

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

1 KINGS

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**GOSPEL
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Preface and Acknowledgment

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs and Henry Simmons. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, Ray Hawk and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over much time. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people. "Outlined" does not imply skimpy—these are full-length books.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we barely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge to the recipients. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. A good many of these non-paying costumers were gospel preachers. I have learned from brethren who operated Bible Bookstores that they have had the same problem. One of these brethren reported that he had to secure his supply of Bibles, in locked cases, to prevent their being stolen by preachers. How sad!

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound or wire-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie still helps as much as she can despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Kings

Introduction	Page 5
Chapter 1	Page 9
Chapter 2	Page 18
Chapter 3	Page 29
Chapter 4	Page 34
Chapter 5	Page 38
Chapter 6	Page 43
Brief History of the Hebrews	Page 52
Brief Study of Prophets	Page 57
Chapter 7	Page 60
The Tabernacle & Temple	Page 65
Chapter 8	Page 80
Chapter 9	Page 87
Chapter 10	Page 94
Chapter 11	Page 99
Chapter 12	Page 105
Chapter 13	Page 111
Chapter 14	Page 119
Chapter 15	Page 124
Chapter 16	Page 130
Chapter 17	Page 138
Chapter 18	Page 144
Chapter 19	Page 153
Minorities in the Bible	Page 159
Chapter 20	Page 164
Chapter 21	Page 170
Chapter 22	Page 176
Kings of Israel and Judah	Page 183
Bibliography	Page 184

INTRODUCTION TO 1 KINGS

A. Author and Date of Writing.

1. Authorship for Kings and Chronicles is difficult to determine by virtue of the fact that the author or authors do not identify themselves, which is the case with several books in the Bible....If we can establish the fact that the books in question are included as 'Scripture' then we can know they are inspired and profitable whether or not we ever come to know who the human author or authors are (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21) By virtue of the fact that inspired writers and speakers of the first century appealed to these books as authoritative we can know that they were received as Scripture" (Lloyd, ADL, pp.19f).
 - a. Jesus directly referred to the story found in 1 Kings 10 regarding the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon. "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is here*" (Matt. 12:42).
 - b. Christ also spoke of the famine that took place during the time of Elijah, which is found in 1 Kings 17. "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow" (Luke 4:25-26).
 - c. The apostle Paul cited 1 Kings 19:18 as proof that God does not reject the faithful. "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal*" (Rom. 11:4).
2. The Lord authenticated the inspiration of all "the law and the prophets" in various reference to these Old Testament writings, which include the books of Kings.
 - a. Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."
 - b. Luke 24:44: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me."
3. Other passages.
 - a. Luke 16:16: "The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."
 - b. Acts 24:14: "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets."
4. Jewish tradition attributes the authorship of both books of Kings to Jeremiah. Although this tradition cannot be considered authenticated, still there is no conclusive proof against it. The identity of the man who received and recorded the information that forms 1 and 2 Kings is unknown, and thus the date of its transcription has not been verified. With the foregoing information in mind, we are not concerned with his identity, since we have good reason to accept the contents of the books as inspired.

B. Purpose of 1 and 2 Kings.

1. "The First Book of Kings contains the history of one hundred and nineteen years, from A.M. 2989 to A.M. 3108. It contains a great variety of interesting particulars, the chief of which are the following: The death of David; the reign of Solomon; the building and dedication of the temple; the building of Solomon's palace; an account of his great wisdom; his magnificence, and his fall; the division of Israel and Judah under Rehoboam; the idolatry of the ten tribes over whom Jeroboam became king. It states how Judah, Benjamin, and Levi attached themselves to the house of David; how Rehoboam was attacked by Shishak, king of Egypt, who pillaged the temple; how Baasha destroyed the house of Jeroboam, and seized the government of Israel; how Jehu predicted the ruin of Baasha; how Ahab married the impious Jezebel, and persecuted the prophets of the Lord. It relates the acts of Elijah; the destruction of the prophets of Baal; the cruel death of Naboth; the death of Ahab; the good reign of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah; and the wicked reign of Ahaziah, king of Israel..." (Clarke, p.382).

2. "The books of Kings and Chronicles were written looking back at the history of the United and Divided Kingdoms of Israel, their apostasy, captivity, and restoration. Apparently, the books were written during or after exile for the purpose of rehearsing for the people of that day why they suffered the humiliation of captivity and how the past gave significance to the present—or looking at it from the other end, how the present post-exilic Israelites were related to the Israel of the past" (Lloyd, ADL, p.22).
3. "With reference to the books of Kings, the writer helps his readers to see the connection between Babylonian exile and their unfaithfulness. God had foretold to Israel through Moses that retention of the land promised to Abraham was dependent on their faithfulness to God's will (Deu. 28:56-58). Jehovah said that if they did not observe to do all the words of the law, he would cause them to perish. He said, 'Ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goes in to possess it. And Jehovah will scatter thee among all peoples, from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth'" (28:63-64). The books of Kings draw the connection between what God had foretold through Moses, with their demise in 2 Kings 17:7-23; 18:10-12; 21" (Lloyd, ADL, pp.22f).

C. Outline of 1 Kings.

1. Chapter One.
 - a. Verses 1-4: David in old age.
 - b. Verses 5-10: Adonijah Prepares to take the Throne.
 - c. Verses 11-21: Bathsheba intercedes for Solomon to succeed David.
 - d. Verses 22-27: Nathan reports to David that Adonijah was preparing to take the throne.
 - e. Verses 28-40: David directs that Solomon is to be anointed king.
 - f. Verses 41-49: Adonijah learns that Solomon has been anointed king.
 - g. Verses 50-53: Adonijah seeks mercy from Solomon.
2. Chapter Two.
 - a. Verses 1-12: David's last instructions to Solomon.
 - b. Verses 13-25: Adonijah's request leads to his death.
 - c. Verses 26-27: Abiathar is deposed from the priesthood.
 - d. Verses 28-35: The execution of Joab.
 - e. Verses 36-46: The end of Shimei.
3. Chapter Three.
 - a. Verses 1-4: Worship during the early years of Solomon's reign.
 - b. Verses 5-15: God speaks to Solomon in a dream.
 - c. Verses 16-28: Solomon's wisdom is shown in the case of the two women.
4. Chapter Four.
 - a. Verses 1-19: Solomon's cabinet and other servants.
 - b. Verses 20-28: The greatness of Solomon's reign.
 - c. Verses 29-34: Solomon's wisdom.
5. Chapter Five.
 - a. Verses 1-6: Solomon asks Hiram for help in building the temple.
 - b. Verses 7-12: Hiram gladly agrees to help Solomon.
 - c. Verses 13-18: Solomon's workers.
6. Chapter Six.
 - a. Verses 1-10: Solomon's temple.
 - b. Verses 11-14: God's conditional promise to bless Israel.
 - c. Verses 15-36: The temple described.
 - d. Verses 37-38: Constructing the temple took seven years.
7. Chapter Seven.
 - a. Verses 1-12: Solomon's own house.
 - b. Verses 13-22: The brass pillars and chapiters.
 - c. Verses 23-26: The molten sea.
 - d. Verses 27-39: The ten bases of brass.

- e. Verses 40-51: The lavers and vessels.
- 8. Chapter Eight.
 - a. Verses 1-11: God's glory fills the temple.
 - b. Verses 12-21: Solomon's speech.
 - c. Verses 22-30: Solomon's prayer.
 - d. Verses 31-53: Occasions in which Israel would need God's help.
 - e. Verses 54-66: Solomon concludes his prayer and offers a sacrifice.
- 9. Chapter Nine.
 - a. Verses 1-9: God appears to Solomon a second time.
 - b. Verses 10-28: Events following the twenty-year building program.
- 10. Chapter Ten.
 - a. Verses 1-13: The visit of the Queen of Sheba.
 - b. Verses 14-29: The greatness of Solomon.
- 11. Chapter Eleven.
 - a. Verses 1-8: Solomon's rebellion.
 - b. Verses 9-13: God's anger against Solomon.
 - c. Verses 14-22: God stirs up Hadad against Solomon.
 - d. Verses 23-25: God stirs up Rezon against Solomon.
 - e. Verses 26-40: Jeroboam.
 - f. Verses 41-43: Solomon's death
- 12. Chapter Twelve.
 - a. Verses 1-11: Rehoboam's fateful policy.
 - b. Verses 12-20: Israel rebels against Rehoboam and makes Jeroboam king.
 - c. Verses 21-24: Rehoboam proposes a war against the rebels.
 - d. Verses 25-33: Jeroboam's sinful decision.
- 13. Chapter Thirteen.
 - a. Verses 1-10: The younger prophet cries out against Jeroboam's altar at Bethel.
 - b. Verses 11-19: The old prophet deceives the younger prophet.
 - c. Verses 20-32: The death of the younger prophet.
 - d. Verses 33-34: Jeroboam persists in sinful conduct.
- 14. Chapter Fourteen.
 - a. Verses 1-16: Jeroboam's attempt to deceive Ahijah the prophet.
 - b. Verses 17-20: The death of Abijah and Jeroboam.
 - c. Verses 21-31: Rehoboam's reign.
- 15. Chapter Fifteen.
 - a. Verses 1-8: Abijah follows Rehoboam to the throne in Judah.
 - b. Verses 9-15: The godly reign of Asa.
 - c. Verses 16-24: The war between Asa and Israel.
 - d. Verses 25-34: The end of Jeroboam's dynasty.
- 16. Chapter Sixteen.
 - a. Verses 1-7: The end of Baasha's reign.
 - b. Verses 8-14: The reign of Elah in Israel.
 - c. Verses 15-20: The end of Zimri's reign.
 - d. Verses 21-28: Omri's reign.
 - e. Verses 29-33: The beginning of Ahab's evil reign.
 - f. Verse 34: Fulfillment of Joshua's prophecy.
- 17. Chapter Seventeen.
 - a. Verses 1-7: Elijah the Tishbite.
 - b. Verses 8-16: The Widow of Zarephath.
 - c. Verses 17-24: The resurrection of the widow's son.
- 18. Chapter Eighteen.

- a. Verses 1-6: Ahab searches for water and grass.
 - b. Verses 7-16: Elijah and Obadiah meet.
 - c. Verses 17-20: Elijah confronts Ahab.
 - d. Verses 21-40: Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal.
 - e. Verses 41-46: Elijah prays for rain.
19. Chapter Nineteen.
- a. Verses 1-8: Elijah flees from Jezebel.
 - b. Verses 9-18: Seven Thousand in Israel were still faithful.
 - c. Verses 19-21: Elijah meets Elisha.
20. Chapter Twenty.
- a. Verses 1-12: Benhadad seeks to humble Ahab.
 - b. Verses 13-21: Israel routs the Syrians.
 - c. Verses 22-34: Israel defeats the Syrians again.
 - d. Verses 35-43: "As thy servant was busy here and there."
21. Chapter Twenty-One.
- a. Verses 1-4: Ahab covets Naboth's vineyard.
 - b. Verses 5-16: Jezebel arranges for Naboth's death.
 - c. Verses 17-24: The death of Ahab and Jezebel foretold.
 - d. Verses 25-29: Ahab is humbled.
22. Chapter Twenty-Two.
- a. Verses 1-14: Ahab seeks the help of Jehoshaphat in capturing Ramoth-gilead.
 - b. Verses 15-28: Micaiah speaks to Ahab.
 - c. Verses 29-40: The death of Ahab.
 - d. Verses 41-50: Death of Jehoshaphat.
 - e. Verses 51-53: The reign of Ahaziah.

