

18.05 Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 9:1–28; 10:1–29; 2 Chronicles 7:11–22; 8:1–18; 9:1–28)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

Brackets [. . .] indicate a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud, or they show answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *ivory*: the material in elephants’ tusks

Scripture: (ESV)

1 Kings 9:1 As soon as Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king’s house and all that Solomon desired to build, 2 the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. 3 And the LORD said to him, “I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me. I have consecrated this house that you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. 4 And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, 5 then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’ 6 But if you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, 7 then I will cut off Israel from the land that I have given them, and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight, and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples. 8 And this house will become a heap of ruins. Everyone passing by it will be astonished and will hiss, and they will say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’ 9 Then they will say, ‘Because they abandoned the LORD their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore the LORD has brought all this disaster on them.’”

1 Chronicles 7:11 Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king’s house. All that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the LORD and in his own house he successfully accomplished. 12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. 13 When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, 14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 15 Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. 16 For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time.

1 Kings 9:10 At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king’s house, 11 and Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold, as much as he desired, King Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. 12 But when Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, they did not please him. 13 Therefore he said, “What kind of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?” So they are called the land of Cabul to this day. 14 Hiram had sent to the king 120 talents of gold.

15 And this is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon drafted to build the house of the LORD and his own house and [much more]. . . . 20 All the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel— 21 their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel were unable to devote to destruction—these Solomon drafted to be slaves, and so they are to this day. 22 But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves. They were the soldiers, they were his officials, his commanders, his captains, his chariot commanders and his

horsemen.

23 These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work: 550 who had charge of the people who carried on the work. . . .

26 King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. 27 And Hiram sent with the fleet his servants, seamen who were familiar with the sea, together with the servants of Solomon. 28 And they went to Ophir and brought from there gold, 420 talents, and they brought it to King Solomon.

10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions. 2 She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. 3 And Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. 4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 5 the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her.

6 And she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, 7 but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard. 8 Happy are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! 9 Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD loved Israel forever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness." 10 Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, and a very great quantity of spices and precious stones. Never again came such an abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

11 Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a very great amount of almug wood and precious stones. 12 And the king made of the almug wood supports for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also lyres and harps for the singers. No such almug wood has come or been seen to this day.

13 And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired, whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of King Solomon. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.

14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, 15 besides that which came from the explorers and from the business of the merchants, and from all the kings of the west and from the governors of the land. 16 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold; 600 shekels of gold went into each shield. 17 And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; three minas of gold went into each shield. And the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 18 The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with the finest gold. 19 The throne had six steps, and the throne had a round top, and on each side of the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the armrests, 20 while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. The like of it was never made in any kingdom. 21 All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver; silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. 22 For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

2 Chronicles 8:11 Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house that he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not live in the house of David king of Israel, for the places to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy."

12 Then Solomon offered up burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD that he had built before the vestibule, 13 as the duty of each day required, offering according to the commandment of Moses for the Sabbaths, the new moons, and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths. 14 According to the ruling of David his father, he appointed the divisions of the priests for

their service, and the Levites for their offices of praise and ministry before the priests as the duty of each day required, and the gatekeepers in their divisions at each gate, for so David the man of God had commanded. 15 And they did not turn aside from what the king had commanded the priests and Levites concerning any matter and concerning the treasuries.

16 Thus was accomplished all the work of Solomon from the day the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.

9:22 Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. 23 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. 24 Every one of them brought his present, articles of silver and of gold, garments, myrrh, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year. 25 And Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 26 And he ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. 27 And the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. 28 And horses were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

Introduction/Review:

What did Solomon pray when he dedicated the temple to God? ["If God keeps rain from the land, if there is disease among the people, if our enemies defeat us, then we will know we have sinned. God, when we have sinned and are sorry and if we pray toward your Temple, please hear and forgive us."]

How did God show he accepted Solomon's offering? [Fire came from heaven and ate up the sacrifice.]

Story:

God's answer to Solomon's prayer

God answered Solomon's prayer.¹ Again, as He had before, God answered the prayer at night. This is what He said: "When the people sin, if my people who are sorry for their sin, humble themselves and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Furthermore, I will put my name at this Temple forever.

