

# *The Spirit of Excellence*

*Sunday, October 22, 2006*

## *1 Kings 10:1-10*

1 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.

2 And *she came to Jerusalem* with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when *she was come to Solomon*, she communed with him of *all that was in her heart*.

3 And *Solomon told her all her questions*: there was *not any thing hid from the king*, which he told her not.

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*.

6 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*.

7 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*.

8 *Happy are thy men*, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom.

9 *Blessed be the LORD thy God*, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, *to do judgment and justice*.

10 And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of *spices very great store*, and precious stones: *there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon*.

- Where does true greatness starts? Does it come from our educational accomplishments, our familiar traits, or does it come from a learned behavior pattern that is developed through personal discipline?

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- I believe that many people today strive for greatness and excellence, but never fully accomplish what they are striving to achieve, basically, because of a lack of personal discipline.
- True greatness, in the realm of excellence, comes from a spiritual empowerment from God. He gives us the wisdom and power to accomplish astounding feats.
- As the Body of Christ, I believe that all of His people should strive to excel in every area of their lives. We may not all become rich, as far as money is concerned, but that should not stop us from working towards greatness.
- Too many of you give up on life too quickly and stop dreaming at the point of your success. The enemy of our soul turns up his heat just prior to our breakthrough, so we should not let increased struggles stop us. For, in just a few more moments, we will experience our breakthrough.
- Have you ever considered how much you don't have because you gave up too easily? Or, how far you could have been if you did not stop pursuing greatness? Maybe, you have been listening to the wrong people; hanging out with the wrong crowd; speaking too negatively of yourself; or reading and studying the wrong materials.
- Well, I am here today to help you to stir up the spirit of excellence that dwells within the heart of every believer.
- There is more success within you than failure. You were reborn with the power and grace to accomplish great things. When God gave you His Spirit, He gave you all of the wisdom, power, and strength to do what only can be done by the help of God.
- Peter states in **2 Peter 1:3**, "*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.*" God puts enough of Himself within each of us to cause us to do great exploits, but it's all contingent upon us coming into a greater knowledge of Him.
- This is why Paul told Timothy to stir up the gift of God that was within him. Don't shake it, but stir it. Shaking may mix it and yet waste it; but, stirring it will blend it well.
- So, today, as we look at our lesson, we read of the queen of Sheba, a queen from the North African region of Yemen, which traveled about a thousand miles to

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experience and to validate what she had heard of the wisdom of King Solomon and how God had highly favored him.

- Although, many great kings may arise in the world, Solomon had a name because of his relationship with the Lord.
- There are several key points that I would like to make from the text that will help you to appreciate the spirit of excellence that is displayed in this text.
- First, because of his relationship with the Lord, Solomon first became great within himself, in his homeland. The first example of his wisdom is found when the two women were arguing over the rights of a child.
- Until you are able to perfect your giftedness within yourself and know what God has instilled within you, you will never be of any benefit to others. Solomon knew that his wisdom came from God and he was not afraid to use it to perfect his kingdom.
- Too many of you are even afraid to use what God has given you to perfect who you are in Christ. The power and Spirit of God comes first to perfect you, then you are to use them to perfect others. Wisdom teaches you that it is not you doing the work, but the power of God that dwells within you
- Secondly, excellence is achieved through self-confidence. If you are not confident of the you that you are, then you will never convince others of the you that you are. Solomon was excellent before the queen of Sheba ever arrived in Jerusalem. As a matter of fact, she came surprisingly to test him, she was not invited.
- Therefore, we learn that he did not become excellent for her, but for God. Excellence is a by-product of wisdom, so without the wisdom of God, attempts towards excellence will be futile.
- Lastly, the final point that I would like to make is thinking and planning. Most women are excelling today because of their ability to think, plan, and then contemplate. Most men fail to think, or if they do, they don't plan or contemplate.
- You will never be excellent without dreaming, making plans, contemplating or reflecting over your plans, thinking again, then implementation of your plans.
- Solomon used everything that he was blessed with by leaders from other countries to build his house and the house of the Lord. He also blessed his servants and the people of his kingdom prospered because of his wisdom. Someone attached to

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you is dependent upon you perfecting your gift to release blessing and favor into their lives.

- So, in closing, let's increase our personal excellence so that we may enhance the corporate excellence of God's kingdom.