1 KINGS 1

A. 1 Kings 1:1-4: David in Old Age.

1. Verse 1: "Now king David was old *and* stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat."
 - a. "He was in the seventieth year of his age (2 Sam. 5:4,5); but the wear and tear of a military life, bodily fatigue, and mental care, had prematurely, if we may say it, exhausted the energies of David's strong constitution (1 Sam. 16:12)" (JFB, p.291).
 - b. At the age of seventy, David is described as "old and stricken in years." By contrast, Abraham was very much alive and active at an age far beyond seventy, and Sarah still retained her beauty at an age beyond that attained by David.
 - c. Also, Moses was eighty when he began his 40-year leadership of Israel; even at the age of one hundred and twenty, he was still vigorous and strong. "And Moses *was* an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated" (Deut. 34:7).
 - d. David had lived a hard life, much of it spent in conflict of various kinds. Even while he tended his father's sheep, he faced dangers and strife, including the occasions when he had to slay a lion and a bear which had attacked the flock. He lived in danger for a lengthy period when Saul sought to kill him. He was a man of war during his long reign. There was much trouble in his own family, enough to age the strongest man.
 - e. Thus it was that in his old age, he was worn out and cold. His attendants could not cover him with enough bed-clothes to get him warm. "It follows from this that the king was bedridden, or at least that when lying down he could no longer be kept warm with bed-clothes" (Keil, p.16f). Keil also notes that the Hebrew term rendered "clothes" is a word meaning bed-coverings. "And Michal took an image, and laid *it* in the bed, and put a pillow of goats' *hair* for his bolster, and covered *it* with a cloth" (1 Sam. 19:13; cf. Num. 4:6ff).
2. Verse 2: "Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat."
 - a. "The expedient recommended by David's physicians is the regimen prescribed in similar cases still in the east, particularly among the Arab population, not simply to give heat, but to 'cherish,' as they are aware that the inhalation of young breath will give new life and vigour to the worn-out frame....And hence the prescription for the aging king was made in a hygeian point of view, for the prolongation of his valuable life, and not merely for the comfort to be derived from the natural warmth imparted to his withered frame" (JFB, p.291).
 - b. "As David was then in his seventieth year, this decrepitude was not the natural result of extreme old age, but the consequence of a sickly constitution, arising out of the hardships which he had endured in his agitated and restless life. The proposal of his servants, to restore the vital warmth which he had lost by bringing a virgin to lie with him is recommended as an experiment by Galen....And it has been acknowledged fact with physicians of all ages, that departing vitality may be preserved and strengthened by communicating the vital warmth of strong and youthful persons" (Keil, p.17).
 - c. His servants made a hurried search in the land for a beautiful young virgin, to warm David's bed. Under the more noble standard of the gospel, such a plan could not be considered, in view of its higher ideals. But in an age when God overlooked polygamy and concubinage, this plan was not considered immoral.
 - 1) Matthew 5:27-28: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."
 - 2) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
3. Verses 3-4: "So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. And the damsel *was* very fair, and cherished the king, and

ministered to him: but the king knew her not.”

- a. The one found was Abishag, a Shunammite. Shunem was a city in the territory of Issachar (Josh. 19:18), and was situated on an eminence in the plain of Esdraelon, five miles south of Tabor. It is now called Sulam (see JFB, p.291).
- b. Abishag became David's servant, and ministered to him. The inspired historian hastens to report that David "knew her not," a euphemism used in the Bible in reference to sexual relations. This fact was obviously known to others, for Adonijah (1 Kings 2:17) sought to obtain her as his wife.

B. 1 Kings 1:5-10: Adonijah Prepares to be King.

1. Verses 5-6: “Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also *was a very goodly man*; and *his mother* bare him after Absalom.”
 - a. Adonijah was David's son by Haggith. "And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital" (2 Sam. 3:4).
 - b. Perceiving that his father was near death, Adonijah made plans to ascend David's throne. He had exalted himself by having chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. David knew of this, but had not reproved his son. We remember that Absalom had done the same thing (2 Sam. 15).
 - c. The inspired writer reports also that Adonijah had been born after Absalom, and that he was "a very goodly man" in his appearance.
2. Verse 7: “And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they following Adonijah helped *him*.”
 - a. Using shrewd wisdom, Adonijah conferred with Joab, the general of the army, and with Abiathar the priest. These two leading Israelites agreed to support him in his quest to take the throne.
 - b. "Although he was David's fourth son (2 Sam. 3:4), yet after the death of Amnon and Absalom he was probably the eldest, as Chileab, David's second son, had most likely died when a child, since he is never mentioned again. Adonijah therefore thought that he had a claim to the throne (cf. ch. 2:15), and wanted to secure it before his father's death" (Keil, p.15).
 - c. God was the one to make the selection. He had exercised this right in selecting both Saul and David. "Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother" (Deut. 17:15).
 - d. Adonijah's quest to be king was defeated before it began, since God had not chosen him to continue David's dynasty. "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom" (2 Sam. 7:12). This individual is later shown to be Solomon.
3. Verse 8: “But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah.”
 - a. There were some very notable men who did not side with Adonijah. These are identified as Zadok the priest, Benaiah, Nathan the prophet, and Rei, plus the mighty men who had faithfully served David for many years.
 - b. Benaiah was a great fighting force even when alone. "And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow: And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man: and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear" (2 Sam. 23:20-21).
 - c. With Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet with him, God's power and authority were likewise with David.
4. Verses 9-10: “And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which *is* by Enrogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants: But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.”
 - a. Adonijah made detailed preparations for assuming the reign in Israel. He selected Abiathar to be the

high priest and Joab to be the commander of the army under the new regime.

- b. He prepared a great feast at the stone of Zoheloth, which was near Enrogel, to which he invited the other sons of David and all the men of Judah. The purpose of this feast was political; if a man is well-fed and entertained, he is apt to feel kindly disposed toward his host. Compare: "Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! And it was *so*, that when any man came nigh *to him* to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him. And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Sam. 15:4-6).
- c. However, excluded from the invitation list were Nathan, Benaiah, David's mighty men, and Solomon. "The fact that Solomon and the others mentioned were not included in the invitation, showed very clearly that Adonijah was informed of Solomon's election as successor to the throne, and was also aware of the feelings of Nathan and Benaiah" (Keil, p.19).

C. I Kings 1:11-21: Bathsheba Intercedes with David for Solomon to be Given the Throne.

1. Verses 11-12: "Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon."
 - a. Nathan was moved to approach Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, advising her of Adonijah's plans to usurp the throne. He had not become king as yet, but his plans were on the verge of completion.
 - b. He counseled her that she take action to deliver her own life and that of Solomon. The implication plainly is that Adonijah would kill anyone who could be a threat to his assuming the throne. The prospective power, prestige, and wealth of the royal throne are more than enough to override brotherly affection.
2. Verses 13-14: "Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words."
 - a. Nathan further advised Bathsheba to enter into David's chambers and remind him that he had vowed to her that Solomon would reign in his place when the time came.
 - b. She was also to tell him that Adonijah was about to make himself king. Nathan said he would enter and verify her words.
 - c. God intended to select each king, and not necessarily in order of their birth. "This divine purpose was known throughout the kingdom; but no intimation had been made as to whether the right of inheritance was to belong to the eldest son....Nathan, who was aware of the old king's solemn promise to Solomon, and, moreover, that this promise was sanctioned by the Divine will, saw that no time was to be lost. Fearing the effects of too sudden excitement in the king's feeble state, he arranged that Bath-sheba should go first to inform him of what was being transacted without the walls, and that himself should follow to confirm her statement. The narrative here not only exhibits the vivid picture of a scene within the interior of a palace, but gives the impressions that a great deal of Oriental state ceremonial had been established in the Hebrew court" (JFB, p.292).
3. Verses 15-16: "And Bathsheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king. And Bathsheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou?"
 - a. Bathsheba entered David's chamber; Abishag the Shunammite virgin was ministering to him. Bathsheba bowed before the king, and was asked about the purpose of her visit.
 - b. Despite the fact that she was one of David's wives, Bathsheba showed the proper respect for her sovereign lord.
4. Verses 17-19: "And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest *it* not: And he hath slain oxen

and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.”

- a. Addressing her husband with deep respect, she pointed out succinctly the current situation, and without reproach, reminded David of his solemn promise that Solomon would follow him on the throne.
 - b. The situation, David is advised, is this: He had promised the throne to Solomon; but Adonijah was presently executing his plans to seize power; this usurper was even now giving a great feast for Joab, Abiathar, the king’s other sons, and others who were supportive of his claims; but Solomon had not been invited to the feast.
 - c. That Solomon was not invited is significant. "Bathsheba added this, not because she felt herself injured, but as a sign of Adonijah's feelings towards Solomon, which showed that he had reason to fear the worst if Adonijah should succeed in his usurpation of the throne" (Keil, p.20).
5. Verses 20-21: “And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.”
- a. Bathsheba called David's attention to the fact that the whole nation was looking to the king to name his successor publicly, and avoid the misguided efforts of Adonijah and all other potential usurpers.
 - b. If he did not do so, then following the death of David, both she and her son would be judged to be dangerous to Adonijah's rule, and dealt with accordingly. She rightly feared for their lives, for it has long been true that the sibling who gained control of his predecessor's throne often dealt severely with his brothers.

D. 1 Kings 1:22-27: Nathan Reports to David that Adonijah was Preparing to Take the Throne.

1. Verses 22-23: “And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in. And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.”
 - a. In keeping with his promise to Bathsheba, Nathan came to see the king, while she was still in the royal presence.
 - b. He was announced as "Nathan the prophet." This man of God bowed before David, with his face to the floor. Verse 28 implies that Bathsheba departed from the king's presence at the approach of the prophet, for after Nathan's conversation, the king directed that Bathsheba be called back.
2. Verses 24-25: “And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah.”
 - a. Nathan inquired whether the king had given order for Adonijah to be anointed as his successor to the throne. To give the background to his question, the prophet stated that Adonijah had that very day slain sheep, cattle, and oxen in abundance, to serve as a feast for Abiathar, the captains of the army, and the king's sons.
 - b. The prophet further reported that those who attended the feast had eaten and drunk, and proclaimed, "God save King Adonijah." All of these details were true.
3. Verses 26-27: “But me, *even* me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not showed *it* unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?”
 - a. Notable among those not invited to the feast were Zadok, Benaiah, Solomon, and Nathan. Their being excluded signified that Adonijah expected them to be opposed to his efforts.
 - b. Could it be true, Nathan asks, that David had chosen Adonijah to succeed him as king and he had not announced this news to Nathan? "The indirect question...is not merely an expression of modesty, but also of doubt, whether what had occurred had emanated from the king and he had not shown it to his servants" (Keil, p.21).

