

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

Week 19: The Choice is Clear - Answer Guide

Below is the answer guide for this week's lesson. By no means are the answers complete or the only possible responses to each question. They are a guide to fully understanding the intent of the questions posed.

1. The Hebrew word for glory in both passages is *kabode*, not *shakinah* which comes from *shakan* meaning to reside or permanently stay. The word *shakinah* is NOT in the Old Testament. It was introduced later by Rabbis in the intertestamental period in an attempt to describe God's glorious light. Some say the glory of the LORD was preincarnate Christ. Some say it was a manifestation of the second person in the Trinity. Similar times recorded in Exodus 40:35 and 1 Kings 8:11 show that the glory of the LORD prohibited anyone from approaching the house of God. Ezekiel 10:18-20; 11:23 says it left the Temple after the exile. It seems there aren't any English words to adequately describe the glory of the LORD.

2. The setting of 2 Chronicles 7:14 is the dedication of the Temple of God. The nation of Israel was gathered to enter covenantal relationship with God. The LORD, Yahweh, is speaking to "My people" who are His chosen, the Israelites. It is a path to restart to a life of obedience to God's commands and welcoming God in their presence to lead, guide and protect them. It is a lifelong applicable verse which speaks to many believers today.

3. The three "ifs" presented in 2 Chronicles 7:13 are:

1. If I close the sky so there is no rain
2. If I command the grasshopper to consume the land
3. If I send pestilence on My people

These are three stages of a controlled progression of a curse. Another way of saying "if in ALL things you turn away."

Coupled with 2 Chronicles 7:14, God's people's response should be four-fold:

1. Humble themselves
2. Pray
2. Seek God's face
3. Turn from sin

When temptation, adversary or any life challenge comes our way, we should always humble ourselves and pray, seek God's face in faith, and turn from any sin that may be hindering our relationship with Him. For when we do such God finds favor in His people.

4. All responses are acts of worship and reverence towards Yahweh:

1. Humble themselves: repent, fall to your knees, bow your head
2. Pray: Seek forgiveness, build relationship with God, confess sins, ask (Ref. James "old camel knees")
3. Seek God's face: Demonstrates the heart's desire to know and worship/serve God
4. Turn from sin: U-turn your behavior because you serve a different King now

5. God promised the Israelites that:

1. I will hear from heaven: hear their prayers, their praises and adorations
2. I will forgive your sins, extend grace and mercy to a deprived people and restore fellowship
3. I will heal your land. Land = livelihood, God would increase their possessions and bless them abundantly

6. In Matthew 12:38 the Pharisees wanted a sign, a miracle, to know Jesus was the Messiah. The question itself revealed their lack of faith in who Jesus claimed to be. Jesus does not give them a sign but reiterates a sign that is already in their Scriptures, the sign of Jonah. The mentioning of Jonah in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights symbolized Jesus' coming resurrection from the dead. Like Jonah, Jesus will be saved from death. After Jonah was vomited out on land, he preached repentance and the Ninevites turned from their wicked ways. These Pharisees, after hearing the Gospel, did not turn from their sins and repent. Notice the phrase, "... something greater than Jonah is here." He was referring to Himself. He will, likewise, use this same phrase in His next teaching.

Theologians have differing views on the story of the Queen of the South. One is that she symbolized those who are hungry for truth, like the crowds that followed Jesus. The Queen of Sheba, a non-Jew, traveled a very far distance in search of the truth that was revealed in King Solomon. Her zeal to know the greatest truth she had ever been informed of, the truth of God, was evident of those who sought the truth Jesus shared with them. Again, Jesus says, "... something greater than Solomon is here" referring to Himself. He was greater because He was the epitome of Godly Wisdom.

It seems the relevance of 2 Chronicles 9 is to demonstrate the abounding truth of God, manifested in the wisdom of Solomon (remember, wisdom was granted to Solomon from God), will be sought after by those who are called to know Him. It was the never-before-seen wisdom of Solomon that drew the Queen of Sheba a great distance.

7. Asa adhered to the words of God spoken by the prophet Azariah. "The LORD is with you when you are with Him" (2 Chronicles 15:2) is a fundamental, reoccurring theme in the Old Testament and carried over to the New Testament. God seeks our obedience, faith and commitment. Asa demonstrated his love for YHWH by removing all the detestable idols from his land. Likewise, we must remove all aspects of sin in our lives to demonstrate our love to Jesus.

8. Jehoshaphat is knowledgeable of his ancestors and their encounters with God. He recalls Solomon's dedication prayer of the Temple and its purpose. "We do not know what to do, but we look to you." (vs 12) expresses his humility and faith. "... for the battle is not yours, but God's" are words we can rely on even to this day. God is for His people and the battle is spiritual, not physical, that we often encounter. Reference Zechariah 4:6; Ephesians 6.

9. Pride, reliance upon self and denying God's existence and power all contributed to the downfall of the kings considered to be bad (Contrast 2 Chronicles 26:16 and 27:6). Kings influenced by other cultures and their gods fell from God's grace. Likewise, it is easy for us today to be influenced in our worldview which is why we must constantly be immersed in God's Word.

10. Both instances are strikingly similar. In both instances great compassion and care were given to those in need.

2 Chronicles 29:14-15
Samaritans took care of Judeans (Israelites)
Used oil medicinally (anointed)
Sick taken to Jericho
Used donkey to carry feeble
100's of captives

Luke 10:30-36
A Good Samaritan cared for an Israelite
Used oil medicinally
Man taken to Jericho (we presume)
Used a donkey to transport man
1 captive

It was as if the story in 2 Chronicles 29 was a precursor to the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke. Both were stories emphasizing grace, goodwill and care for fellow man.

Additional Questions:

- 1.** As in all situations in a Christian's life, they should always exhibit humility and reverence towards their God. They should daily seek forgiveness for their sins and turn from any wickedness or temptations. They should constantly seek His will for their lives in fervent prayer and reading of His Word. It would do our nation good if cooperatively churches in our nation would observe a day or week of repentance and prayer. However, it all starts with "me."
- 2.** Humility, reverence to God, is the first step called from in 2 Chronicles 7:14. Being humble entails putting God first in everything, taking the back seat in situations and admitting our sinful condition. The more humble a person is, the more they come to appreciate the mercy and grace that God has extended to them.
- 3.** Answers will vary depending on personal experience.

