

THE VOICE OF THE STONES

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In Luke 19:37-40 we read: "And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

This passage has a great deal of relevance to our situation today. In most of our larger denominations there are people in positions of leadership who are not preaching the Gospel, or declaring that the Bible is the Word of God and that Jesus Christ is God's Son. Instead they are holding their peace about these great doctrines and are talking about social improvement and world change. They are urging their members to seek to establish the "Kingdom of God" by hummn effort. Within the last two years many of our American denominations have introduced into their Sunday School lessons and into their church magazines blatant denials of Biblical dependability. When these who should be declaring the Deity of Christ are holding their peace, will the stones cry out and testify to the truth of God's Word?

It must be recognized that the facts about Christ are more vital to our salvation than most of the facts of the Old Testament. Yet we must note that Jesus Christ set His seal upon the Old Testament as God's Word. If we believe in Him, we must accept His attitude toward the truth of the statements of the Old Testament.

Let us note two verses in which Jesus Christ refers to particular events of the Old Testament as facts. Matt. 6:28-29 reads: "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Thus we see that Jesus referred to Solomon as an example of tremendous glory.

Next we look at Luke 11:31 weere Jesus said: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Jesus used the greatness and wisdom of Solomon as a standard of comparison in relation to Himself. Nowadays there are many who seem to think of Solomon as a myth, and even to question whether he actually existed. If so, what does this do to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? What effect does it have upon our belief in His Deity.?

When these are holding their peace, we can ressonably expect the stones to cry out, and indeed they have done so.

Some years ago, I remember seeing a statement by the noted British writer H.G. Wells, the famous author of the Outline of History, in which he said that the greatness of Solomon had been much exaggerated in tradition and in Biblical statement. He said that actually Solomon was a petty king, subject either to Hiram of Tyre or to Pharooh of Egypt, and that "the pride of Solomon in the new temple that Hiram built for him" could be compared with the pride of a chauffeur on Chicago's gold coast in the new car that his employer had purchased!

When we see a statement like this, it is proper to ask, what evidence do we have about Solomon? Is there any proof of his greatness aside from what we find in the Old Testament?

Jewish and Arab myths have much to say about the greatness of Solomon. Such stories are often weird and grotesque. However, all of these stories came into existence long after the time in which Solomon lived. They do not actually bring us proof of anything about him. Contemporary records have been found in which the names of the many of the great kings mentioned in the Old Testament occur. However, no such record has yet been found regarding Solomon.