E. 1 Kings 1:28-40: David Directs that Solomon is to be Anointed King.

1. Verses 28-31: “Then king David answered and said, Call me Bathsheba. And she came into the king's

presence, and stood before the king. And the king swore, and said, *As the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, Even as I swear unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day. Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.*"

- a. David summoned Bathsheba back into his presence. He stated that he had indeed sworn unto her by the Lord that Solomon would reign after him. He affirmed that this would be fulfilled immediately.
 - b. "He renews to her the solemn pledge he had given, in terms, the solemnity and impressiveness of which show that the aged monarch had roused himself to the duty the emergency called for. The cold, stiff, and repulsive etiquette of an Oriental court is strikingly represented in the narrative of these interviews with the aged king. First, Bath-sheba was introduced into the presence-chamber; she bowed and did obeisance. On Nathan's entrance she withdrew, and then, after a brief conversation between the king and the prophet, orders were given to the attendants to recall Bath-sheba. On her return, Nathan retired. This formality, however irksome, was the established usage of the court" (JFB, p.293).
 - c. Notice David's reverent attitude toward God in his initial oath. He stated that he had sworn unto her, saying, "As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress...." He gives God credit for the deliverances he had received from various distressful situations and campaigns he had undergone in the past. He is an old man, but he has not lost his faith and gratitude.
 - 1) The devil has few, if any, happy old men or old women. Some may deceive themselves into thinking that they are happy as they approach the end of their days, but what hope could a sinful person have in the face of death? Without hope, there can be no happiness. A false hope is only empty, wishful thinking
 - 2) A faithful Christian, if his mind does not degenerate greatly with the passing of years, approaches the end of his way with greater faith, love, hope, trust, and confidence. His spirituality should be at its greatest height; he can face the end without fear, but with happiness. David was in this happy circumstance. "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man; And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel" (1 Kings 2:1-4).
2. Verse 32: "And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king."
 - a. Taking decisive action, David called for Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah. These were strong supporters of the king, and had acted under his orders in many matters through the years.
 - b. David had formulated a plan by which he would resolve the present distressful problem. If he had died before doing what he now proposed to do, his kingdom would have been left in a terrible state.
 3. Verses 33-35: "The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon. Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah."
 - a. David directed these men that they put Solomon on the king's own mule, and conduct him down to Gihon, where Nathan and Zadok would anoint him as king to reign in David's stead.
 - b. They were then to blow the trumpet, and declare for all to hear, "God save king Solomon." From Gihon, they were to return to Jerusalem, where Solomon was to take his place on David's throne, as the new king of Israel.
 - c. This strong and definite plan would put to rest the efforts of Adonijah to take over the kingdom; it

would make for a smooth transition of power.

- d. Gihon: "Place name meaning, 'gushing fountain.' The primary water supply for Jerusalem and one of the four rivers into which the river of Eden divided (Gen. 2:13). The river cannot be identified with any contemporary river. During the Old Testament period the spring of Gihon was the primary water supply for the city of Jerusalem. The name comes from a Hebrew word meaning, 'a bursting forth,' and is descriptive of the spring which is located in the Kidron Valley. It does not produce a steady flow, but gushes out at irregular intervals, twice a day in the dry season to four or five times in the rainy season. Water issues from a crack sixteen feet long in the rock. At some point in the ancient past a wall was built at the eastern end of the crack, diverting water into a cave at the other end. In the Jebusite period before David a shaft went from the spring to a pool under the city. Water jugs were let down into the pool through another vertical shaft. This probably was the way Joab entered into the city and captured it for David (2 Sam. 5:8; 1 Chron. 11:6). During the early Israelite occupation, water was collected outside the city walls in an open basin called the 'upper pool' (Isa. 7:3). An open aqueduct carried water from there to the 'old pool' at the southern end of the city (Isa. 22:11; cf. Isa. 8:6). Along this conduit Isaiah confronted Ahaz (Isa. 7:3), and later Sennacherib's army demanded the city's surrender (2 Kings 18:17). Before Sennacherib's arrival, Hezekiah plugged the aqueduct and dug his famous water tunnel (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:30)" (Holman).
 - 1) 2 Kings 20:20: "And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?"
 - 2) 2 Chronicles 32:30: "This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works."
- e. One of the most notable accomplishments of Hezekiah as king was the construction of a conduit which brought water into Jerusalem, to keep the citizens supplied with water in case of a siege.
 - 1) "And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, he took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city; and they helped him. So there was gathered much people together, and they stopped all the fountains, and the brook that flowed through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?.... This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper spring of the waters of Gihon, and brought them straight down on the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works" (2 Chr. 32:2-4, 30, ASV).
 - 2) "This undoubtedly is an 1800 foot tunnel cut through the solid rock of Mt. Zion which to this day bring the waters of Gihon to the pool of Siloam on the southwest side of the hill. Just inside the central valley opening was found in 1880 an inscription in the Hebrew of Isaiah's time recording the excavating of the tunnel by two teams which started at either end and met in the middle of the hill 'one hundred cubits' under the surface overhead" (Pfeiffer, *The Biblical World*, p.317).
 - 3) "The inscription is one of the oldest in the Hebrew language and reads as follows: 'This is the history of the excavation. While workmen still lifting up their axe [pick], each toward his neighbors, and while three cubits remain [to cut through], each heard voices calling one to another. On the day the workmen struck, an axe against axe, to meet his neighbors, waters flowed from the [Gihon] Spring to [Siloam] Pool a thousand and two hundred cubits; and a hundred cubits the height over the heads of the workmen'" (Boyd, *Tells, Tombs and Treasure*, p.215).
4. Verses 36-37: "And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: the LORD God of my lord the king say so *too*. As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David."
 - a. Benaiah shows a measure of spirituality himself, when he declared that this plan was in keeping with the will of God. He further stated his prayerful desire that God would be with Solomon as he had been with David, and exalt the rule of Solomon to exceed even that of his father.
 - b. "The public recognition of the successor to the throne during the old king's lifetime is accordant with the customs of the East" (JFB, p.293).

5. Verses 38-40: "So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon. And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them."
 - a. The king's orders were carried out immediately. Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, accompanied by the Cherethites and Pelethites, all went down to Gihon, with Solomon riding on King David's mule.
 - b. Zadok took with him a horn of oil from the tabernacle at Jerusalem, the one which David had erected early in his reign. "And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD" (2 Sam. 6:17).
 - c. Following the ceremony, the trumpet was sounded and all the people raised up a great shout, "God save king Solomon!"
 - d. There was a great procession that returned to Jerusalem; the people piped and rejoiced with great joy; so powerful was the mighty noise that the inspired historian describes it in a strong figure of speech (a hyperbole), stating that the earth was rent by the joyful sound.
 - e. "The Hebrew pipe was probably borrowed from that of the Egyptians, being of the same form and length, and seems to have been always used by the Hebrews on all occasions of joy and festivity" (JFB, p.294).

F. 1 Kings 1:41-49: Adonijah Learns of Solomon's Exaltation.

1. Verses 41-42: "And Adonijah and all the guests that *were* with him heard *it* as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore *is this* noise of the city being in an uproar? And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou *art* a valiant man, and bringest good tidings."
 - a. The people attending Adonijah's feast heard this great noise, and were anxious to know the meaning. Joab took note of the sound of the trumpet, and wondered about the uproar that was taking place at Jerusalem.
 - b. En-rogel is near Jerusalem. "Jonathan and Ahimaaz, the priests' sons, stayed at En-rogel as messengers to relay to David what the priests might learn from Absalom when he took over Jerusalem from his father (2 Sam 17:17). Adonijah staged a party there to proclaim himself as David's successor as king of Judah (1 Kings 1:9). En-rogel lay near Jerusalem where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys met at modern Bir Ayyub" (Holman).
 - c. Jonathan, the swift son of Abiathar, came with a report of what was transpiring at Jerusalem. When approached, Adonijah said to him that he was a valiant man and that he doubtless brought good news. Actually, under the circumstances, what he reported was the worst possible news he could have brought to Adonijah.
2. Verses 43-45: "And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king. And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule: And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This *is* the noise that ye have heard. And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom."
 - a. Jonathan reported that David had given the throne to Solomon; he had directed that Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet, in company with Benaiah and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, had brought Solomon, who rode on the king's mule, to Gihon, where Zadok and Nathan had anointed him as king.
 - b. The great noise they heard was the rejoicing that rang through Jerusalem as Solomon entered the city. He reported that even now Solomon was sitting on the throne of the kingdom.
3. Verses 47-49: "And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed. And also thus said the king, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which

hath given *one* to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing *it*. And all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

- a. The bad news [from Adonijah's viewpoint] continued. The servants of David had gladly received the new king, saying, "God make the name of Solomon better than that of David." David himself bowed himself upon his bed to the new sovereign.
- b. David further said, as reported by Jonathan, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it." It is not the usual case for the preceding king to witness the coronation of his successor.
- c. David was well-loved by most of his people, and his actions and words in regards to Solomon went a long way in establishing Solomon's rule on a solid foundation.

G. 1 Kings 1:50-53: Adonijah Seeks Mercy from Solomon.

1. Verse 50: "And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar."
 - a. Terror swept through the heart of Adonijah; he knew he was in serious danger due to his own evil and precipitate action in trying to usurp the throne. Well could he fear for his life. We may be sure that there was more than a little trepidation in the hearts of his companions in this conspiracy.
 - b. He did what others did in those ancient days: he approached the tabernacle, and took hold of the horns of the altar. The idea was that no one would shed a man's blood on the holy altar upon which sacrifices were offered unto God.
 - c. "The altar was regarded from time immemorial and among all nations as a place of refuge for criminals deserving of death; but, according to Ex. 21:14, in Israel it was only allowed to afford protection in cases of unintentional slaying, and for these special cities of refuge were afterwards provided (Num. 35). In the horns of the altar, as symbols of power and strength, there was concentrated the true significance of the altar as a divine place, from which there emanated both life and health (see at Ex. 26:19). By grasping the horns of the altar the culprit placed himself under the protection of the saving and helping grace of God...The question to what altar Adonijah fled, whether to the altar at the ark of the covenant in Zion, or to the one at the tabernacle at Gibeon, or to the one built by David on the threshing-floor of Araunah, cannot be determined with certainty" (Keil, p.25).
2. Verse 51: "And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword."
 - a. The report came to Solomon that Adonijah, fearing the new king, had taken hold of the horns of the altar, demanding that Solomon swear that he would not slay him for his offense.
 - b. This was his way of asking for his brother to pardon him for his crime. He obtained pardon, and was able to return to his home.
3. Verses 52-53: "And Solomon said, If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die. So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house."
 - a. "Adonijah, having acted in opposition to the will of the reigning prince, was guilty of rebellion, and stood self-condemned. Solomon spared his life on the express condition of his good behaviour, of his living in strict privacy, leading a quiet, peaceable life, and meddling with the affairs neither of the court nor the kingdom" (JFB, pp.294f).
 - b. Giving Adonijah pardon on the condition that he prove himself to be a worthy man, he was promised that not a hair of his head would be harmed. The rebel gladly accepted the condition.
 - c. Joab sought to preserve his life by fleeing to the altar, but his appeal for pardon went unanswered. "Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and, behold, *he is* by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him. And Benaiah came

to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me. And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father. And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing *thereof, to wit*, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD. So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar" (1 Kings 2:28-35).

