

# The Queen of Sheba

I've entitled this message, "**The Queen of Sheba**". I will summarize what God is teaching by this woman, as follows. We learn from the queen of Sheba that we must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And we learn that when we do, we see the glory of God! This is the main point of this message. Let's look at the details.

## Introduction

I would like to refer to two texts of scripture in this sermon. The first is in Matthew. The second is in 1 Kings chapter 10. In Matthew 12:42 we read:

*"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here"* (Matt. 12:42).

The religious leaders in Jesus' day saw His miracles and heard His words. They saw Him. They heard His teaching. They saw and heard how He welcomed sinners, that He healed their bodies and forgave their sins. They saw that He only did good. But for all this, they did not believe Him!

In light of this, Jesus said that the queen of Sheba would condemn them in the final Judgment. Many saw and heard Christ while He was on earth. Some believed. Some did not believe. This is always the case when the Gospel is preached. Jesus warned them and He warns us what will happen if we do not believe Him.

And that is why I want to look at this woman from scripture with you today. May God make Himself known to you and to me and give us grace to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!

Let's summarize what Jesus said in Matthew 12:42:

- She came from the uttermost parts of the earth.
- She came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

- The Lord Jesus Christ is greater than Solomon.
- Unbelievers will be condemned by this woman.

Because Jesus said she will judge unbelievers in the Day of Judgment, therefore, she must have been saved by the Lord!

## Salvation is by Christ alone

Question, since the the queen of Sheba was saved by the Lord, did Solomon save her? Was she saved by hearing wise sayings from Solomon about philosophy, science, medicine, or space? No. Sinners are only saved by hearing about Christ and Him crucified. We are only saved in believing Him. The apostle Peter said this by God the Holy Spirit: *“Neither is there is salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12). Salvation, therefore, is not by any man, not even by Solomon, the wisest man to ever live. Nor is salvation by hearing man’s wisdom. God saves in one way alone: by hearing of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This is vitally important!

Whatever we learn from the queen of Sheba, we must understand that in her coming to hear Solomon, she actually heard and believed the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the queen of Sheba teaches us how God saves sinners by hearing of Christ crucified, and coming to Him.

All of scripture is written to teach us about the Lord Jesus Christ. When Christ came into the world, He said to His Father: *“In the volume of the book it is written of Me, to do Thy will O God”* (Heb. 10:7). The “volume of the book” is the entire scroll of scripture from the top of the roll to bottom of it. One preacher put it this way: The Bible is a “Him” book; it’s about Him! The OT says, “someone’s coming!” The Gospels say, “He’s here!” The rest of the NT says, “He’s coming again!” Christ rules. He is bringing His people from far. The Bible is who He is, what He accomplished by His death on the cross, where He is now and what He is doing there. He is Emmanuel, God with us. He is the Son of God who humbled Himself. He was born as an infant. He took human nature into union with His

divine nature. He is both God and man. He came from heaven to earth. He fulfilled the will of His Father. He saved His people from their sins. He rose from the dead. He ascended to glory. He sat down on the throne of heaven. His glory is seen in all that He did in His life and death. And it is seen by His bringing all for whom He died to glory, to be with Him where He is; to see Him in His glory.

Therefore, the first principle by which we must understand all scripture is that the Bible is about Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He is the almighty God, the all successful Savior, the all-glorious King of heaven. By His mighty acts on the cross, He saved His people from their sins. By His glorious rule in heaven, He brings His people from the ends of the earth to be where He is and to see His glory. The message of the Bible is: *“His glory is great in thy salvation honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him”* (Psalm 21:5). Truly, Christ’s glory is great in the salvation God the Father gave Him to accomplish!

## Prayed for

**Question:** What happened before the queen of Sheba came to Solomon?

**Answer:** Before she came, Solomon prayed for strangers, like her, who were far off and who were not Jews. In Kings 8:41-43 Solomon prayed to God. He asked God to hear the prayer of any stranger, who was not a Jew, but who heard of the great name of the LORD and came and prayed to Him toward the house of the LORD.

