

From Sheba a distant report
Queen of Sheba
John Newton, 1779,
from Olney Hymns, vol. 1, hymn 34

From Sheba a distant report
Of Solomon's glory and fame,
Invited the queen to his court,
But all was outdone when she came;
She cried, with a pleasing surprise,
When first she before him appeared,
How much, what I see with my eyes,
Surpasses the rumour I heard!

2. When once to Jerusalem come,
The treasure and train she had brought;
The wealth she possessed at home,
No longer had place in her thought:
His house, his attendants, his throne,
All struck her with wonder and awe;
The glory of Solomon shone,
In every object she saw.

3. But Solomon most she admired,
Whose spirit conducted the whole;
His wisdom, which God had inspired,
His bounty and greatness of soul;
Of all the hard questions she put,
A ready solution he showed;
Exceeded her with and her suit,
And more than she asked him bestowed.

4. Thus I when the gospel proclaimed
The Saviour's great name in my ears,
The wisdom for which he is famed,
The love which to sinners he bears;
I longed, and I was not denied,
That I in his presence might bow;
I saw, and transported I cried,
A greater than Solomon Thou!

5. My conscience no comfort could find,
By doubt and hard questions opposed;
But He restored peace to my mind,
And answered each doubt I proposed:
Beholding me poor and distressed,
His bounty supplied all my wants;
My prayer could have never expressed
So much as this Solomon grants.

6. I heard, and was slow to believe,
But now with my eyes I behold,
Much more than my heart could conceive,
Or language could ever have told:
How happy thy servants must be,
Who always before thee appear!
Vouchsafe, Lord, this blessing to me,
I find it is good to be here.