- d. By showing that he had a forgiving spirit, Solomon added to his appeal in the eyes of the people. His natural wisdom was increased dramatically when he later asked God for greater wisdom with which to rule Israel.

1 KINGS 2

A. 2 Kings 2:1-12: David's Last Instructions to Solomon.

1. Verse 1: "Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying."
 - a. As David's earthly life drew toward its close, he saw fit to give some final directions to Solomon. What he told him related to the way he was to conduct his personal life and to certain matters that pertained to his regal responsibilities.
 - b. The last words of a loved one mean much to the living. Christ's final words on the cross are greatly important to those who love him; and his final words to his apostles prior to his ascension are well-remembered by his disciples today. The last words that he has spoken to mankind, found in the book of Revelation (primarily in chapter 22), are filled with significance to the faithful.
 - c. These final words of counsel David gave to his son were doubtless of great importance to Solomon at the time; although he later departed from the truth, this parting charge doubtless had an effect in bringing him back to godly behavior.
 - d. "The charge recorded here is different from the farewell address delivered in public some time before (1 Chron. 28). It is introduced with great solemnity" (JFB, p.295). "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever" (1 Chron. 28:9).
2. Verse 2: "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man."
 - a. Death is appointed unto each man (Heb. 9:27). The king on the throne is no more immune to death than is the lowliest beggar on the street. "It is painful to the pride of the great and mighty that, however decorated their tombs may be, they must undergo the same dissolution and corruption with the vulgar dead; for the grave is the house appointed for all living: man is born to die....Here emperors, kings, statesmen, warriors, heroes, and butchers of all kinds, with peasants and beggars, meet; however various their routes, they terminate in the same point" (Clarke, p.388).
 - b. David was well aware of the fact that his time on earth was at its end; and knowing that death is the common lot of all humanity, and all other earthly beings, he succinctly stated that he was going the way of all the earth.
 - c. David charged Solomon to conduct himself as a man. He was to be courageous and strong; he was to discharge his personal and official responsibilities *as a man*. He was to deal with people and situations with conviction and strength, not with vacillation or weakness.
 - d. Joshua directed the Israelites to be courageous and strong. "Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom *to* the right hand or *to* the left" (Josh. 23:6).
 - e. Christians are likewise admonished to conduct themselves with conviction, courage, and strength.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 16:13-14: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 16:13-14: "Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all *that you do* be done with love" (NKJ).
3. Verses 3-4: "And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel."
 - a. The several statements at the beginning of verse three all add up to one point: be obedient to God. This is the whole obligation of man, as Solomon later was able to learn (Eccl. 12:13-14). There is no duty as great. God's will for Solomon and the Israelites was "written in the law of Moses." If they wanted to know what God required, they must go to the written word to find it.
 - 1) To keep the charge of God is to be obedient to his will, in all its facets.

- 2) To walk in his ways is to live in harmony with God's will.
 - 3) To keep God's statutes and commandments is to be obedient to his rules and requirements.
 - 4) To keep his judgments and testimonies is to honor and follow God's revealed wisdom and take heed to the instructions and examples he incorporated into his inspired word.
- b. The charge of the Lord is "the divine law, in all its ceremonial as well as moral requirements. But particular reference was intended to its political institutions as it was only by strictly maintaining the conduct that became the Hebrew monarch (Deut. 17:16-20) that he should secure the blessing of peace and prosperity to his reign..." (JFB, p.295). "But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel" (Deut. 17:16-20).
- c. Separate from the Bible, no one today can know what God's will is. All that we know about Christ the Savior is revealed in that written word. Apart from the Bible, no man can know what is in the mind of God.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-13: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
 - 2) Ephesians 3:3-11: "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
- d. Solomon's obedience to God's word would result in the success and prosperity of his activities. If a king or a common man seeks to be successful in his life's work, and excludes God's will from his plans, his prosperity will rest in his own strength and wisdom. The best the individual can expect from this plan of operation is for him to have success only as long as his strength, wisdom, and life continue; at death, he is left with an empty sack (Matt. 6:19-21). However, in many cases, even while prosperity and success prevail, happiness may be non-existent for such people.
- e. David adds in verse four, that if Solomon remains obedient and loyal to God, then the Lord will be able to fulfill the promise he made to David, that his dynasty would continue uninterruptedly. We know from other passages that the reign of the Messiah, a descendant of David according to the flesh, but the Son of God from eternity, is a continuation of David's reign. Christ's reign in heaven at God's right hand is a vastly superior rule to the limited, earthly administration of David.

- f. God gave Joshua some instruction remarkably similar to these parting words David gave Solomon. "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it *to* the right hand or *to* the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh. 1:7-8).
4. Verses 5-6: "Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, *and* what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his shoes that *were* on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace."
- a. Turning to other matters that needed to be addressed by Solomon, David brings up the case of Joab, how that he had damaged David's reign by killing Abner and Amasa.
- 1) 2 Samuel 3:26-27: "And when Joab was come out from David, he sent messengers after Abner, which brought him again from the well of Sirah: but David knew *it* not. And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth *rib*, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother."
- 2) 2 Samuel 20:9-10: "And Joab said to Amasa, *Art* thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that *was* in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth *rib*, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri."
- b. To kill a man in war was legitimate, but the killing of Abner and Amasa was hardly short of murder. In these killings, Joab had "shed the blood of war in peace." These deeds hurt David personally and politically, and stained Joab with the blood of these two men.
- c. David advised Solomon to use his best judgment in the matter, and not allow Joab to die a natural death in old age. He was, in this unique statement, telling Solomon to execute Joab for these crimes.
- 1) "The insolent and imperious conduct of that general had not only been deeply offensive to the feelings (2 Sam. 18:5-15; 19:5-7), but calculated to bring reproach on the character, to injure the prospects, and endanger the throne, of David. Passing over the injuries committed directly against himself, David dwelt with strong feelings on the base assassination of Abner and Amasa....Joab's immense popularity with the army required that any proceedings instituted against him should be taken with great prudence and deliberation" (JFB, p.295).
- a) 2 Samuel 18:5-15: "And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom. So the people went out into the field against Israel: and the battle was in the wood of Ephraim; Where the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand men. For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured. And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away. And a certain man saw it, and told Joab, and said, Behold, I saw Absalom hanged in an oak. And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle. And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom. Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have

set thyself against me. Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and smote Absalom, and slew him."

- b) 2 Samuel 19:5-7: "And Joab came into the house to the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; In that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now."
- 2) "Joab had murdered both of them out of jealousy in a treacherous and malicious manner; and thereby he had not only grievously displeased David and bidden defiance to his royal authority, but by the murder of Abner had exposed the king to the suspicion in the eyes of the people of having instigated the crime....David ought to have punished these two crimes; but when Abner was murdered, he felt himself too weak to visit a man like Joab with the punishment he deserved, as he had only just been anointed king, and consequently he did nothing more than invoke divine retribution upon his head (2 Sam. 3:29). And when Amasa was slain, the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba had crippled the power of David too much, for him to visit the deed with the punishment that was due. But as king of the nation of God, it was not right for him to allow such crimes to pass unpunished: he therefore transferred the punishment, for which he had wanted the requisite power, to his son and successor" (Keil, p.29).
5. Verse 7: "But show kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother."
 - a. David remembered the kindness and support of Barzillai, who had aided him during the rebellion of Absalom. "And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim, and went over Jordan with the king, to conduct him over Jordan. Now Barzillai was a very aged man, *even* fourscore years old: and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he *was* a very great man. And the king said unto Barzillai, Come thou over with me, and I will feed thee with me in Jerusalem. And Barzillai said unto the king, How long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem? I *am* this day fourscore years old: *and* can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward? Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, *and be buried* by the grave of my father and of my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee. And the king answered, Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do to him that which shall seem good unto thee: and whatsoever thou shalt require of me, *that* will I do for thee. And all the people went over Jordan. And when the king was come over, the king kissed Barzillai, and blessed him; and he returned unto his own place. Then the king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him: and all the people of Judah conducted the king, and also half the people of Israel" (2 Sam. 19:31-40).
 - b. He gave counsel that Solomon allow the sons of Barzillai to eat at the king's table, a blessing which involved being counted part of the royal court. This would include many advantages.
6. Verses 8-9: "And, behold, *thou hast* with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou *art* a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood."

- a. David brought up the case of Shimei, the man who had pronounced a long, continuing curse upon the king as he fled from Jerusalem to Mahanaim during Absalom's rebellion. "And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name *was* Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief, because thou *art* a bloody man. Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now *may this* Benjamite *do it*? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day. And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust. And the king, and all the people that *were* with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there" (2 Sam. 16:5-14).
 - b. When David returned to his palace, Shimei met him at Jordan, and asked to be reinstated into the king's good pleasure.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 19:16-23: "And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which *was* of Bahurim, hastened and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. And *there were* a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king. And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king. But Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered and said, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD'S anointed? And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I *am* this day king over Israel? Therefore the king said unto Shimei, Thou shalt not die. And the king swore unto him."
 - 2) "Though David promised him a pardon, which, being enforced by the presence of a thousand followers, could not have been well refused, he warned his son against Shimei as a turbulent and dangerous character" (JFB, p.295).
 - c. David had not allowed Shimei to be slain, but he knew the treacherous nature of this evil man, and so counseled Solomon to use his good judgment in dealing with him. David instructed his son not to hold this man guiltless, but execute him by a wise plan. Later, we find that Solomon devised an ingenious, but simple, plan by which Shimei would bring the sword upon his own neck (1 Kings 2:36-46).
7. Verses 10-11: "So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. And the days that David reigned over Israel *were* forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem."
- a. Following this instruction, after an unspecified interval of time, David died. His death is depicted as sleeping with his fathers.
 - 1) "His life was a life of remarkable providences, of much piety, and of great public usefulness. In general he lived well, and it is most evident that he died well; and as a king, a general, a poet, a

father, and a friend, he has had few equals, and no superior, from his own time to the present day" (Clarke, p.389).

- 2) 1 Chronicles 29:26-28: "Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. And the time that he reigned over Israel *was* forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three *years* reigned he in Jerusalem. And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead."
 - b. His reign spanned forty years, and encompassed many great events, great tragedies, and wonderful successes. "David *was* thirty years old when he began to reign, *and* he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah" (2 Sam. 5:4-5).
 - c. His body was buried in the "city of David." "Sepulchres were not allowed within the precincts of cities. Jerusalem, however, formed an exception; and yet even there the privilege was reserved chiefly for the royal family (Acts 2:29). Tradition says that the bones of David repose on mount Zion, and the minaret of a small mosque points out this spot which tradition has fixed. In the year 1853 *M.de Saulcy* in his tour examined the tombs of the kings of Judah on the north side of Jerusalem, and amongst other extraordinary discoveries which he claims to have made, is that of a sarcophagus, which he brought to France, depositing it in the gallery of the Louvre, where, with matchless assumption, it is exhibited as the identical sarcophagus of king David!" (JFB, p.296).
 - d. The inspired historian informs us in verse eleven that David reigned over Israel for forty years, with the first seven being from Hebron and the last thirty-three from Jerusalem. As noted in 2 Samuel 5:4-5, he was thirty when he began his reign, making him seventy years of age at death.
8. Verse 12: "Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly."
- a. Solomon had already been anointed king (1 Kings 1:44-49), according to the instructions of David. He became one of the few kings who lived to see his successor anointed.
 - b. This verse states the fact that Solomon's kingdom was established greatly. The passages which ensue give some of the details as to how it was done.