"If you, Solomon, walk before me as David your father did, doing all that I command, then you will always have a son, grandson, great grandson, *etc.*, on the throne of Israel. But if you do not keep my commandments but go after other gods and worship them, I will take Israel from this land and I will cast this Temple out of my sight. People will pass by where the Temple was and will whistle or hiss, [Teacher, whistle] 'Whew! Ssssss!'

"They will say, 'Why did the Lord take away this people and this Temple?' The answer will be clear: 'Because they forsook the God of their fathers but worshiped and still worship false gods. That's why God did this to them.'"

Will the people forsake their God? May it not be so!

Solomon's acts

Now, I want to tell you a little about Solomon and what he had and what he did. (1) Because of all the help and supplies that Hiram had provided for twenty years, Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in Galilee—in northern Israel.² But Hiram didn't like those cities,³ so Solomon received them back, rebuilt the cities, and had Israelites live in them.

(2) He had a whole city for his chariots—1400 chariots—and whole cities for his horsemen—12,000 horsemen.

(3) He married Pharaoh's daughter (from Egypt) and built a special house for her because he said, "My wife shall not live in David's house because the ark of the Lord was there and it was holy."

(4) He built an altar and offered sacrifices three times a year.

(5) He organized the priests, Levites, and Temple doorkeepers as David had told him to do.

(6) He built a fleet of ships.

(7) He sent these ships far away to get gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

(8) He received 252 tons of gold in a year. The Bible tells us Solomon used the gold to make 200 large shields, 300 regular-sized shields, and to cover his ivory throne.

Let's talk about that throne for a minute. It had six steps with a carved lion on both sides of each step—twelve in all. One larger carved lion stood beside each of the throne's armrests, and a carved calf's head adorned the back of the throne. No one had ever had such a throne before! Imagine it—an ivory throne covered in gold!

Another thing Solomon did with gold was to make gold dishes and cups from which to eat—two sets, one for home and one for his summer home. Instead of silverware they had goldware. Silver “was as common in Jerusalem as stone and cedar wood as plentiful as sycamore.”

Last, (9) his large kingdom spread from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt [locate].

Solomon's guests

So you can see Solomon had more wealth than any other king. He also had more what because God had given it to him when he had asked? [Wisdom.] Lots and lots of people, kings and wise men, came to visit Solomon every year in order to hear his wisdom. Then they would give him gifts—silver, clothes, horses, mules, gold, spices, and myrrh. (These last three gifts remind me of the gifts given to the newborn King of all the earth, Jesus. The wise men brought him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.)

One of the people to visit Solomon was the Queen of Sheba, ✓who was probably from Africa. She had heard how famous Solomon was, but she had also heard about Solomon's God. When she came to visit, she brought lots of spices, lots of gold, and precious stones—all carried on many camels. The queen tested Solomon with hard questions, but he answered every one. She observed his beautiful house, the food on his table, how nicely his servants behaved and looked, and the burnt offerings he gave at the Temple. She was just amazed! “People told me what you were like, but I didn't believe anybody could have so much wealth and wisdom. So I came to see for myself. Those people who told me about you didn't tell me one half of your greatness!” she said.

¹When did the Lord appear a second time to Solomon? In this passage, it sounds as if it was after building the Temple (which took seven years; 1 Kings 6:38) and after building his own house (finished in another thirteen years; 1 Kings 7:1) and possibly after completing all his other projects (2 Chronicles 7:11). However, Gill states, “[This] is not probable; but rather it was the night after the dedication of it, when an answer was returned to Solomon's prayer in the preceding chapter; for that it should be deferred twelve or thirteen years is not reasonable to suppose” (1 Kings 9:2 - Meaning and Commentary on Bible Verse (biblestudytools.com)).

²“[T]hey were upon the borders, particularly on the borders of Asher” (1 Kings 9:11 - Meaning and Commentary on Bible Verse (biblestudytools.com)).

³“[T]hey did not suit with the disposition of him and his people, who were given not to husbandry, but to merchandise; and the land about these would require a good deal of pains and labour to till, which they were not used to” (1 Kings 9:12 - Meaning and Commentary on Bible Verse (biblestudytools.com)).