*“Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; 42 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; 43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel...” (1 Kings 8:41-43).*

There are two truths we learn from this:

- First, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners out of every nation under heaven, both Jews and Gentiles.
- Second, before God saves any sinner, the Lord Jesus Christ prays for them.

Is this not amazing grace! Before sinners hear and come, while they are wandering in the night of their rebellion, Christ prays for them! Christ prays according to the purpose and will of God. God purposed to save His people (Rom. 8:28; Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:9-11). Christ prays for them and His prayer is always always heard, “*Thou hearest me always*” (John 11:42).

We know this is true in the case of the queen of Sheba, because before she came, God moved Solomon to pray his prayer. Solomon prayed God’s will. Before Solomon prayed, it was God’s will to save strangers who were far off. The Lord records Solomon’s prayer for our learning and for our comfort (Rom. 15:4).

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than Solomon. He is as much greater, as the Creator is greater than man whom He created. He is as much greater as the One God who is worshipped is greater than man who worships Him. In John 17:9, Christ prayed for His people. He said to His Father, “*I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*” On the cross, Jesus prayed “*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*” (Luke 23:34). Before Jesus came into the world, Isaiah said, “*He bare the sin of many. He made intercession for the transgressors*” (Isa. 53:12). Thus, Jesus prayed God’s will. And God always does His will. “*My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; I have purposed it, I will also do it*” (Isa. 46:10). Therefore, God forgives all those for whom Jesus prayed. The Centurion and those with him who crucified Christ are proof of this fact. When they heard Jesus’ words on the cross, and when they saw all that God did in the earthquake, they cried, “*Truly this man was the Son of God*” (Matt. 27:54; Mark 15:39)! In them Christ’s prayer was answered! Therefore, we know that in Solomon’s prayer, Christ prayed for the queen of Sheba.

What do you say to this? What do I say? I lift my voice to the King of glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, and say, “Lord! Advocate for me! Intercede for me! Plead for me! Bring me! Show me your great glory in the salvation of your people!” God’s

promise is: *“He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them”* (Heb. 7:25).

Now, let’s turn to the account of the queen of Sheba recorded in 1 Kings 10.

*“And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions”* (1 Kings. 10:1).

## His wisdom concerning the name of the LORD

The queen of Sheba had heard of Solomon’s fame concerning the name of the LORD. She did not come to Solomon to learn science or philosophy or medicine or astronomy. She came to know God! She came to be saved from her sins by the LORD’s *“strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm”* (1 Kings 8:42)! Paul told Timothy, *“the holy scriptures are able to make you wise unto salvation”* (2 Tim. 3:15). The wisdom we need: is how God saves sinners!

*“The name of the LORD”* is who God is. When you speak of someone by name, you refer to their person, their reputation. If I say, “Abraham Lincoln,” you think of the 16th president of the United States. You recall his reputation, his words, his actions. Now, the name of the LORD is who God is. It gathers together all that is true about Him in a name. What is the name by which God’s people know Christ? Remember Matthew 1:21? *“His name shall be called “JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins!”* (Matt. 1:21). If you know God, you know Him in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you believe Christ, you know Him as your God and Savior. If you do not know Jesus Christ as Lord over all and the only Savior, you do not know God. *“They that know Thy name will put their trust in Thee”* (Ps. 9:10). (Too little time to enumerate God’s names: Jehovah- [jireh (provided), shalom (Peace), raah (Shepherd), rapha (that healeth thee), tsidkenu (righteousness, nissi (banner)].

