

1 Kings 9

Introduction

1. We're in chapter 9 this morning and it's a critical passage in the study of Solomon's life
2. In fact, I would argue that it's one of the two most important passages—those being chapter 9 and chapter 11
3. Our passage this morning breaks down naturally into two parts:
 - a. Verses 1-9 make up the first part and it records the LORD's second appearance to Solomon; this is what makes it such an important passage
 - b. Verses 10-28 make up the rest of the chapter and they focus on Solomon's duties and accomplishments as king (10-28)
4. Now, one of the challenges we face in this chapter is what the first nine verses (the LORD's appearance to Solomon) have to do with the remaining 19 verses (Solomon's duties and accomplishments) because there's not an immediately obvious connection
5. However, I noticed a pattern throughout the first 11 chapters that I believe gives us an answer so we'll look at this pattern after we walk through chapter 9 and see if we can bring it all together

A. The LORD appears to Solomon a second time (9:1-9)

1. The LORD appeared to Solomon a second time (READ 9:1-2):
 - a. The first time was at Gibeon in 3:1-15:
 - 1) This was shortly after he became king and went to the tabernacle there to offer sacrifices to the LORD
 - 2) The LORD was pleased and offered to grant Solomon whatever he wished for
 - 3) Solomon asked for a "**listening heart**", one inclined to obey the LORD, and we know the rest of the story
 - b. The LORD spoke to Solomon a second time in 6:11-13 when he first began to build the temple, but He didn't actually appear to him; it simply says the Word of the LORD came to him
 - c. Here, the LORD appears to Solomon again after completing the temple
2. The LORD's words to Solomon reveal and **ANSWER**, a **PROMISE** and a **WARNING**:
 - a. The first part of the LORD's response was an **ANSWER** to Solomon's prayer (9:3):
 - 1) If you remember back in chapter 8 when Solomon dedicated the temple, he prayed and asked of the LORD for three things:
 - a) To keep His promises to David (8:25-26)
 - b) To have His eyes and ears open toward the temple to hear the prayers of Israel (8:27-30a)
 - c) And ultimately to forgive Israel's sins when they repent and cry out to Him (8:30b-53)
 - 2) In v. 3 the LORD responds to Solomon (READ 9:3):
 - a) What the author records here is only a summary of the LORD's response

b) 2 Chronicles 7:12-16 gives us a lot more detail and there are a few things we need to note (READ):

- Notice that the LORD refers to the temple as a “**house of sacrifice**” (12)—this is because God didn’t intend for the temple to just be a place of prayer, but a place of atonement and sanctification; there can be no relationship with God without atoning for sin and the temple would serve that purpose as Israel would bring their sacrifices to the temple
- That ties into the second thing we should note and that’s the LORD’s willingness to forgive—the LORD promised to “**hear from heaven, forgive their sin and heal their land**” (14b) but only if they “**humbled themselves and pray and seek [His] face and turn from their wicked ways**” (14a)
- The final thing we should note is the perpetual nature of the LORD’s relationship with Israel; both authors record the LORD’s promise to put His name on the temple forever and keep His eyes and heart there perpetually; this isn’t so much a reference to the permanent nature of the temple (for that will be destroyed), but a reference to the permanence of Jerusalem in God’s plan (note 11:13)

b. The second part of the LORD’s response was a **PROMISE** to Solomon (READ 9:4-5):

- 1) The LORD repeated to Solomon a promise He made to King David which was that he would never lack a descendant to rule over Israel (READ 2 Samuel 7:8-17)
- 2) When David repeated this promise to Solomon, he revealed that there was a condition—David’s descendants would need to remain faithful to the LORD (READ 1 Kings 2:3-4)
- 3) Solomon even prayed to the LORD that He would fulfill this promise, and even repeated the condition (READ 1 Kings 8:25-26)
- 4) Here in 9:4-5 the LORD once again reminds Solomon of this promise and the condition associated with it
- 5) This is one of the things that makes the end of Solomon’s life so tragic—the promise was his; all he had to do was remain faithful to the LORD; that’s it

c. This leads to the third part of the LORD’s response which was a **WARNING** to Solomon (READ 9:6-9):

- 1) The LORD lists three consequences if Solomon or his sons would turn away from Him:
 - a) Israel would be cut off from the land
 - b) The temple would be destroyed
 - c) Israel would become a “**proverb and a by-word among all peoples**”—this means that God would make Israel a public example among the nations of what happens when forsaking the LORD; this is described in vs. 8-9 (RE-READ)
- 2) Unfortunately, as we’ll see in chapter 11 (and as recorded in the rest of 1 & 2 Kings), Solomon failed to heed the LORD’s warning and tragically all three of the consequences just mentioned ultimately come to pass