B. 2 Kings 2:13-25: Adonijah's Request Leads to his Death.

1. Verses 13-14: "And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably. He said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on."
 - a. In view of Adonijah's past conduct, Bathsheba was properly apprehensive at first of his intentions when he came to see her. Her question betrays a measure of doubt as to his reason for the visit.
 - b. His response was to assert that he had come peaceably to make a request of her. She invited him to tell her what he wanted.
2. Verses 15-18: "And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and *that* all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for it was his from the LORD. And now I ask one petition of thee, deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on. And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife. And Bathsheba said, Well; I will speak for thee unto the king."
 - a. As David's eldest surviving son, Adonijah should have been king, if the modern policy had been followed. He had tried to usurp the throne, thinking that he would have enough support from Joab, Abiathar, other prominent people, and enough acceptance by the general population. He found out that his father was capable of taking quick, decisive action even while in the sick bed.
 - b. David caused Solomon to be anointed, which took the ground from under Adonijah's attempts to seize the throne. Implying that he was now in agreement that Solomon was rightfully on the throne, Adonijah nevertheless asserts to Bathsheba that the kingdom actually belonged to him. He claimed that the whole nation had turned their faces toward him as the king, but that David had given it to Solomon. This, said Adonijah, was possible only because it was given to his brother by the Lord.
 - c. "...His pious acknowledgment of the Divine will seemed apparently to indicate so entire an acquiescence in the settlement of the succession that, in her womanly simplicity, she perceived not

the deep cunning and evil design that was concealed under his request, and readily undertook to promote his wishes" (JFB, p.297).

- d. Adonijah's request was that she should intercede with Solomon in his behalf that the king give him Abishag as his wife. This was the young virgin who was brought to David, to provide warmth for his bed, and perhaps some health. We were pointedly told in 1 Kings 1:4 David never *knew* her.
 - e. "Moreover it might have been the case that many of the people wished him to be king, and the fact that he had found adherents in Joab, Abiathar, and others, confirms this; but his assertion, that all Israel had set its eyes upon him as the future king, went beyond the bounds of truth. At the same time, he knew how to cover over the dangerous sentiment implied in his words in a very skilful manner by adding the further remark, that the transfer of the kingdom to his brother had come from Jehovah; so that Bathsheba did not detect the artifice, and promised to fulfil his request (vers. 16ff) to intercede with king Solomon for Abishag to be given him to wife" (Keil, pp.31f).
3. Verse 19: "Bathsheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand."
- a. Bathsheba approached Solomon to make the request in behalf of his half-brother Adonijah. The king greeted her warmly, and bowed before her, and sat down on his throne.
 - b. He directed that a seat be set for her on his right hand, a place of honor. "Besides, the dignity of 'king's mother' is a state office, to which certain revenues are attached. The holder has a separate palace or court, as well as possesses great influence in public affairs; and as the dignity is held for life, it sometimes happens, in consequence of deaths, that the person enjoying it may not be related to the reigning sovereign by natural maternity. Bath-sheba had evidently been invested with this honourable office" (JFB, p.297).
4. Verses 20-22: "Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; *I pray thee*, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother: for I will not say thee nay. And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife. And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he *is* mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruah."
- a. She practically gained his agreement to the request even before the request had been made. He had almost promised to give her whatever it was she sought. However, he had not committed himself.
 - b. She boldly made the request that he grant Adonijah the privilege of taking Abishag as his wife. That there was more involved in this particular behest than that which meets the modern eye, is obvious; this is so since the request incensed Solomon.
 - c. "Solomon's indignation was roused; he in a moment penetrated the artful scheme; and from Adonijah's associating the names of Abiathar and Joab, he seems to have suspected or known that those deep schemers had been his prompters....Whether there was a treasonable design concealed under this request or not, the act, according to Eastern notions, was criminal, and of dangerous consequence to the state" (JFB, p.297).
 - d. "Although Abishag had been only David's nurse, in the eyes of the people she passed as his concubine; and among the Israelites, just as with the ancient Persians (Herod. iii. 68), taking possession of the harem of a deceased king was equivalent to an establishment of the claim to the throne (see at 2 Sam. 12:8 and 3:7,8). According to 2 Sam. 16:21, this cannot have been unknown even to Bathsheba; but as Adonijah's wily words had disarmed all suspicion, she may not have thought of this, or may perhaps have thought that Abishag was not to be reckoned as one of David's concubines, because David had not known her..." (Keil, p.32).
 - e. Solomon perceived the real intent of Adonijah, and angrily decried it as an attempt to gain control of the kingdom. Clarke supposed that Solomon wrongfully took exception to the request, and used it as a pretext to execute his brother for his abortive attempt to take the throne. However, in the absence of any evidence to convict the young king of wickedness at this point, we must agree with Keil. Adonijah had already shown his true nature by trying to steal the throne; to this point and beyond, Solomon has only shown good traits.

5. Verses 23-24: "Then king Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore, *as* the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day."
 - a. Solomon vowed that Adonijah would be put to death that very day. There would be no long, drawn-out appeals; he decreed his guilt and ordered his execution immediately.
 - b. The oath that Solomon gave here was made before the Lord. "God do so to me, and more" was a common expression which preceded a solemn vow.
 - c. God, said Solomon, had established him on the throne of David, and had made him a house, just as he had promised to do. Solomon would not, therefore, permit a usurper to rob him of the kingdom by any underhanded, clever subterfuge.
6. Verse 25: "And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died."
 - a. Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was commissioned by the king to execute Adonijah. There was no delay in dispensing the king's judgment; Benaiah went immediately and "fell upon him that he died." "The king was perfectly just in doing this. For since Adonijah, even after his first attempt to seize upon the throne had been forgiven by Solomon, endeavoured to secure his end by fresh machinations, duty to God, who had exalted Solomon to the throne, demanded that the rebel should be punished with all the severity of the law, without regard to blood-relationship" (Keil, p.33).
 - b. Benaiah's record as a fierce, skillful warrior is well-documented. It was he who slew the two lion-like men of Moab, who descended into a pit to slay a lion, and who defeated an armed Egyptian with a staff (2 Sam. 23:20-22).
 - c. "The office of executioner was, among the Hebrews, as in other ancient countries of the East, performed unceremoniously and privately—often without any previous warning—by the captain of the guard, or one of his officers (Matt. 14:10)" (JFB, p.297).

C. 2 Kings 2:26-27: Abiathar is Deposed from the Priesthood.

1. Verse 26: "And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou *art* worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted."
 - a. "The conduct of Solomon towards the high priest Abiathar is a proof how free his actions were from personal revenge or too great severity. Abiathar had also forfeited his life through the part he took in Adonijah's conspiracy; but Solomon simply sent him to Anathoth...to his own fields, *i.e.* to his property there..." (Keil, p.33).
 - b. Solomon told him plainly that he was guilty of death, but that he would not at this time execute him. The reasons given for this leniency are twofold: He had borne the ark of the covenant for David and had suffered alongside David during their many years together. The implication was unmistakably made that if Abiathar committed another offense, he could expect no pardon.
2. Verse 27: "So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh."
 - a. Solomon removed Abiathar from the high priesthood. Verse 35 reports that Zadok was given the position of high priest in Abiathar's place.
 - b. The reason behind this action, in addition to the demotion being a punishment for Abiathar's part in Adonijah's insurrection, was to fulfill the Lord's promise concerning the house of Eli. "Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed *that* thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy *in my* habitation, in all *the wealth* which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever. And the man of thine, *whom* I shall not cut off from mine altar, *shall be* to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house

shall die in the flower of their age" (1 Sam. 2:30-33).

- c. "Thus was the high-priesthood of the house of Eli extinguished, and henceforth this dignity passed through Zadok into the sole possession of the line of Eleazar" (Keil, p.34).

D. 2 Kings 2:28-35: The Execution of Joab.

1. Verse 28: "Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold on the horns of the altar."
 - a. Joab heard of the foregoing events. He had not partaken of Absalom's rebellion, but he was involved in Adonijah's attempt to steal the throne from Solomon. But his involvement with Adonijah was not the cause of his execution; rather, he was punished on account of his murder of Abner and Amasa.
 - b. Knowing his own guilt, and now seeing that Solomon was the son of his father, that he was capable of taking definite and ruthless action against his enemies, Joab fled to the tabernacle, and took hold of the horns of the altar. This was permitted only in the case of an accidental death. "And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver *him* into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee. But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die" (Ex. 21:13-14).
 - c. "It is true that, according to Ex. 21:13,14, the altar could afford no protection to a man who had committed two murders. But he probably thought no more of these crimes, which had been committed a long time before, but simply of his participation in Adonijah's usurpation; and he might very well hope that religious awe would keep Solomon from putting him to death in a holy place for such a crime as that. And it is very evident that this hope was not altogether a visionary one, from the fact that, according to ver. 30, when Joab refused to leave the altar at the summons addressed to him in the name of the king, Benaiah did not give him the death-blow at once, but informed Solomon of the fact and received his further commands" (Keil, p.35).
 - d. He entertained some hope that Solomon would be loathe to shed the blood, especially of a man accused of crimes, on the holy altar.
2. Verses 29-30: "And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and, behold, *he is* by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him. And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me."
 - a. Solomon sent Benaiah to the tabernacle to execute Joab. He found his victim there, clinging to the horns of the altar. He issued the order that the king had commanded him to come forth, but Joab declined, saying that he would die where he stood.
 - b. "The altars were so sacred among all the people, that, in general, even the vilest wretch found safety, if he once reached the altar. This led to many abuses, and the perversion of public justice; and at last it became a maxim that the guilty should be punished, should they even have taken refuge at the altars. God decreed that the presumptuous murderer who had taken refuge at the altar should be dragged thence, and put to death; see Exod. 21:14. The heathens had the same kind of ordinance..." (Clarke, p.391).
 - c. Benaiah was unsure what he ought to do, so he returned to the king for further instructions. He would find that his orders had not changed.
3. Verses 31-33: "And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father. And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing *thereof, to wit*, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD."
 - a. Solomon told Benaiah to do as Joab had requested: slay him where he stood, even though he still held to the horns of the altar. He was to be slain and his body was to be buried, and thus to remove

the blood of his victims from the house of the king and that of David.