The queen of Sheba came to Solomon to know God. Is God wise? His wisdom is seen in Christ and Him crucified, how He can be just, and justify the ungodly! Is

God just? His justice is seen in Christ. When the sins of God's people were laid on His Son, He did not spare His own Son (Isa. 53:6; Rom. 8:32)! Can God be just and merciful to sinners? In Christ, He is "*a just God and a Savior*" (Isa. 45:21). Is God love? His love to sinners is only in Christ! "*The love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Rom. 8:39). All that is true of God, is true of Christ. If you see Christ, you've seen God (Jn. 12:45; 14:9). If you know Christ, you know God (Jn. 8:19; 14:7). If you believe Christ, you believe God (Jn. 14:1). He is the "*express image of His [Father's] person*" (Heb. 1:3). He is one with His Father (John 10:30). The Father is in Him and He is in the Father (John 14:10). He is "*Equal with God*" (John 5:18; Philip 2:6). All "*the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily*" (Col. 2:9).

## Hard questions

The queen of Sheba came to Solomon to ask hard questions. What are "hard" questions? Hard questions are questions that God answers in Christ, which sinners cannot live without. Hard questions are those questions only answered by the doing and dying of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul told the Corinthians, "*We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God*" (1 Cor. 1:21-24). Did you catch what Paul said was his only sermon? He said, "*I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*" (1 Cor. 2:1). By preaching Christ alone, Paul preached the power of God and the wisdom of God. Therefore, the wisdom of God is known only in Christ and Him crucified!

Solomon was very intelligent. So was the apostle Paul. Yet Paul determined not to know or preach anything among the Gentiles except "*Jesus Christ and Him crucified*" (1 Cor. 2:2). Why? Because the Gospel of Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation (Prov. 4:7; Prov. 8; Rom. 1:16). "*In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*" (Col. 2:3). Isn't that what we need, salvation?! Do you or I need more than this wisdom of God that He has made known in His Son? Do we need to go beyond Jesus Christ? If we do, we will never

know God; we will never see Christ. We will remain blinded by the darkness of our hard heart and unbelieving mind.

We are easily distracted by the voices of this world. We hear of terrorists, political corruption and moral debauchery. We may read the Bible and listen to sermons our entire life. But we will remain in darkness and confusion until we see that God's wisdom is in Christ and His salvation of sinners! There is nothing greater than God's glory. And His glory is seen when, by faith in Christ, we know how God saved His people from their sins by the death of His Son on the cross. "*God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*" (2 Cor. 4:6).

We will never come to Christ until we come to Him with our hard questions. We will never know Christ until our questions are answered in Him and what He did, where He is now, and what He is doing to save His people from their sins.

What questions should we be asking? We should be asking these:

- How can God have mercy and save a sinner like me? Scripture answers this way: "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*" (1 Tim. 1:15).
- How can God save me? "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour*" (Titus 3:5-6). "*Salvation is of the LORD*" (Jonah 2:9). Christ saved His people from their sins. Therefore, He is God our Savior, JESUS: "Jehovah is salvation."
- I don't know what to pray! How am I to pray to God? "*Return unto the LORD thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. 2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips*" (Hosea 14:1-2). "*The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful [propitious] to me [THE] sinner*" (Lk. 18:13)!

- I can't repent! I can't believe! Is there any hope for me? “*God has exalted Christ with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins*” (Acts 5:31; Ps. 80:3).
- If we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, what answer can I give to God? Only this: “*Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died*” (Rom. 8:34). If you or I have anything but Christ as our answer to God, we have no answer. A sinner cannot answer God in judgment. “*The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment*” (Ps. 1:5). If Christ has not answered for me at the cross, and if He does not now answer for me in my conscience in looking to Him, then I have no answer in Judgment! But if Christ and Him crucified is all your answer to God in your conscience, then your Advocate will answer with Himself in that day, because He has already answered God's justice with His obedience unto death. Lord! Answer for me! You are the wisdom of God because you are my only answer!

[Coming to Christ -- section skipped in radio sermon for time]

### She came from the ends of the earth (reconciliation)

How far were you from God before Christ saved you? How far was I? We were as far as we could be.

Our sin created a bilateral separation between us and God. First, God's justice demanded that God separate Himself from us because of our sins. “*Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear*” (Isa. 59:2). God cannot look upon sin. “*Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity*” (Hab. 1:13). We have broken God's law by failing to do what He commands and by doing what He forbids. We have dishonored God's law. We have offended His justice.

