

2CHRONICLES 9: 1 When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great train, and camels that bore spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she had come to Solomon, she talked with him of all that was in her heart.

The queen of Sheba visits Solomon, and is sumptuously entertained by him, 2Chr 9:1-12. His great riches, 2Chr 9:13, 2Chr 9:14. He makes targets and shields of beaten gold, and a magnificent ivory throne, and various utensils of gold, 2Chr 9:15-20. His navigation to Tarshish, and the commodities brought thence, 2Chr 9:21. His magnificence and political connections, 2Chr 9:22-28. The writers of his life, 2Chr 9:29. He reigns forty years, and is succeeded by his son Rehoboam, 2Chr 9:30, 2Chr 9:31.

Verse 1

The queen of Sheba - See all the particulars of this royal visit distinctly marked and explained in the notes on 1Kgs 10:1-10 (note). The Targum calls her queen of Zemargad.

2CHRONICLES 9: 2 Solomon told her all her questions; and there was not anything hidden from Solomon which he didn't tell her.

2CHRONICLES 9: 3 When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built,

2CHRONICLES 9: 4 and the food of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their clothing, his cup bearers also, and their clothing, and his ascent by which he went up to the LORD's house; there was no more spirit in her.

2CHRONICLES 9: 5 She said to the king, "It was a true report that I heard in my own land of your acts, and of your wisdom.

2CHRONICLES 9: 6 However I didn't believe their words, until I came, and my eyes had seen it; and behold, the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me: you exceed the fame that I heard.

2CHRONICLES 9: 7 Happy are your men, and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you, and hear your wisdom.

2CHRONICLES 9: 8 Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, to set you on his throne, to be king for the LORD your God: because your God loved Israel, to establish them forever, therefore made he you king over them, to do justice and righteousness."

2CHRONICLES 9: 9 She gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, and spices in great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

2CHRONICLES 9: 10 The servants also of Hiram, and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum trees and precious stones.

2CHRONICLES 9: 11 The king made of the algum trees terraces for the LORD's house, and for the king's house, and harps and stringed instruments for the singers: and there were none like these seen before in the land of Judah.

2CHRONICLES 9: 12 King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatever she asked, besides that which she had brought to the king. So she turned, and went to her own land, she and her servants.

Verse 12

Beside that which she had brought unto the king - In 1Kgs 10:13 it is stated that Solomon gave her all she asked, besides that which he gave her of his royal bounty. It is not at all likely that he gave her back the presents which she brought to him, and which he had accepted. She had, no doubt, asked for several things which were peculiar to the land of Judea, and would be curiosities in her own kingdom; and besides these, he gave her other valuable presents.

2CHRONICLES 9: 13 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold,

2CHRONICLES 9: 14 besides that which the traders and merchants brought: and all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.

Verse 14

The kings of Arabia - "The kings of Sistevantha." - Targum.

2CHRONICLES 9: 15 King Solomon made two hundred bucklers of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of beaten gold went to one buckler.

Verse 15

And King Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold - For a more correct valuation of these targets and shields than that in 1Kgs 10:17 (note), see at the end of the chapter.

2CHRONICLES 9: 16 He made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three hundred shekels of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

2CHRONICLES 9: 17 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

Verse 17

Made a great throne of ivory - For a very curious description of the throne of Solomon, see at the end of the chapter, 2Chr 9:29 (note).

2CHRONICLES 9: 18 And there were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and stays on either side by the place of the seat, and two lions standing beside the stays.

2CHRONICLES 9: 19 Twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other on the six steps: there was nothing like it made in any kingdom.

2CHRONICLES 9: 20 All king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold: silver was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

2CHRONICLES 9: 21 For the king had ships that went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once every three years came the ships of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

Verse 21

The king's ships went to Tarshish - "Went to Africa." - Targum.

2CHRONICLES 9: 22 So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

2CHRONICLES 9: 23 All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.

2CHRONICLES 9: 24 They brought every man his tribute, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and clothing, armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

2CHRONICLES 9: 25 Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, that he stationed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

Verse 25

Four thousand stalls for horses - See the note on 1Kgs 4:26, where the different numbers in these two books are considered. The Targum, instead of four thousand, has ארבע מאה arba meah, four hundred.

