

A PROMISE RENEWED

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“And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments:

Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.”

I Kings 9:4-5

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Solomon was a young man when he became the king of Israel. Being young, he was overwhelmed with the responsibility that had fallen to him. With the godly example of his father, King David as a guide, Solomon purposed to faithfully follow the God of His father. He had a great day of worship and sacrifice in Gibeon. That night, in a dream, the Lord came to him and promised to give him special wisdom to be able to rule His people properly. At that time God gave Solomon special instructions to make sure that the blessings of God would remain on his reign over Israel. *“If thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days”* (3:14) Seven years later, after the Temple was built and Solomon had dedicated the structure, the Lord repeated this promise and added to it. *“And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and*

keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father: And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.” (6:11-13) About thirteen years passed between the completion of the construction of the Temple and the completion of the house of the king. (7:1) At the completion of the construction of the Temple and the King’s house, God came to Solomon to add His blessing to all that Solomon had done. *“And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there forever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.”* (9:2) Just as God had come to him as a young man in Gibeon, God came to Solomon once again to encourage him to remain faithful to the ways of God just as his father David had. This chapter “is concerned with promise and warning.” (Wycliffe. P. 320) God’s promise in verse 4 of chapter 9 consisted of four parts. The Lord encouraged Solomon to follow Him as David had followed. He Said that David followed

Him “in integrity of heart”. David lived before the Lord with an internal consistency, a lack of corruption. He was undivided in his fidelity to the Lord. It was also said of David that he followed the Lord “In uprightness”. He lived with an honest and honorable attitude of heart. To be sure, David was not a perfect man. There were times when he did not live up to these ideals but as a rule, he was faithful in his life for the Lord. When he did, *“according to all that I [the Lord] commanded”* it was an example to Solomon to be obedient to all that the Lord asked him to do. Finally, Solomon was to be obedient to all the requirements that God expected of him. God’s promise to him was, *“Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.”* (Vs. 5) To this point the promises of God to Solomon have been positive in nature. However, this promise given to Solomon in the 24th year of his reign was conditional in nature. If Israel, led by Solomon, failed to obey these encouragements by following after other Gods there would be severe consequences.

“But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people:” (Vs. 6-7) In chapter 9 “It is noteworthy that Solomon, to whom the warning was given, was soon to be guilty of this very offense (11:4,5)” (Wycliffe. P. 320)

At the completion of the King’s house, it seems that Solomon was living in obedience to all that Lord asked of Him. *“And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the LORD.”* (Vs. 25) “It is deeply significant that no great moral scandal is connected with the name or reign of Solomon, yet he never attained to the high spiritual character of his father, and at best died under the displeasure of the Lord.” (Wycliffe. P. 320) An interesting study, would be a comparison

between the spiritual life of King David and Solomon. That study will be attempted at a later time.

The wisdom of Solomon had become legendary by the mid-point of his reign. People from all over came to prove his wisdom. Most notable of them was the Queen of Sheba. She came from the kingdom of the Sabeans in Arabia. I Kings 10:1 reports, *“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.”* “In other words, the fame which Solomon had acquired through the name of the Lord, or through the fact of the Lord had so glorified Himself in him,” (K&D. Vol. 3 P. 158) that she wanted to find out the truth of the stories that she had heard. Solomon answered all of her questions and she was so impressed that she gave gifts of great riches. (Vs. 10) Her assessment was that when she, *“had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, . . . there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, it was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the*

words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. . . . Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.” (Vs. 10:4-9) The writer of the histories in I & II Kings summed up the story of the Queen of Shiba by saying, “So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom.” (Vs. 10:23)

K&D = Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes.
C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch. Vol. III. William B. Eerdmans
Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1982.

Wycliffe = The Wycliffe Bible Commentary. By Charles F.
Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison. Moody Press, Chicago, Il. 1962.