Second, in our minds and by wicked works (Col. 1:21) we separated ourselves from God. Our minds are at enmity with God. By nature, because of our sin, we are the very enemies of God. “*the carnal mind [what we are by nature] is enmity*



*against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be”* (Rom. 8:7). Our own mind and our wicked works indicate that we hate God (Rom. 1:30; Mark 7:21-23). The greatest commandment of all is to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Yet we fail to keep this commandment all the time. Therefore, we constantly break God’s law! Our sin appears in its true light in the cross. When God turned His Son over to the will of man, what did man do (Lk. 23:25)? He stripped Him, covered His head, hit Him in the face with their hands, mocked Him, spit on Him, flogged Him, pressed a crown of thorns into His head, hated and murdered Him by nailing Him to the cross. That is what you and I are by nature!

Because on God’s part, our sin separated Him from us, and because on our part, we are the enemies of God, two things are required to bring us to God.

**First**, God must reconcile us to Himself: His justice must be compensated; His law must be honored, fulfilled. God must be glorified (Rom. 3:23). His justice demands wrath. His Justice must be satisfied. His wrath must be appeased. His law demands obedience. His law must be honored.

**Second**, we must be turned from our ignorance and hatred of God to faith and love. We would not and could not reconcile ourselves to God. We do not make peace with God! Christ is God and man. By His wisdom, He magnified God’s law with all of His heart, mind, soul and strength by laying down His life in love to God and for His people. And Christ satisfied God. He bore His people’s sins as His own. And with those sins in His own body on the tree, bore the full curse of God in His own person. God removed His wrath in Christ’s death (Ps. 85:10). First, then, to bring His people to Himself from far, God reconciled them in the death of His Son. *“When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son”* (Rom. 5:10)!

The queen of Sheba came from far. Even so, we were as far from God as we could be. We were dead in sins (Eph. 2). But, *“in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace...”* (Eph. 2:13). God

laid all of the sins of all of His people on Christ. In justice, He poured out His curse on Him (Gal. 3:13). Christ endured that curse. He “*made peace by the blood of His cross*” (Col. 1:20). Having made peace, God raised Him from the dead. In one single act of obedience, Christ both satisfied justice and fulfilled God’s law for His people.

Now, He sends His ambassadors, in His name, proclaiming peace to sinners. This is how God addresses the second part of our estrangement: by removing our enmity against Him. God reconciles sinners in their minds and by their works. Paul said, “*We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*” (2 Cor. 5:20-21). God gives sinners life in their soul. This life simultaneous and is known when He gives them faith in Christ and Him crucified. Faith in Christ is a change from a stony heart to a heart of flesh. It is a new mind. Faith sees what God has done in His Son. Faith comes to God by Christ. Faith loves Christ for what He did. Faith looks to Christ because faith sees that He took my place before God, bore all my sins in His own body on the tree, bore the curse of God’s holy law in His own body and soul, and both satisfied God’s justice and fulfilled His righteousness (Isa. 53:10). He died in obedience. We are made the righteousness of God in Him by this great transaction between God the Father and God the Son.

Those who were bitten by the serpents in the wilderness were told to look at the serpent on the pole and live (Num. 21:8). By this, Jesus taught Nicodemus that sinners must look to Christ crucified. In looking, they live (Jn. 3:14-15; Rom. 1:17)! Dear sinner, be reconciled to God! God Himself gives you warrant to look to Him, to believe Him. He says, “*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else*” (Isa. 45:22). All of your need is met in looking to Christ!

The queen of Sheba came from far to hear the wisdom of Solomon. But a greater than Solomon is here!

## The queen of Sheba saw the king in his glory

What do sinners see when they come to Christ?

*1 Kings 10:4* And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, *5* And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her” (1 Kings 10:4-5).