- b. His crimes dictated that he should suffer this penalty. He had slain two men more righteous than himself. David had not known ahead of time that Joab was planning to kill Abner and Amasa.
 - c. The blood of his victims would be brought upon Joab, where it belonged. The ancient principle God had given to Noah, after the flood ended, was that murderers were to be punished according to their crime. "But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:4-6).
4. Verse 34: "So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness."
- a. Benaiah went to the tabernacle, and slew Joab; Joab's body was then buried at his own house which was situated in the wilderness, evidently somewhere in the rural area of Judah.
 - b. "According to the terms of the statute (Exod. 21:14), and the practice in similar cases (2 Ki. 11:15), the criminal was to be dragged from the altar and slain elsewhere. But the truth is, that the sanctity of the altar was violated as much by the violence used in forcing the criminal from the place as in shedding his blood there: the express command of God authorized the former, and therefore by implication permitted the latter" (JFB, p.298).
 - c. Later, Athaliah was taken and executed away from the holy premises: "And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard *and* of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD. And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner *was*, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, Treason. But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges: and him that followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD" (2 Kings 11:13-15).
5. Verse 35: "And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar."
- a. Until this time, Joab had retained his position as general of the Israelite army. Solomon now elevated Benaiah to this office, which he was well-qualified to fill. Zadok was given the position as high priest, to fill the place left vacant by the exile of Abiathar.
 - b. The new king has shown that he was well able to serve on the throne. His decisiveness and wisdom give evidence that he took to heart the charge given him by his father earlier in the chapter. He had been strong and had shown himself to be a man.

E. 2 Kings 2:36-46: The End of Shimei.

1. Verses 36-37: "And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Build thee an house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither. For it shall be, *that* on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: thy blood shall be upon thine own head."
 - a. There was yet another tough problem for Solomon to address: What shall be done with Shimei. David had told him that he must use wisdom in deciding his fate.
 - b. The young king decided upon a simple but effective plan. He called Shimei into his presence, and told him to build a house in Jerusalem. He would be free to live there, and could go anywhere in the city he wished, but if he crossed over the brook Kidron, he would forfeit his life. In that case, his death would be his own responsibility.
2. Verses 38-40: "And Shimei said unto the king, The saying *is* good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days. And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto Achish son of Maachah king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants *be* in Gath. And Shimei arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants: and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath."
 - a. Shimei agreed to the plan, and faithfully adhered to the restrictions for many days; but after three

years, two of his servants ran away, and took refuge with Achish, the king of the Philistine city of Gath. The memory can fade in three years; the penalty threatened had doubtless lost some of its terror in his mind.

- b. Shimei learned of their whereabouts, and saddled an ass to go bring them back. He was successful in retrieving his servants.
3. Verses 41-42: "And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again. And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The word *that* I have heard *is* good."
 - a. Solomon evidently had a good intelligence network. He quickly learned of Shimei's trip to Gath, and summoned him into the royal presence.
 - b. The king reminded Shimei of the conditional parole he had been granted, and was told of the king's knowledge that he had violated those conditions. He had agreed to abide by the conditions, but had violated them, therefore the penalty was to be imposed.
 4. Verses 43-46: "Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the LORD, and the commandment that I have charged thee with? The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head; And king Solomon *shall be* blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever. So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon."
 - a. Solomon called to Shimei's attention that he had violated the oath he had taken, and had disobeyed the command the king had given him. He further reminded him of the wickedness of which he had been guilty, especially the cursing he had directed toward David, God's anointed.
 - b. The penalty of death was ordered. Shimei's life had twice been spared by the mercy of David; once when he committed the offense, and another when he later asked for the king's pardon. Abishai was ready to execute him on both occasions.
 - c. Instead of David and his lineage being cursed, according to the evil words of Shimei, Solomon said that blessings would be given.
 - d. The events that are related in this chapter give some of the means that were used in establishing the reign of Solomon. Without the strong, wise actions taken by the king, his reign would not have been so long or as successful.

1 KINGS 3

A. 1 Kings 3:1-4: Worship During the Early Years of Solomon's Reign.

1. Verse 1: "And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about."
 - a. No one, not even a king, can shun God's laws with impunity. We must all reap what we sow. This was as true with Solomon as with anyone else. This young king made a treaty with his powerful pagan neighbors, which included a marriage with the Egyptian Pharaoh's daughter. God had earlier decreed that such marriages were to be avoided. The following passages were given in reference to Israel's dealings with the Canaanite idolaters.
 - 1) Exodus 34:12-16: "Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and *one* call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 7:3-4: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly."
 - b. However, women captured in war from foreign enemies could be married by Israelite men, with certain provisions. "When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive, And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife; Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails; And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife. And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her" (Deut. 21:10-14).
 - c. This marriage arrangement with the Egyptian king shows the high respect in which Israel was held by their former taskmasters. In view of the fact that verse three speaks of the love Solomon had for the Lord, it appears that this arrangement with the Egyptian princess was not a violation of God's law.
 - d. "This Pharaoh of Egypt is supposed...to have been *Psusennes*, the last king of the twenty-first (Tanitic) dynasty, who reigned thirty-five years; since the first king of the twenty-second (Bubastic) dynasty, *Sesonchis* or *Sheshonk*, was certainly the Shishak who conquered Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (ch. 14:25,26)" (Keil, p.38).
 - e. "Into the city of David: *i.e.* not into the palace in which his father had dwelt...but into a house in the city of David or Jerusalem, from which he brought her up into the house appointed for her after the building of his own palace was finished (ch. 9:24). The building of the house of Jehovah is mentioned as well, because the sacred tent for the ark of the covenant was set up in the palace of David until the temple was finished..." (Keil, p.39).
 - f. In this big building project, Solomon undertook to strengthen, and perhaps extend, the walls of Jerusalem. "...Solomon built Millo, *and* repaired the breaches of the city of David his father" (1 Kings 11:27).
2. Verse 2: "Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the LORD, until those days."
 - a. At this point in Israelite history, the people were obliged to worship in high places, since the temple had not yet been constructed and the tabernacle was bereft of the ark of the covenant. This had been

- the situation for many years, since the time when the ark was captured by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4).
- b. The ark had resided at Kirjathjearim for many years (1 Sam. 7:1-2), until David brought it into the city of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6). Meanwhile, the tabernacle was situated at Shiloh and later at Gibeon.
 - c. The high places were locations situated at higher elevations than the surrounding area. On these high locations, altars were constructed on which sacrifices were made to the Lord. Later, the term "high places" became synonymous with idolatry.
 - d. High places "had been used by the patriarchs, and had become so universal among the heathen that they were almost identified with idolatry. They were prohibited in the law (Lev. 17:3,4; Deut. 12:13,14; Jer. 7:31; Ezek. 6:3,4; Hos. 10:8). But so long as the tabernacle was migratory, and the means for the national worship were merely provisional, the worship on those high places was tolerated; and hence, as accounting for their continuance, it is expressly stated (v.2), that God had not yet chosen a permanent and exclusive place for his worship" (JFB, pp.299f).
3. Verses 3-4: "And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that *was* the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar."
- a. We are expressly told that Solomon loved the Lord and walked in harmony with the statutes of his father David. To walk in David's statutes is to follow the law of God, which David instructed his son to obey. "And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself" (1 Kings 2:3).
 - b. "Even Solomon, although he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David...sacrificed and burnt incense upon high places. Before the building of the temple, more especially since the tabernacle had lost its significance as the central place of the gracious presence of God among His people, through the removal of the ark of the covenant, the worship of the high places was unavoidable..." (Keil, p.40).
 - c. Solomon went to Gibeon and offered a sacrifice which included a thousand burnt offerings. Gibeon was the place where the tabernacle was located. Perhaps the original altar was still present there, but the ark of the covenant was now at Jerusalem.

B. 1 Kings 3:5-15: God Speaks to Solomon in a Dream.

1. Verse 5: "In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee."
 - a. While Solomon was at Gibeon in connection with the great sacrifice he made there, God appeared to him in a dream by night. This was not an ordinary dream; this was a miraculous experience.
 - b. In the dream, God asked Solomon what he would like to receive from the Lord. The secrets of a man's heart may sometimes be revealed by the requests he makes. God offered to give Solomon the great desire of his heart, which would reveal the inner workings of the young man's mind.
2. Verse 6: "And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day."
 - a. Solomon began his response to the Lord's offer by stating that David had been mercifully blessed by the benevolent God of Israel, and that David had walked before the Lord in truth, righteousness, and uprightness of heart. David was not a perfect servant of God, but he did much better than most. He had followed God's truth, had been obedient to his will, and had maintained an upright heart. This was true despite the fact that David faltered on occasion. When his sins were known to him, he altered his conduct so as to be more in harmony with God's will.
 - b. Solomon stated further that David had been blessed by having a son to reign in his stead. For an Israelite father to have a son to carry on his name was considered a great blessing. This was doubly true with reference to an Israelite king, for it meant that his dynasty would survive.
3. Verses 7-9: "And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I *am but* a little child: I know not *how* to go out or come in. And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give

therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"

- a. Solomon acknowledged that it was God who had made it possible for him to reign in the place of David. It was not due to any special power he possessed by which this honor was earned.
 - b. However, Solomon saw that he was not sufficiently strong or wise to rule the great nation of Israel. He stated that he did not know how to "go out or come in." Due to his youth and inexperience, coupled with the greatness of God's nation, Solomon did not think he was sufficient to the task.
 - c. Therefore, he requested that God might give to him an understanding heart that he could govern the nation properly. He knew he needed to have the ability to discern between good and bad. Without this wisdom, no one would be capable of governing so great a nation. At the time, Israel was a great power in their area of the globe.
 - d. The nature of the conversation between God and Solomon shows that this was not an ordinary dream; it was a miraculous experience in which both parties were expressing real ideas in real words.
4. Verses 10-12: "And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee."
- a. God was well-pleased by the humble request on the part of the young king. His request for wisdom to rule Israel, instead of asking for personal blessings, showed that he already possessed a high degree of wisdom.
 - b. If Solomon had been self-centered, he would have asked for a long life, great wealth, or death for his enemies. He rather asked for understanding so that he could dispense proper justice and be a better king, which showed that he was more interested in the advancement of the nation than in his own wealth and position.
 - c. God stated that, because of the foregoing, he had given Solomon a wise and understanding heart, so that he would be unique in this degree of wisdom. No one who followed him on the throne was as wise as Solomon; indeed, it is doubtful that any natural man since has measured up to his stature.
5. Verses 13-14: "And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days."
- a. God can give his faithful children more than they expect. Solomon had not asked for the things which might have been requested by a common man. God would give him those things which are considered to be of greatest importance to this world.
 - b. God gave him the wisdom he requested, but added great wealth and honor, so that there would not be another king on earth, during his days, who would be his equal.
 - c. Furthermore, if he continued to be obedient, the Lord would lengthen his days. He did not receive this last promise for he did not meet the conditions. He reigned for forty years, but he was a young man when he ascended the throne. He likely was not even seventy years of age when he died.
6. Verse 15: "And Solomon awoke; and, behold, *it was* a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants."
- a. "The vivid impression, the indelible recollection he had of this dream, together with the new and increased energy communicated to his mind, and the flow of worldly prosperity that rushed upon him, gave him assurance that it came by divine inspiration, and originated in the grace of God. The wisdom, however, that was asked and obtained was...not for himself personally, but for his office, such as would qualify him for the administration of justice, the government of a kingdom, and for the attainment of general scientific knowledge" (JFB, pp.300f).
 - b. Many of our common dreams are very vivid and seem real to us. The dream Solomon had was even more so, for it was a communication from God.

