

The Lord Prospers Solomon's Reign

Lesson Scope: [2 Chronicles chapters 8 and 9](#)

References in brackets relate to Lesson Scope unless noted otherwise

Lesson Focus

During the first twenty years of his reign, Solomon built the temple and his own house. The wealth that made these buildings possible was a fulfillment of God's promise to Solomon, recorded in 2 Chronicles 1:11- 12. Solomon reigned during the golden age of Israel as a nation. It was a time of great wealth and prosperity. These blessings were bestowed upon Solomon because he requested wisdom in order to rightly rule over Israel.

God's bountiful blessings on Israel showed the admiring nations what He could do for a people who served Him with their whole heart. Solomon had the wisdom the world needed. All the kings of the earth sought Solomon to hear his wisdom (9:23). Solomon stands as a type of Jesus, who was also a Son of David. Jesus, as did Solomon, offers the world that which can be found nowhere else.

As humans we tend to think first of our physical needs. Jesus calls us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:32-33). When we put God first, He will add the other things we need.

Solomon asked for wisdom rather than riches. God approved of his request and blessed him with much wealth. Wealth rightly used can be a great blessing. But it becomes a snare when wealthy people's hearts become set on their wealth.

The Lord honours those who honour Him. The blessings He bestows upon them enhance God's kingdom and testify of His graciousness.

Lesson Aim: To show involvements of giving the Lord His rightful place.

Theme Verse: [John 12:26](#). If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

Lesson Text

Orderly Worship

2 Chronicles 8:12-16

¹² (KJV) Then Solomon offered burnt offerings unto the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch, ¹³ Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, *even* in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles. ¹⁴ And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required: the porters also by their courses at every gate: for so had David the man of God commanded. ¹⁵ And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning the treasures. ¹⁶ Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. *So* the house of the LORD was perfected.

Contented Servants

2 Chronicles 9:1-8

¹ (KJV) 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. ² And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not. ³ And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, ⁴ And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cupbearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her. ⁵ And she said to the king, *It was* a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom: ⁶ Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it*: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: *for* thou exceeds the fame that I heard. ⁷ Happy *are* thy men, and happy *are* these thy serv-

ants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom. ⁸
Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, *to be* king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.

Royal Bounty

2 Chronicles 9:9

⁹ (KJV) And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

2 Chronicles 9:12

¹² (KJV) And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside *that* which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.

Questions for Study

Orderly Worship

1. How did Solomon demonstrate that he put God first?
2. What did order and form contribute to the worship and service of Solomon and of the priests?
3. What principles do we find in Solomon's worship that we can apply to ourselves?

Contented Servants

4. In what way did Solomon's wisdom affect the queen's understanding of God?
5. What does the happiness of Solomon's servants show us regarding the nature of service in the kingdom of God?
6. What attitudes toward service show that we are giving God His rightful place?

Royal Bounty

7. What does the church have to offer the world?

Analysing the Passage

Solomon's worship practices (8: 12-13) conformed to the commands of Moses as they are set forth in Numbers 28 and 29. Solomon also

showed respect for precedents established by his father (8:14) in the appointment of the priests.

The queen of Sheba probably came from southern Arabia. Jesus referred to her as “the queen of the south” (Matthew 12:42). Jesus remarked favourably on her quest, stating that “she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the Wisdom of Solomon.” Yet in Jesus’ day many rejected the wisdom of the One who was greater than Solomon and who stood right among them. The queen’s worship of Solomon’s God (9:8) shows the kind of response God desires. God blesses His people so that they can offer the seekers of the world all that their souls need.

Principles and Applications

Orderly Worship

1. Personal preparation is a prerequisite for giving the Lord His rightful place (8:12). Solomon personally prepared an altar. Preparation for worship “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24) involves having clean hands, and a pure heart” (Psalm 24:4). The outward forms and expressions of worship must show order and reverence. '

2. Following God’s revealed pattern for worship is integral to giving the Lord His rightful place (8:13-15). We show respect for God by holding to patterns of worship established in the past. Innovations and flesh-pleasing alterations fail to honour God, but rather call attention to the individual. The strange fire offered by Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1) met God’s wrath, for God had said, “I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me” (Leviticus 10:3; see Exodus 19:22). Diligent attention to all God commands is required for acceptable worship.

3. Dedication in filling God-appointed roles is an expression of giving the Lord His rightful place (8:14-16). “All in their stations move and each performs his part,” we sing. And that is a beautiful sight in the church, in the home, or other gatherings. When each worker understands his role in a corporate effort and serves in humility and submission, God is honoured and His work is advanced. We give God His place by humbly taking our place.

Contented Servants

4. A testimony goes forth from the lives of those who give the Lord His rightful place (9:1). When God’s people allow their lives to be governed

by the principles of Scripture, the world will notice. They will see a peace and contentment that is conspicuously absent in the hearts of worldlings. “But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt” (Isaiah 57:20).