Lessons from This Lesson:

- We see Jesus:

The Bible is true and tells us so much about Jesus Christ, but it probably can't tell us even one half of his greatness. Someday, like the Queen of Sheba, who went to visit king Solomon, those who know Jesus as Savior will go to be with him. Then they will likely say, "The Bible told us so much about him, but now we see for ourselves. The half has not been told!"

"The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here" (Matthew 12:42; Luke 11: 31).

- "Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Luke 12:27).

Activities:

- Play dough: chariots, horses, apes, peacocks, throne, lions, camels
- Snack: Wafer cookie horse and ice cream. See instructions about ¾ down the page at [Horse Theme Day \(familythemedays.ca\)](http://familythemedays.ca).
- Do a puppet skit, "Camille Camel," found on the "Extras" page at www.teachingthebibletochildren.org.
- Review questions: (Game: A student who answers a question correctly also gets to name something carried on camels in this lesson. Some answers are spices, gold, silver, clothes, myrrh, precious stones, the Queen of Sheba, kings.)
 1. Finish the statement that God made in answer to Solomon's prayer. "If you will walk before me, as David your father walked, doing according to all that I have commanded, and keeping my statutes and my rules, then . . ." ["I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever."]
 2. What did God say He would do if Solomon and Israel did not keep His commandments? [He would cut off Israel from the land, and He would cast the Temple out of His sight.]
 3. Solomon built cities for what two things? [Chariots and horsemen.]
 4. Describe Solomon's throne. [Ivory covered with gold; two lions on each step; one lion by each armrest.]
 5. Fill in the blank. Silver was as common as _____ in Solomon's kingdom. [Stones.]
 6. Why did the Queen of Sheba visit Solomon? [To see if what she had heard about his wealth and wisdom was true.]
 7. What did the Queen of Sheba say after visiting Solomon about what she had heard in comparison to what she now saw? [The half had not been told her.]

Memory Verse[s]: A song sheet for this verse is found below. The verse can be sung antiphonally or as a round.

- 2 Chronicles 5:13—Give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon His name for He is good. [Not an exact quotation.]

Handwork:

- Clothespin camel. A template is found at [camel-clothespins-bw-printables.png \(576×545\) \(artistshelpingchildren.org\)](http://artistshelpingchildren.org). Color the camel. Attach clothespins to make the camel stand. Optional: Glue cinnamon sticks, whole cloves, other whole spices or a gold-painted pebble, or jewels on the camel.

SOME ACTS OF SOLOMON

- 1. Gave Hiram twenty cities in Galilee**
- 2. Had a whole city for his chariots and cities for his horsemen**
- 3. Married Pharaoh's daughter**
- 4. Built an altar and offered sacrifices three times a year**
- 5. Organized the priests, Levites, and Temple doorkeepers**
- 6. Built a fleet of ships**
- 7. Sent his ships far away to get gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks**
- 8. Got 252 tons of gold in a year**
- 9. Ruled from the Euphrates River to Philistia and to the border of Egypt**



Solomon's Vast Wealth

1 Kings

Solomon owns a large palace as well as huge quantities of food and livestock; he also owns the following:



