thousand years.

What we have endeavoured to show in this brief study, is that in a variety of ways, Solomon stands in the record as a type of Christ. His dominion closely parallels the dominion of our Messiah, and his reign is a shadow of greater things to come. And the main characteristics of both, is the way in which the kingdoms will operate upon the principles of Wisdom and Righteousness. We must therefore, apply ourselves to the Wisdom of the Word with all the effort of the Queen of Sheba, that we might be granted a place in Messiahs’ kingdom to come.