B. Solomon’s duties and actions as king (9:10-28)

1. Politics (READ 9:10-14):

- a. Solomon gave Hiram, the king of Tyre, 20 cities

- b. They were close to Tyre, but apparently Hiram wasn't all that pleased and called them Cabul which some suggest means "good as nothing"
 - c. Nonetheless, in return Hiram gave Solomon 120 talents of gold which amounts to 4.5 tons
 - d. This might look purely like a financial transaction, but it's more likely a political exchange because three times the text says that Solomon "gave" (not sold) Hiram the cities which gives the impression it was a good will gesture by Solomon, and Hiram's sending of gold in response was likewise a good will gesture
2. Defense (READ 9:15-19): according to the parallel passage in 2 Chronicles 8, the storage cities appear to have been used to house his chariots and horsemen, and many of the other cities mentioned were fortified with walls, gates and bars
 3. Governance (READ 9:20-23):
 - a. As he had done during the building of the temple, Solomon built a large slave labor workforce out of the Canaanites that Israel had failed to remove from the land
 - b. This must have been a fairly sizeable enterprise because he assigned 550 men to manage it
 4. Religion (READ 9:25):
 - a. The author only mentions the three annual feasts here which were the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feasts of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths, but that wasn't the extent of Solomon's religious service
 - b. However, Solomon's religious duties didn't end there—2 Chronicles 8 also states that he oversaw the following:
 - 1) The daily requirement of two one year old sacrificial lambs (Exodus 29:38)
 - 2) The Sabbath offerings which included two one year old unblemished lambs, two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil as a grain offering, and a drink offering (Numbers 28:9)
 - 3) The New Moon offerings which occurred at the beginning of every month and included a burnt offering of two bulls, one ram, and seven one year old lambs without defect (Numbers 28:11)
 - 4) Finally, he oversaw the divisions of the Levites for their daily duties in the temple and the gatekeepers who served at all the gates
 5. Commerce (READ 9:26-28):
 - a. The last duty or accomplishment the author mentions is Solomon's building of a large fleet of ships
 - b. As we learned with the building of the temple, Hiram had a huge shipping industry already so Solomon wisely partnered up with him to provide experienced sailors to work along side his own
 - c. One purpose for the fleet was to transport gold from Ophir to Jerusalem—what amounts to over 17 tons in one shipment!
 - d. In addition, once very three years the ships were used to bring Solomon more gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks (2 Kings 10:22)

C. The connection between the LORD's appearance and Solomon's duties and accomplishments
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1. There's an important pattern in the 11 chapters that chronicle Solomon's life:

- a. In 2:1-4, David impresses upon Solomon the importance of remaining faithful to the LORD and walking in His ways, and the author follows this up with a list of Solomon's acts as king to solidify his reign
 - b. In 3:1-15, the LORD appears to Solomon the first time and impresses upon him the importance of remaining faithful to Him and walking in His ways, and this is followed up with a description of Solomon's acts as a judge, setting up his administration, and his power, wealth, and wisdom
 - c. In 6:11-13, the LORD speaks to Solomon when he begins the temple construction and impresses upon him the importance of remaining faithful to Him and walking in His ways, and this is followed up with the building of the temple and palace, the dedication of the temple, Solomon's prayer to the LORD, and his blessing and warning to Israel
2. So, the pattern we see from the author is that he presents the LORD's expectations of Solomon before he presents each list of Solomon's actions or accomplishments:
 - a. He is showing us the correlation between Solomon's obedience to the LORD's words and his successes
 - b. We see this same pattern here in chapter 9 where the author once again presents us with the LORD's expectations of Solomon before he presents us with another list of Solomon's actions and accomplishments
 - c. So far, every time the author has done this, Solomon is abiding in the LORD, he is faithful, and as a result he is having success and prospering in everything that he does
 - d. This is not coincidental; Solomon's success was tied directly to his faithfulness and obedience to the LORD
 3. There's one more purpose to this pattern and it's this: it creates a contrast and sets up what is revealed in chapter 11:
 - a. In 11:1-13 the LORD speaks to Solomon one last time, but this time the He rebukes Solomon for his disobedience and failure to walk in His ways
 - b. The author then follows this up with an account of the consequences of Solomon forsaking of the LORD
 - c. What a contrast: in the first four instances when Solomon is reminded of the LORD's expectations, he is shown to be faithful and obedient and successful in all that he does; the author has driven this home over and over and over
 - d. However, in the last instance the direct opposite is true: the author presents the LORD's expectations again but this time in the LORD's rebuke of Solomon for not remaining faithful and obedient, and then follows this up with the consequences Solomon and Israel will face

<p>Conclusion: What does this teach us? Two takeaways</p>

1. First and foremost, the most important thing is faithfulness and obedience to the LORD: Jesus said the most important command is to love the LORD with all our heart, soul, mind and strength; it's that simple; that's what the LORD requires of us and we demonstrate this through our obedience
2. Second, Solomon prospered as long as he remained faithful and obedient to the LORD:
 - a. Unlike Solomon, we may not be promised earthly prosperity or success because of our faithful obedience to the LORD
 - b. However, our faithfulness will be rewarded with more important things:

- 1) Hebrews 3:14: **“For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,”**
- 2) Hebrews 4:14-16: **“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”**
- 3) Hebrews 6:11-12: **“And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”**
- 4) Hebrews 10:23-39 (READ)