What the queen saw teaches us what sinners see when they believe Christ: they see the glory of God. When we come to Christ, we see His glory in His mighty conquering, saving acts for sinners. He put away their sins. He conquered death and hell and the devil. In seeing this, we see the glory of God. He is the brightness of God’s glory (Heb. 1:3). When God gives us faith in Christ, we see the glory of God (2 Cor. 4:6) [Gal. 6:14 -- “*God forbid that I should glory, boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;*” Heb. 1:3; Ex. 33:18-19; 34:5-7)].

**She saw His accomplishments.** The Lord Jesus put away the sins of His people (Heb. 1:3; 10:17-18). He obtained their eternal redemption. He established their everlasting righteousness and secured their eternal inheritance (Heb. 9:12,15). By His one offering, He sanctified and perfected them forever (Heb. 10:10,14). When He had thus finished their salvation, He sat down with His Father on His throne (Rev. 3:21). A greater than Solomon is here! The Gospel makes sinners see that Christ’s “*glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him*” (Ps. 21:5). [“*A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary*” (Jer. 17:12).]

**She saw the seating of His servants.** All who believe Christ rest in faith, and are satisfied with Him (Heb. 4:3). If God is satisfied with Him, you can be satisfied with Him (Isa. 53:10)!

**She saw his provision for them.** God provided Himself the Lamb (Gen. 22:8). Christ is the Lamb of God. He is the propitiation for our sins (Rev. 13:8; 1 John 4:10). God blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3). Christ gave Himself for our sins (Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 5:25; Titus 2:14). His body and blood are the food on which our souls depend. He is our life. We find satisfaction and delight in Him (John 6:51,53-37; Isaiah 55:2-3; 2 Sam. 23:5).

**She saw his attendants.** “*Kings shall fall down before Him: All nations shall serve Him*” (Ps. 72:11). All whom Christ redeemed confess Him. They confess Him in their heart. They confess Him in believer’s baptism (Ps. 107:3; Rom. 10:9). They worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus. They serve Him in love for what He has done, yet they trust nothing about themselves or their works to please God (Philip 3:3). “*By love [they] serve one another*” (Gal. 5:13).

**She saw their apparel.** Christ clothes His people with the garments of salvation; with the robe of His righteousness (Isa. 61:10). Nothing can be added to what He has done. Nothing can be taken from it. God Himself finds no spot or flaw in them. He looks only to Christ for His people (Num. 23:21; Jer. 50:20; Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 2 Cor. 5:21). Therefore, they are holy and blameless before Him in love (Eph. 1:4). In Christ, believers are the very righteousness of God.

**She saw his cupbearers.** Cupbearers provide wine to the king and his guests. True servants of Christ preach what He accomplished when He shed His blood. Jesus told his disciples, “*This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*” Christ made remission for the sins of His people by shedding His blood. All of the blessings of the NT, the covenant of God’s grace, were put into force by His blood. Believing sinners, by faith, drink in and live upon and rejoice in what Christ has done.

What is your hope that God will accept you in the Day of Judgment? All of my hope is that Christ died for me (Rom. 8:34). It’s not what I do. It’s not even what I fail to do. It never will be about me. I trust Christ’s blood and righteousness alone.

His blood cheers the heart of God and man (Judges 9:13). It's about Him!  
Therefore we preach nothing but Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2).

**She saw his ascent.** Believers see Christ in His glory. Christ sits on His Father's right hand. He reigns because He glorified God by the redemption of His people (Heb. 1:3; Ps. 21:5). On earth, Solomon had wisdom, dominion, riches and honor from the LORD. But a greater than Solomon is here! *“Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever”* (Rev. 5:13).

**There was no more spirit in her.** When we see Christ as our Savior and glorious King because of His work in our salvation, all of our strength and goodness becomes nothing. He becomes all (John 3:30; Dan. 10:8).

**He gave her all her desire.** (Ps. 27:4; 2 Sam. 23:5). Are you a sinner? Is Christ enough to satisfy the deepest thirst and hunger of your soul? Is His life and death and intercession at God's right hand all that you need to save you to the uttermost? Do you see that His glory is great in His salvation (Ps. 21:5)? Then He has given you all your desire!

May God give us such a sight of Christ, the greater than Solomon!