2CHRONICLES 9: 26 He ruled over all the kings from the River even to the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

2CHRONICLES 9: 27 The king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars to be as the sycamore trees that are in the lowland, for abundance.

2CHRONICLES 9: 28 They brought horses for Solomon out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

2CHRONICLES 9: 29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, aren't they written in the history of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

Verse 29

Nathan the prophet - These books are all lost. See the account of Solomon, his character, and a review of his works, at the end of 1Kgs 11:43 (note).

I. By the kindness of a learned friend, who has made this kind of subjects his particular study, I am able to give a more correct view of the value of the talent of gold and the talent of silver than that which I have quoted 1Kgs 10:17, from Mr. Reynold's State of the Greatest King.

1. To find the equivalent in British standard to an ounce troy of pure gold, valued at eighty shillings, and to a talent of the same which weighs one thousand eight hundred ounces troy.

The ounce contains four hundred and eighty grains, and the guinea weighs one hundred and twenty-nine grains, or five pennyweights and nine grains. (1) As 129 grains: 21 shillings:: 480, the number of grains in an ounce: 78.1395348s. or 3l. 18s. 1d. 2.69767q.; the equivalent in our silver coin to one ounce of standard gold. (2) As 78.1395348 shillings, the value of an ounce of standard gold,: 80 shillings, the value of an ounce troy of pure gold,: 80 shillings: 81.9047619 shillings, the equivalent in British standard to one ounce of pure gold.

Instead of the preceding, the following proportions may be used: - (1) As 21.5 shillings: 21 shillings:: 80 shillings: 78.1395348 shillings. This multiplied by 1800, the number of troy ounces in a Hebrew talent, gives 140651.16264s. or 7032l. 11s. 1d. 3.8q., the equivalent to one talent of standard gold. (2) As 21 standard: 21.5 pure:: 80 pure: 81.9047619 standard. This multiplied by 1800 gives 147428.67142s. or 7371l. 8s. 6d. 3.4q., the equivalent to one talent of pure gold.

2. To find the equivalent in British standard to a talent of pure silver, which is valued at four hundred and fifty pounds sterling, or five shillings the ounce troy.

The pound troy is 240 pennyweights; and our silver coin has 18 pennyweights of alloy in the pound. From 240 pennyweights take 18, and there will remain 222 pennyweights, the pure silver in the pound.

Now as 240 pennyweights: 222 pennyweights:: 20 pennyweights, the weight of a crown piece,: 18 1/2 pennyweights, the weight of the pure silver in the crown.

Then, as 18.5 pennyweights: 6 shillings:: 36000, the number of dwts. in a talent,: 9729.729729729 shillings, or 486 9s. 8 3/4d., the equivalent in our coin to a talent of pure silver.

Example 1. To find the equivalent in British standard to the one hundred and twenty talents of gold which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon, 2Chr 9:9.

147428.57142 s. equivalent to one talent of pure gold, 120 number of talents [as found above]. 17691428.5704 = 884,571 8 s. 6 3/4 d., the equivalent to 120 talents. Example 2. To find the equivalent in British standard to Solomon's two hundred talents of beaten gold, each six hundred shekels; and to his three hundred shields, each three hundred shekels, 2Chr 9:15, 2Chr 9:16.

A talent is three thousand shekels; therefore six hundred shekels are one-fifth, and three hundred are one-tenth of a talent. - 5)147428.57142s. equivalent to one talent. 29485.71428 equivalent to one target. 200 the number of targets. 2 0)589714 2.856 294,857 2 s. 10 1/4 d. equivalent to 200 targets.

One-tenth of a talent is

14742.857142 = one shield. 300 number of shields. 2 0)442285 7.1426 221,142 17 s. 1 1/2 d. = 300 shields. Example 3. To find the equivalent in British standard to the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year, independently of what the chapmen and merchants brought him.

147428.57142 s. = one talent. 666 number of talents. 88457142852 88457142852 88457142852 2 0)9818742 8.56572 4,909, 371 8 s. 6 3/4 d. equivalent to 666 talents. Example 4. To find the equivalent in British standard to the hundred thousand talents of gold, and to the million of talents of silver, which were prepared by David for the temple, 1Chr 22:14.

The Gold 147428.57142 s. = one talent. 100000 number of talents 2 0)1474285714 2 737,142, 857 2 s. the equivalent. Or, seven hundred and thirty-seven millions, one hundred and forty-two thousand, eight hundred and fifty-seven pounds, two shillings sterling, for the gold.