12,000 horses 4:26



4,000 stalls for chariot horses 4:26



666 talents of gold received per year
(about 25 tons) 10:14



540 talents of gold from Ophir and Sheba
(about 20 1/2 tons) 9:28; 10:10



500 gold shields 10:16–17



**Ivory
and
gold
throne**
10:18

**Fleet of trading
ships that bring him
gold, silver, ivory,
apes and baboons**
10:22



**Gold goblets;
all household
articles pure
gold**
10:21



**Revenues from
merchants, traders,
governors, Arabian
kings**
10:15



**Precious
stones**
10:10



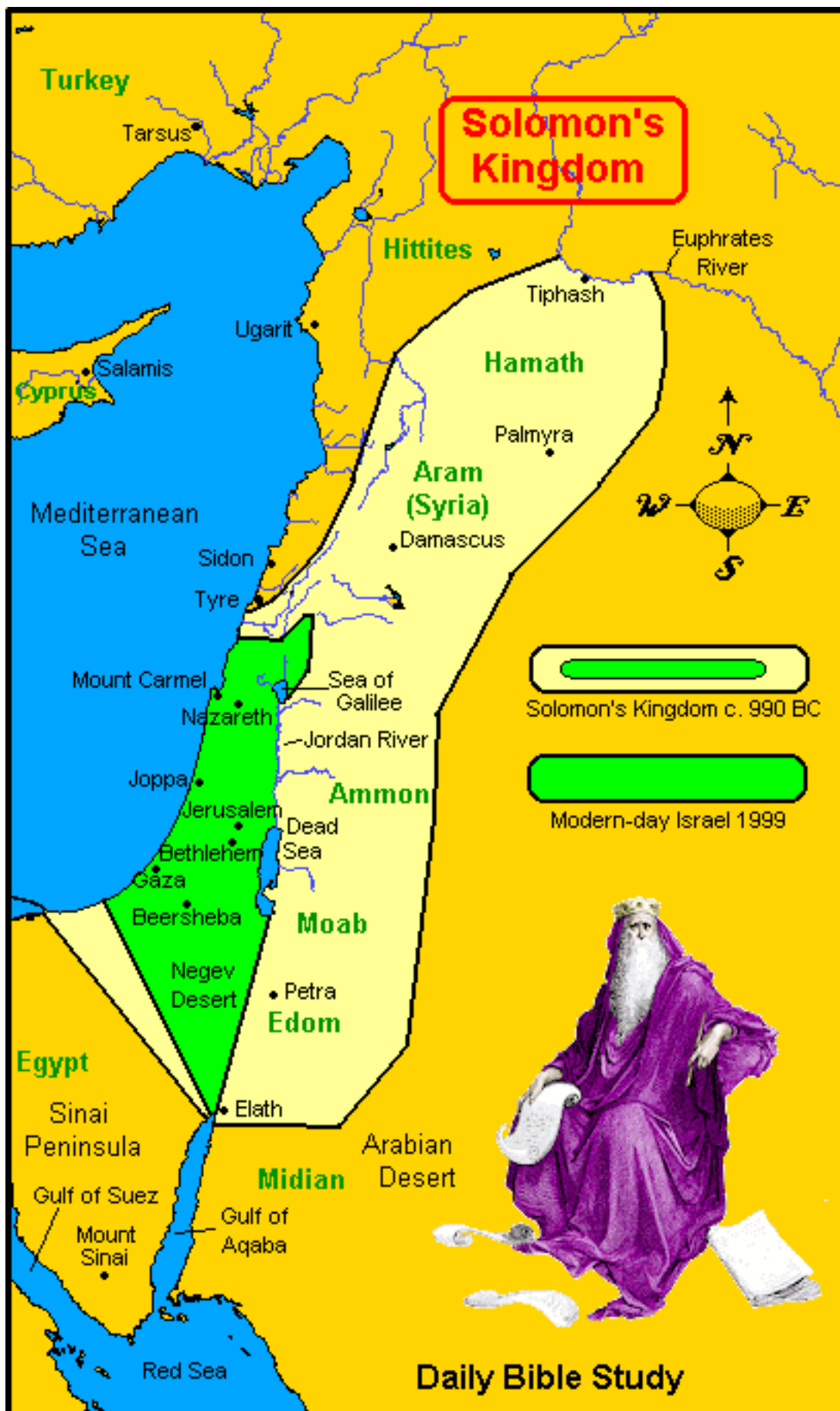
**Large
quantities
of spices**
10:10



Solomon is so wealthy that he makes silver as common as stones! 10:27

Source: The NIV Quickview Bible – www.thequickviewbible.com





Give Thanks unto the Lord

Traditional

The musical score is written on two staves in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a measure labeled 'A' and ends with a measure labeled 'B'. The second staff begins with a measure labeled 'C' and ends with a double bar line. The lyrics are: 'Give thanks un - to the Lord. Give thanks un - to the Lord. And call up - on His name. And call up - on His name. For He is good; for He is good.'

A B

Give thanks un - to the Lord. Give thanks un - to the Lord. And

3 C

call up - on His name. And call up - on His name. For He is good; for He is good.

This song can be sung antiphonally—one group sings the first phrase and a second group sings the second phrase, continuing to alternate to the end of the song.

This song can also be sung as a 3-part round (canon) with the second group beginning at A when the first group is singing at B, and the third group beginning at A when the first group is singing at C and the second group is at B.