

**The Inscrutable Question: The Honor Of Solomon, 2 Chr 1:7-12; 2:4; 9:5-7; The Ichabod of Israel: The Apostate Priesthood of Eli & His Sons, 1 Sam 1**

- 7- The humility of believers who possess divine thought results in a desire to honor God through acts of reciprocal love. There are a number of examples among the kings of Israel—King Solomon will be our example:

2 Chronicles 1:7 - In that night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask what I shall give you.”

v. 8 - And Solomon said to God, “You have dealt with my father David with great lovingkindness [**undiminished love**], and have made me king in his place.

v. 10 - “Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can rule this great people of Yours?”

v. 11 - And God said to Solomon, “Because you had this in mind, and did not ask for riches, wealth, or **honor [kavoth: glory]**, or the life of those who hate you, nor have you even asked for long life, but you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge, that you may rule My people, over whom I have made you king,

2 Chronicles 1:12 -wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. And I will give you riches and wealth and **honor [kavoth: glory]**, such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed, nor who will come after you.”

- 8- Beginning in 2 Chronicles 1:14 and covering the next four chapters we have the account of Solomon’s construction of the Temple in Jerusalem. The expense of the project must have been billions of dollars by today’s standards. The Lord approved of Solomon’s efforts for we learn that the Shekinah Glory “filled the house of God” in 2 Chronicles 5:14.
- 9- In the context of our recent studies it is instructive to read about Solomon’s motivation for building this Temple. He was motivated by a reciprocity that was based on his sense of responsibility to return Israel to a proper observance of the spiritual life assigned to it by the Mosaic Law:

2 Chronicles 2:4 - “Behold I am about to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, dedicating it to Him, to burn fragrant incense before Him, and to set out the showbread continually, and to offer burnt offerings morning and evening, on Sabbaths and on new moons and on the appointed feasts of the lord our God, this being required forever in Israel.

v. 5 - “And the house which I am about to build will be great; for greater is our God than all the gods.”

- 10- Solomon’s glory was recognized by another monarch, the Queen of Sheba, when she visited Israel in:

2 Chronicles 9:5 - Then she said to the king, “It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom.

v. 6 - “Nevertheless I did not believe their reports until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You surpass the report that I heard.

v. 7 - “How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom.”



- 11- The nation Israel had its own glory. There was prosperity of untold proportions. Laborers were blessed and happy serving Solomon. There was a tremendous amount of talent and ability among the people demonstrated by the elaborate construction of the Temple. Israel's foreign policy had developed an harmonious relationship with its neighbors. There were flourishing markets and active foreign trade. The arts were magnified and promoted. The safety of the people was secure. The mental attitude of a large number of positive people was reflected by the beauty of the land, the size of its herds, and the benefits of its economy. Solomon and the Jewish people were respected by friends and foe alike. There was peace and tranquility in Jerusalem and throughout the land. All this may be described as the "glory of Israel."
- 12- This concept is the subject of commentary on the subject of *kavoth* by:

Jenni, Ernst and Claus Westermann. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Vol. 2. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 594:

This kavod of the land is evidenced in a multitude of phenomena that constitute the flowering of the people and the land, the size and fortification of the cities, the blossoming of the culture, political stature, trade, military, etc.

V. The Ichabod of Israel:

- 1- About the year 1200 B.C. the tabernacle was located at a central point in Canaan at a community called Shiloh. There inside the holy of holies was placed the arc of the covenant and dwelling between its cherubs was the Shekinah Glory.
- 2- The high priest at this time was Eli whose sons, Hophni / *HOFF-nye* / ("Tadpole") and Phinehas / *FIN-e-us* / ("Nubian"), are characterized by Scripture as "sons of Belial," a Hebrew idiom which means worthless and lawless.
- 3- Another central character at the beginning of 1 Samuel is Samuel's father, Elkanah / *El-KAY-nah* / who had two wives, Hannah, who was initially barren, and Peninnah / *Pe-NEEN-ah* / who had borne him many children.
- 4- Samuel's mother was Hannah. His birth was the result of her prayer to God, "give Your maidservant a son" in 1 Samuel 1:11. Samuel would become the last Judge of Israel.
- 5- Samuel would be trained under the tutelage of Eli the High Priest. All high priests were descendants of Aaron from the line of one of his two sons, Eleazar or Ithamar. Eli's line went back to Ithamar.
- 6- Eli functioned as an honorable high priest but as he grew older his sons Hophni and Phinehas took over the sacerdotal duties at the Tabernacle.
- 7- Their administration of the sacrifices, the feast days, and the Sabbaths transformed these events into blasphemous rituals that did not honor the Lord but instead their own lustful appetites. In addition to dishonoring the priesthood in this fashion they went even further by having illicit sexual relations with women in front of the Tabernacle.
- 8- There are many sins that contribute to the fall of a client nation, but there are a few that fall at the top of the list with regard to their efficiency in drawing severe divine disapproval: fornication, adultery, idolatry, homosexuality, and anti-Semitism.
- 9- Although Hophni and Phinehas were obviously not anti-Semitic they were involved in the first three and their guilt solicited divine discipline upon both themselves as well as Israel.
- 10- Eli had a tragic flaw. His intense parental love for his sons blinded him to their misbehavior at the Tabernacle so that he only mildly admonished them instead of firing them.