C. 1 Kings 3:16-28: Solomon's Wisdom Shown in the Case of the Two Women.

1. Verse 16: "Then came there two women, *that were* harlots, unto the king, and stood before him."
 - a. "As proof that the Lord had bestowed upon Solomon unusual judicial wisdom, there is appended a decision of his in a very difficult case, in which Solomon had shown extraordinary intelligence" (Keil, p.43).
 - b. Many times in the Scriptures, reference is made to decisions being made by the judicial figures at the gates of the city. Solomon likely sat on his judgment seat at such a place. He later constructed a judgment porch for this purpose. "Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, *even* the porch of judgment: and *it was* covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other" (1 Kings 7:7).
 - c. Two harlots, who resided in the same house, came before the king to ask that he legally decide the identity of the real mother of the infant they brought with them.
2. Verses 17-22: "And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king."
 - a. The first woman gave the details of the case: They lived in the same house; the speaker gave birth to a son; three days later the other woman bore a son. During the night, the second woman turned over on her son and killed it; she put her dead son in the place of the living son of the other woman (the speaker). The next morning, the speaker saw what had happened.
 - b. The second woman spoke up to deny the allegations of the first. There was no other person in the house who could give testimony in the case. It was a case of one woman's word against the other's.
3. Verses 23-25: "Then said the king, The one saith, This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living. And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other."
 - a. Stating the essentials of the case, Solomon showed the facts of the case were unable to furnish an inerrant decision. He then ordered that a sword be brought to him. What could have been going through the minds of these women when they heard this request?
 - b. Solomon told his servants to take the sword and cut the surviving child in half, giving one part to each of the women.
4. Verses 26-27: "Then spake the woman whose the living child *was* unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide *it*. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof."
 - a. The real mother was alarmed at this order, and in fear she pleaded with the king not to kill the baby, but to give it to the other woman. The lying woman agreed with the king.
 - b. The reaction of the women told Solomon which was the real mother. The true mother would want to spare the life of her son, even to the extent of allowing the other harlot to claim him as her own. This simple little strategy, based on the love of the mother for her son, was ingenious; it worked to perfection.
 - c. "*Suetonius*, in his life of Emperor Claudius, cap. xv, whom he celebrates for his wonderful sagacity and penetration on some particular occasions, tells us, that this emperor discovered a woman to be the mother of a certain young man, who she refused to acknowledge as her son, by commanding her to marry him, the proofs being doubtful on both sides; for, rather than commit this incest, she confessed the truth....*Ariopharnes*, the king of Thrace, being appointed to decide between three young

men, who each professed to be the son of the deceased king of the Cimmerians, and claimed the crown in consequence, found out the real son by commanding each to shoot an arrow into the body of the dead king: two of them did this without hesitation; the third refused, and was therefore judged by Ariopharnes to be the real son of the deceased" (Clarke, pp.396f).

5. Verse 28: "And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God *was* in him, to do judgment."
 - a. Naturally, the sagacity of Solomon, as demonstrated in such decisions as this case, caused his renown to spread.
 - b. When men learned of such gems of wisdom as this, they were moved to fear him because they perceived the wisdom of God was in him.

1 KINGS 4

A. 1 Kings 4:1-19: Solomon's Cabinet and Other Servants.

1. Verses 1-6: "So king Solomon was king over all Israel. And these *were* the princes which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the priest, Elihoreph and Ahiah, the sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the host: and Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests: And Azariah the son of Nathan *was* over the officers; and Zabud the son of Nathan *was* principal officer, *and* the king's friend: And Ahishar *was* over the household: and Adoniram the son of Abda *was* over the tribute."
 - a. Azariah, the son of Zadok the high priest, "was the *Kohen par excellence*, that is to say, held the first place among the confidential counsellors of the king, so that his dignity was such as befitted the office of an administrator of the kingdom" (Keil, p.44).
 - b. Elihoreph and Ahiah served as scribes. They served as "secretaries of state, who wrote the royal edicts" (JFB, p.302).
 - c. Jehoshaphat was the recorder, whose job it was to keep records of various activities and events of the reign.
 - d. Benaiah was the general of the army.
 - e. Zadok and Abiathar were the high priests; because Abiathar was involved in Adonijah's ill-fated effort to usurp the throne, he was removed from office early in Solomon's reign.
 - f. Azariah was in command of the officers named in verses 7-19.
 - g. Zabud served as principal officer and friend of the king, which may mean that he was "president of the privy council, and Solomon's confidential friend or favourite (cf. 2 Sam. 15:37)" (JFB, p.302).
 - h. Ahishar was "steward or chamberlain of the palace (cf. Isa 22:15), whose duties embraced a supervision of the arrangement and expenditure, including probably that of the royal harem" (JFB, p.302).
 - i. Adoniram (same as Adoram) was over the tribute, a position he also had under David (2 Sam. 20:24).
2. Verses 7-19: "And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man his month in a year made provision. And these *are* their names: The son of Hur, in mount Ephraim: The son of Dekar, in Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Bethshemesh, and Elonbethhanan: The son of Hesed, in Aruboth; to him *pertained* Sochoh, and all the land of Hopher: The son of Abinadab, in all the region of Dor; which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife: Baana the son of Ahilud; to him *pertained* Taanach and Megiddo, and all Bethshean, which *is* by Zartanah beneath Jezreel, from Bethshean to Abelmeholah, *even* unto *the place that is* beyond Jokneam: The son of Geber, in Ramothgilead; to him *pertained* the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which *are* in Gilead; to him *also pertained* the region of Argob, which *is* in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brazen bars: Ahinadab the son of Iddo *had* Mahanaim: Ahimaaz *was* in Naphtali; he also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife: Baanah the son of Hushai *was* in Asher and in Aloth: Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar: Shimei the son of Elah, in Benjamin: Geber the son of Uri *was* in the country of Gilead, *in* the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; and *he was* the only officer which *was* in the land."
 - a. Solomon appointed twelve men to provide for the needs of his household, with each of the twelve serving for a month during each year. The daily provisions are identified in verses 22-23, demanding an efficient supply system. Obviously, there was a abundant supply of these items during this time of peace and prosperity.
 - b. "The royal revenues were raised according to the ancient, and still in many parts existing, usage of the East, not in money payments, but in the produce of the soil. There would be always a considerable difficulty in the collection and transmission of these tithes (1 Sam. 8:15); and therefore, to facilitate the work, Solomon appointed twelve officers, who had each the charge of a tribe or particular district of country, from which, in monthly rotation, the supplies for the maintenance of the king's household were drawn, having first been deposited in 'store cities' which were erected for their reception (ch. 9:19; 2 Chr. 8; 4:6)" (JFB, p.302).

B. 1 Kings 4:20-28: The Greatness of Solomon's Reign.

1. Verses 20-21: "Judah and Israel *were* many, as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry. And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life."
 - a. God had promised that the descendants of Abraham would be so numerous that they would be likened to the sand on the seashore (Gen. 22:17). They are here described by this figure. The peaceful prosperity of the age is also depicted, for they had the occasion and the means to eat, drink, and be merry.
 - b. All the kingdoms from the Euphrates River to the river of Egypt were under the control of Solomon, and paid tribute to him throughout his reign. David had subjugated all these nations and territory. "David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates" (2 Sam. 8:3). Despite the claims of the millennialists, God caused Israel to possess all of the land he had promised to give them. These modern errorists assert that these promises were never fulfilled, and that only during the mythical reign of Christ on earth will Israel enjoy these promises. This passage proves beyond dispute that the land promises have been fulfilled. This is further confirmed by other plain statements of the inspired text.
 - 1) 2 Chronicles 9:26: "And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt." The Philistines still held territory on the western side of Palestine, adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea.
 - 2) Joshua 23:14: "And, behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof."
2. Verses 22-23: "And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl."
 - a. Other versions offer these renditions:
 - 1) "Now Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour, sixty kors of meal,²³ ten fatted oxen, twenty oxen from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl" (NKJ).
 - 2) "And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, besides harts, and gazelles, and roebucks, and fatted fowl" (ASV).
 - b. Maintaining a great table at which many respected citizens were privileged to eat, the daily consumption of food was very great. The people being fed might also include all of his servants who served him at various localities throughout the kingdom.
 - c. Thirty measures of fine flour and sixty measures of ordinary flour were daily requirements. "The quantity of fine flour used is estimated at 240 bushels; that of meal, or common flour, at 480" (JFB, p.303). Keil accounts the supply of flour to amount to about 28,000 pounds of bread.
 - d. Ten fattened oxen and twenty oxen taken directly from the pasture were part of the daily supply.
 - e. Also included, were one hundred sheep, plus a number of harts, roebucks [gazelles], fallowdeer [roebucks], and fattened fowl.
 - f. "This daily consumption of Solomon's court will not appear too great, if, on the one hand, we bear in mind that not only the numerous attendants upon the king and his harem, but also the royal adjutants and the large number of officers employed about the court, were supplied from the king's table, and that their families had also to be fed, inasmuch as the wages in oriental courts are all paid in kind" (Keil, p.52).
3. Verses 24-25: "For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side the river, from Tiphseh even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to

Beersheba, all the days of Solomon."

- a. Solomon's rule extended from Tiphseh to Azzah. Tiphseh, or "Thapsacus, a large and flourishing town on the west bank of the Euphrates, the name of which was derived from a celebrated ford near it, the lowest on that river" (JFB, p.303). Azzah is another name for Gaza, located in the southern part of Palestine.
 - b. Since all of the other kingdoms and nations in this wide expanse of territory were servants to Israel, the kingdom enjoyed a period of peace. All of the Israelites dwelt in safety and peace, and were in the midst of a prosperous time.
 - c. Every man could sit under his vine and fig tree. "This is a common and beautiful metaphor for peace and security (Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10), founded on the practice, still common in modern Syria, of training these fruit trees up the walls and stairs of houses, so as to make a shady arbour, beneath which the people sit and recreate themselves" (JFB, p.303).
 - 1) Micah 4:4: "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it."
 - 2) Zechariah 3:10: "In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree."
4. Verses 26-28: "And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing. Barley also and straw for the horses and dromedaries brought they unto the place where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge."
- a. God had forbidden the kings of Israel to multiply horses, lest they depend on military might for their defense, rather than trusting the Lord. "But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way" (Deut. 17:16).
 - 1) Prior to Solomon's time, they had no chariots, while many of their enemies were equipped with this powerful military arm.
 - 2) In those cases where Israel was faithful to the Lord, they were uniformly successful in military activities, but after their acquisition of horses and chariots, they were equally unsuccessful.
 - b. We are told that Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots and horsemen. Second Chronicles 9:25 gives the number as four thousand. The common explanation is to attribute a copyist's error in our text, with the correct number being given in the parallel passage. As in other such cases, there may be other interpretations.
 - 1) Our text states that there were forty thousand stalls of horses; 2 Chronicles 9:25 says there were four thousand stalls *for* horses. If ten horses were in each of the four thousand stalls, the number of horses would be forty thousand.
 - 2) Perhaps the writers of the two accounts were giving the figures for different times during the reign of Solomon.
 - c. The men assigned to the cavalry were supplied with food by Solomon. This helps to explain the very large amount of food required on a daily basis (verses 22,23).
 - d. Barley and straw were provided for the animals. "Straw is not used for litter, but barley mixed with chopped straw is the usual fodder of horses" (JFB, p.304).
 - e. The KJV has "dromedaries" and the ASV has "swift steeds" in verse twenty-eight. The margin in the KJV gives "mules, or swift beasts" as the alternate rendering. The term seems to have possible application to swift camels, mules, or horses.
 - 1) The Hebrew word is *rekesh*: "a relay of animals on a post-route (as stored up for that purpose); by impl. a courser:--dromedary, mule, swift beast" (Parson's QuickVerse).
 - 2) "OT:7409: *rekesh* (reh'-kesh); from OT:7408; a relay of animals on a post-route (as stored up for that purpose); by implication, a courser" [(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.).
 - 3) 1 Kings 4:28: "They also brought barley and straw to the proper place, for the horses and steeds,

each man according to his charge" (NKJ).