The Silver 9729.729729729 s. = one talent. 1000000 number of talents. 2 0)9729729721 9.729 486,486, 486 9 s. 8 1/2 d. the equivalent. Or, four hundred and eighty-six millions, four hundred and eighty-six thousand, four hundred and eighty-six pounds, nine shillings, and eightpence halfpenny sterling, for the silver.

II. I have referred, in the note on 2Chr 9:17, to a curious account of Solomon's throne, taken from a Persian MS. entitled *beet al mukuddus*, the Holy House, or Jerusalem. It has already been remarked, in the account of Solomon at the end of 1Kgs 11:43, article 12, that among the oriental writers Solomon is considered, not only as the wisest of all men, but as having supreme command over demons and genii of all kinds; and that he knew the language of beasts and birds, etc.; and therefore the reader need not be surprised if he find, in the following account, Solomon employing preternatural agency in the construction of this celebrated throne. "This famous throne was the work of the Deev Sukhur; it was called Koukab al Jinna. The beauty of this throne has never been sufficiently described; the following are the particulars: - "The sides of it were pure gold; the feet, of emeralds and pearls, intermixed with other pearls, each of which was as large as the egg of an ostrich. "The throne had Seven steps; on each side were delineated orchards full of trees, the branches of which were composed of precious stones, representing ripe and unripe fruits. "On the tops of the trees were to be seen fowls of the most beautiful plumage; particularly the peacock, the etaub, and the kurgus; all these birds were artificially hollowed within, so as occasionally to utter a thousand melodious notes, such as the ears of mortals had never before heard. "On the First step were delineated vine-branches, having bunches of grapes, composed of various sorts of precious stones; fashioned in such a manner as to represent the different colors of purple, violet, green, and red, so as to exhibit the appearance of real fruit. "On the Second step, on each side of the throne, were two lions, of massive gold, of terrible aspect, and as large as life. "The property of this throne was such, that when the prophet Solomon placed his foot upon the First step, all the birds spread their wings, and made a fluttering noise in the air. "On his touching the Second step, the two lions expanded their claws. "On his reaching the Third step, the whole assembly of deevs, peris, and men, repeated the praises of the Deity. "When he arrived at the Fourth step, voices were heard addressing him in the following manner: Son of David be grateful for the blessings which the Almighty has bestowed upon thee. "The same was repeated on his reaching the Fifth step. "On his touching the Sixth step, all the children sang praises. "On his arrival at the Seventh step, the whole throne, with all the birds and other animals, became in motion, and ceased not till he had placed himself in the royal seat; and then the birds, lions, and other animals, by secret springs, discharged a shower of the most precious musk upon the prophet; after which two of the kurguses, descending placed a golden crown upon his head. "Before the throne was a column of burnished gold; on the top of which was placed a golden dove, which had in its beak a roll bound in silver. In this roll were written the Psalms of the prophet David, and the dove having presented the roll to King Solomon, he

read a portion of it to the children of Israel. "It is farther related that, on the approach of wicked persons to this throne for judgment, the lions were wont to set up a terrible roaring, and to lash their tails about with violence; the birds also began to erect their feathers; and the whole assembly of deeves and genii uttered such loud cries, that for fear of them no person would dare to be guilty of falsehood, but instantly confess his crimes. "Such was the throne of Solomon, the son of David." Supposing even this splendid description to be literally true, there is nothing here that could not have been performed by ingenuity and art; nothing that needed the aid of supernatural influence."

In another MS., on which I cannot now lay my hand, the whole value of this throne, and its ornaments, is computed in lacs of rupees! The above description is founded in the main on the account given here, 2Chr 9:17-19. The Six steps, and the footstool of the sacred writer, make the Seven steps, in the above description. The twelve lions are not distinguished by the Mohammedan writer. Other matters are added from tradition.

This profusion of gold and precious stones was not beyond the reach of Solomon, when we consider the many millions left by his father; no less a sum than one thousand two hundred and twenty-three millions, six hundred and twenty-nine thousand, three hundred and forty-three pounds, eleven shillings, and eight pence halfpenny, besides what Solomon himself furnished.

2CHRONICLES 9: 30 Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

2CHRONICLES 9: 31 Solomon slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.