5. Those who honour God are blessed with His wisdom (9:2-3). Solomon could answer the hard questions the queen of Sheba asked because God had given him sufficient wisdom. According to James 1:5, those who ask God for wisdom will receive it. Though we may not become as wise as Solomon, we believe God gives us wisdom according to our need for it.

6. Giving the Lord His rightful place brings blessings the world cannot understand (9:3-6). Reports of Solomon’s fame were such that the queen of Sheba travelled a long distance to see it for herself. It seems that she doubted these reports. Do those who observe our congregations see God at work? Do they, like the queen of Sheba, bless God, who showers His people with such great benefits as we have?

7. Giving the Lord His rightful place results in joy and satisfaction (9:6). The carnal man believes he can be happy by being served. But in the kingdom of God, the greatest blessings are bestowed on those who serve. Serving God brings joy; it does not subject one to a life of dull drudgery. The psalmist expressed contentment with a lowly place of service when he said, “I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness” (Psalm 84:10).

8. Those who give the Lord His rightful place will direct all praise and glory back to Him (9:8). The queen of Sheba concluded correctly that God was at work in Solomon’s kingdom. She acknowledged that God was the source of the order and beauty she observed there. The same is true today. “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13). All that we do should be done to the glory of God.

Royal Bounty

9. Those who give the Lord His rightful place are a blessing to others (9:12). When Jesus sent out His disciples to preach the Gospel of the kingdom, He reminded them that they had much to give because they had received much. “Freely ye have received, freely give,” He told them (Matthew 10:8). When God blesses His people, He does so with

the intent that they would be a blessing to others, both within and without the kingdom.

Important Teachings

1. Personal preparation is a prerequisite for giving the Lord His rightful place (8:12).
2. Following God's revealed pattern for worship is integral to giving the Lord His rightful place (8:13-15).
3. Dedication in filling God-appointed roles is an expression of giving the Lord His rightful place (8:14-16).
4. A testimony goes forth from the lives of those who give the Lord His rightful place (9:1).
5. Those who honour God are blessed with His wisdom (9:2-3).
6. Giving the Lord His rightful place brings blessings the world cannot understand (9:3-6).
7. Giving the Lord His rightful place results in joy and satisfaction (9:6).
8. Those who give the Lord His rightful place will direct all praise and glory back to Him (9:8).
9. Those who give the Lord His rightful place are a blessing to others (9:12).

Answers to Questions

1. How did Solomon demonstrate that he put God first?
His Worship was directed to God. He offered sacrifices at a certain rate every day, showing his constancy of devotion. He observed the commandments of God through Moses.
2. What did order and form contribute to the worship and service of Solomon and of the priests?
Solomon offered sacrifices every day, showing regularity in his religious devotion. The priests served by course, each course being sufficient in number to carry out the priests' duties. The Levites, as supporting personnel, filled their roles each day. The porters took their places at each gate so that all the gates were staffed at all times. Each filled his role and carried out his work in the way he was instructed to do it.
3. What principles do we find in Solomon's worship that we can apply to ourselves?

Our worship should be given to the Lord and not used to impress people. Worship should be a daily experience including praise, prayer, and service to others. Worship should be engaged in collectively at regular intervals. Our worship should be according to God's prescribed patterns under the leadership of God-appointed men. Individualistic features, which exalt persons and their ability to perform, should have no place in our worship.

4. In what way did Solomon's wisdom affect the queen's understanding of God?

She concluded that Solomon's wisdom was a blessing from God who loved him and set him on the throne of Israel. She could see that the Wisdom of Solomon far surpassed that of any other man of that time. She understood that the only reasonable explanation was that it was God-given.

5. What does the happiness of Solomon's servants show us regarding the nature of service in the kingdom of God?

There is joy and fulfillment to be found when one serves in the work to which God calls. Those who serve find more blessing in giving than in receiving. The work we do for the Lord will outlast any of our earthly pursuits.

6. What attitudes toward service show that we are giving God His rightful place?

We should serve cheerfully because "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Serving with a willing heart honours God, whereas the one who serves grudgingly fails to acknowledge God's right to all the service a person can do for Him. The only reasonable response to God's redemptive work in our lives is to present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him (Romans 12:1).

7. What does the church have to offer the world?

The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. Having the Scriptures, we can tell the world the truth about God and man, about sin and its consequences, God's remedy for sin, and coming judgment. The church offers all sincere seekers a place of spiritual nurture and safety, a place where they can learn the Way to please God and find rest for their souls.

Summarizing the Lesson

Those who give God His rightful place fall heir to His richest blessings. By yielding their lives to God's service, they reap a life of joy and satisfaction. They also give God an opportunity to show the world His power and glory.

Research Guide

1. Read 1 Kings 9 and 10, which are parallel passages to this lesson scope.
2. Read Numbers 28 and 29 for specifications regarding Old Testament sacrifices and feasts.