

A GREATER THAN SOLOMON IS HERE

"The queen of the South will rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and indeed a greater than Solomon is here." (Matthew 12:42)

INTRODUCTION—As great and wise as Solomon was, he was just a shadow of what the Christ would be. All through his reign, Solomon awed and impressed people with profound wisdom about all things. All through His ministry, Jesus dumbfounded people with words of spiritual wisdom that were beyond most of His listeners. Solomon spoke practical living for life... Jesus spoke words that give life (John 6:68; 8:32).

I. COMPARING THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON WITH THE WISDOM OF JESUS

- A. Wisdom of Solomon. Solomon was unique among men (1 Kings 3:12). His wisdom was received from God in humility (1 Kings 3:7-9). His wisdom was well known among men of all nations (1 Kings 4:29,32; 10:1-10).
- B. Wisdom of Jesus. Jesus was unique among men (John 7:46; Matthew 7:29). His wisdom was received from God in humility (Matthew 13:54; John 8:28; Luke 4:16-22). His wisdom is well known among men of all nations.

II. HOW DOES SOLOMON COMPARE WITH JESUS?

- A. Life. Knowledge and wisdom are supposed to influence our lives.
 - 1. Solomon did not Live What He Knew and Taught (1 Kings 11:1-13; Ecclesiastes 2:10-11,17; cf. 12:13-14).
 - 2. Jesus Was a Sinless Example of What He Knew and Taught (John 8:46; 1 Peter 2:21-22).
- B. Teaching. Solomon's wisdom tended to be more worldly—while Jesus' was more spiritual.
 - 1. Solomon's wisdom dealt with the successful life in this world. Jesus' wisdom transcended this world and sought to make us more like God (Matthew 5:48).
 - 2. Solomon stressed practical living. Jesus called for radical living (Matthew 5-7). Solomon's words benefited physical life (4:10-13). Jesus' words led to eternal life (John 6:68).
 - 3. Solomon taught effectively with proverbs that relate general wisdom learned by observation (1:1-4). Jesus taught effectively with parables which are spiritual lessons and applications from everyday occurrences (Matthew 13:10-17).
 - 4. Solomon's philosophy of life was pessimistic because he lost sight of God (Ecclesiastes 1:1-3,14). Jesus' philosophy of life was based on optimism and God's goodness (John 10:10).
- C. Accomplishments. Both left their marks on the world.
 - 1. Solomon built the temple that his father was not permitted to build (1 Kings 5:2-5; 6:11-13).
 - 2. Jesus built the temple that his Father wanted to dwell in since before time began (John 4:21-24; 1 Corinthians 3:9-11,16-17; Ephesians 2:19-22).
- D. Son Of David. Both sons were promised to David by God.
 - 1. Solomon was the son who built the temple and ruled on the throne (2 Samuel 7:11-16).

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2. Jesus was the son who would fulfill all the promises made to David (2 Samuel 7:11-16; Psalm 89:35-37; Luke 1:32). As great as Solomon was, he was always just a shadow of what Christ would be.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—

- 1) *How does the queen of the South arise to condemn those of Jesus' generation?*
- 2) *What prompted the queen of the South to come and visit Solomon? Was she invited? Does the Lord invite us to come learn of Him (Matthew 11:28-30)? Why will she condemn those who refuse the Lord?*
- 3) *How much effort did the queen make to hear Solomon's wisdom? How much effort do we make to learn of Christ's wisdom?*
- 4) *Considering Solomon's attitude at the beginning (1 Kings 3:3-15), how were he and Jesus alike?*
- 5) *In what ways does the wisdom of Solomon help us live? In what ways does the wisdom of Christ help us live?*
- 6) *How can one know what is right, yet do things that are so wrong?*
- 7) *Explain why Solomon's and Jesus' philosophy of life are so different?*
- 8) *Would the wisdom of the Bible have been complete if the Proverbs were the last word God had to say about the wisdom for living?*