- 4) "Barley also [the food of horses at the present day in the East, where oats are not grown. (Cf. Hom. II. 5:196)] and straw for the horses and dromedaries [marg. mules or swift beasts. Coursers, or fleet horses of superior breed are intended]" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].

C. 1 Kings 4:29-34: Solomon's Wisdom.

1. Verses 29-31: "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that *is* on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about."
 - a. The historian here depicts the greatness and renown of Solomon's wisdom. In addition to the natural wisdom he possessed, God gave him a supernatural measure of insight.
 - b. His wisdom exceeded that of other famous men of ancient times, with Ethan, Heman, Chalcol, Darda, and the sons of Mahol being specifically named.
 - c. 1 Kings 4:29-31: "And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations" (NKJ).
2. Verses 32-34: "And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is* in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom."
 - a. Solomon's accomplishment also included the writing of three thousand proverbs and one thousand and five songs.
 - b. He also was knowledgeable of many other things. "The meaning is, that his works comprehended a description of all plants, from the greatest to the least. The Spirit of God has seen fit to preserve comparatively few memorials of the fruits of his gigantic mind. The greater part of those here ascribed to him have long since fallen a prey to the ravages of time, or perished in the Babylonian captivity, probably because they were not inspired" (JFB, p.304).
 - c. His great wisdom was widely known. Many people from afar came to hear his wisdom, including kings of other nations.

1 KINGS 5

A. 1 Kings 5:1-6: Solomon Asks Hiram for Help in Building the Temple.

1. Verse 1: "And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David."
 - a. "The friendly relations which the king of Tyre had cultivated with David are here seen renewed with his son and successor, by a message of condolence, as well as of congratulation on his accession to the throne of Israel. The alliance between the two nations had been mutually beneficial by the encouragement of useful traffic. Israel, being agricultural, furnished corn and oil, while the Tyrians, who were a commercial people, gave in exchange their Phoenician manufactures, as well as the produce of foreign lands. A special treaty was now entered into in furtherance of that undertaking which was the great work of Solomon's splendid and peaceful reign" (JFB, pp.304f).
 - b. In ancient times, as in modern, heads of states sent messages of condolence and congratulations to those new kings whose fathers had just died. In view of the friendly relations that had prevailed between David and Hiram, this king of Tyre sent such a message to Solomon.
2. Verses 2-4: "And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the LORD his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, *so that there is* neither adversary nor evil occurrent."
 - a. In his reply to Hiram's message, Solomon reminded him of the many wars which David had fought through most of his reign. The wartime footing of the nation precluded the prospect of building a temple during his tenure on the throne.
 - b. We are also told that God forbade his building the temple on account of his warring nature. "But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou *hast been* a man of war, and hast shed blood" (1 Chron. 28:3).
 - c. We are further told that God intended for Solomon to follow David on the throne of Israel, and that he would build the temple. "And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him *to be* my son, and I will be his father" (1 Chron. 28:6).
 - d. In his message to Hiram, Solomon noted that God had given him peace on every hand; he will state in the next verse that he now had the opportunity and the means to construct the temple for the Lord.
3. Verses 5-6: "And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name. Now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that *there is* not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians."
 - a. Solomon sent word to Hiram that he now proposed to build the temple, which the Lord had said he should erect. "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13).
 - b. Having given the background, Solomon next requested that Hiram cut cedar trees in Lebanon to be used in constructing the temple. He confessed that there were no workers among the Israelites with the skill to "hew timber like unto the Sidonians." Tyre and Sidon were twin cities of Phoenicia. "The expression *Sidonians* stands for Phoenicians generally..." (Keil, p.59).
 - c. "Nowhere else could Solomon have procured materials for the woodwork of his contemplated building. The forests of Lebanon, adjoining the sea in Solomon's time, belonged to the Phoenicians, and the timber being a lucrative branch of their exports, immense numbers of workmen were constantly employed in the felling of trees, as well as the transportation and preparation of the wood" (JFB, p.304).
 - d. The cedars of Lebanon are described as: "A tree grown especially in Lebanon and valued as building material (probably *Cedrus libani*). Cedar played a still-unknown role in the purification rites of Israel

(Lev. 14:4; Num. 19:6). Kings used cedar for royal buildings (2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Kings 5:6; 6:9-7:12). Cedar signified royal power and wealth (1 Kings 10:27). Thus the cedar symbolized growth and strength (Ps. 92:12; compare Ezek. 17). Still, the majestic cedars could not stand before God's powerful presence (Ps. 29:5). The cedars owed their existence to God, who had planted them (Ps. 104:16)" (Holman Bible Dictionary).

- e. "The Cedrus libani still survives in the mountains of Syria and flourishes in much greater numbers in the Taurus mountains. 'There are groves of cedars above el-Ma'acir, Baruk, 'Ain Zehaltah, Hadith, Beshherri, and Sir' (Post, Flora, 751). Of these the grove at Beshherri is of world-wide renown. It consists of a group of about 400 trees, among them some magnificent old patriarchs, which lies on the bare slopes of the Lebanon some 6,000 ft. above the sea. Doubtless they are survivors of a forest which here once covered the mountain slopes for miles. The half a dozen highest specimens reach a height of between 70 and 80 ft., and have trunks of a circumference of 40 ft. or more. It is impossible to estimate with any certainty their age, but they may be as much as 800, or even 1,000, years old. Though magnificent, these are by no means the largest of their kind. Some of the cedars of Amanus are quite 100 ft. high and the Himalayan cedar, Cedrus deodara, a variety of Cedrus libani, reaches a height of 150 ft. The impressiveness of the cedar lies, however, not so much in its height and massive trunk, as in the wonderful lateral spread of its branches, which often exceeds its height. The branches grow out horizontally in successive tiers, each horizontal plane presenting, when looked at from above, the appearance of a green sward. The leaves are about an inch long, arranged in clusters; at first they are bright green, but they change with age to a deeper tint with a glaucous hue; the foliage is evergreen, the successive annual growths of leaves each lasting two years. The cones, 4 to 6 inches long, are oval or oblong-ovate, with a depression at times at the apex; they require two years to reach maturity and then, unlike other conifers, they remain attached to the tree, dropping out their scales bearing the seeds. The wood of the cedar, specially grown under the conditions of its natural habitat, is hard, close grained, and takes a high polish. It is full of resin (Ps 92:14) which preserves it from rot and from worms. Cedar oil, a kind of turpentine extracted from the wood, was used in ancient times as a preservative for parchments and garments" [International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1996 by BibleSoft].

B. 1 Kings 5:7-12: Hiram Gladly Agrees to Help Solomon.

1. Verse 7: "And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed *be* the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people."
 - a. King Hiram rejoiced greatly when he received the communication from Solomon. He expressed his happiness that God had raised up such a wise son unto David.
 - b. "This language is no decisive evidence that Hiram was a worshipper of the true God, as he might use it only on the polytheistic principle of acknowledging Jehovah as the God of the Hebrews....At the same time, it must be mentioned that they were accustomed, doubtless from a spirit of religion, to join the name of God to their own, conformably to the genius of the Hebrews" (JFB, p.305).
 - c. Hiram's words in a parallel passage speaks in greater detail about God. "Then Hiram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them. Hiram said moreover, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding, that might build an house for the LORD, and an house for his kingdom" (2 Chron. 2:11-12)."
 - d. "This verse [1 Chron. 2:11] and the following are also testimony to the indirect influences on surrounding nations of the knowledge of the one true Creator—God and Ruler—God, that was domiciled by special revelation and oracle (Rom 3:2) with Israel. Where nations near were bitter foes, they often feared Israel's God, whereas now they were friends they could summon to their lips the highest of the outbursts of praise, not to say of adoration. The very noteworthy sympathy of Hiram with Israel may have owed something to his personal predilection for David (1 Kings 5:1). And this again is convincing testimony to the worth and usefulness of individual character which here influenced the destiny of two whole nations" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright

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- e. "It must have been a matter of great importance to the king of Tyre to remain on good terms with Israel, because the land of Israel was a granary for the Phoenicians, and friendship with such a neighbour would necessarily tend greatly to promote the interests of the Phoenician commerce" (Keil, p.60).
2. Verses 8-9: "And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: *and* I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring *them* down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive *them*: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household."
 - a. An explicit agreement was made. Hiram pledged to have the timber cut and conveyed to the sea; it would be floated down the coast to the place Solomon would specify. In return, Solomon would provide food for Hiram's people. Second Chronicles 2:11 shows that the contract was drawn up in writing.
 - b. The logs could have been taken to the sea coast by means of streams, or perhaps beasts of burden were used. Jamieson speaks of Ptolemy using a thousand beasts too carry ship-building wood from Lebanon to the sea.
 - c. "As the river Adonis was in the vicinity of the forest of Lebanon, and emptied itself into the Mediterranean sea, near Biblos, Hiram could transport the timber all squared, and not only cut to scantling, but cut so as to occupy the place it was intended for in the building, without any further need of axe or saw. It might be readily sent down the coast on rafts and landed at Joppa, or Jamnia, just opposite to Jerusalem, at the distance of about twenty-five miles. See 2 Chron 2:16. The carriage could not be great as the timber was all fitted for the building where it was hewn down. The materials had only to be put together when they arrived at Jerusalem" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Biblesoft].
 - d. 1 Kings 6:7: "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor ax *nor* any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building."
3. Verses 10-11: "So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees *according to* all his desire. And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat *for* food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year."
 - a. Hiram provided cedar and fir trees, according to his needs. Annually, Solomon provided twenty thousand measures of wheat and twenty measures of pure oil.
 - b. More details are given concerning the transaction in 2 Chronicles 2:8-10: "Send me also cedar trees, fir trees, and algum trees, out of Lebanon: for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and, behold, my servants *shall be* with thy servants, Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build *shall be* wonderful great. And, behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil."
 - c. We are also told in the parallel account that Solomon asked for a "cunning" man to do the engraving work. "Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that *are* with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my father did provide....And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my father's, The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father" (2 Chron. 2:7,13-14).
4. Verse 12: "And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together."
 - a. "The remark that 'the Lord gave Solomon wisdom' refers not merely to the treaty which Solomon

made with Hiram, through which he obtained materials and skilled workmen for the erection of the house of God (Thenius), but also to the wise use which he made of the capacities of his own subjects for the work" (Keil, p.61).

- b. Solomon's wisdom exceeded that of other natural men. "Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee" (1 Kings 3:12).

C. 1 Kings 5:13-18: Solomon's Workers.

1. Verses 13-14: "And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, *and* two months at home: and Adoniram *was* over the levy."
 - a. There was a need for many workers in the huge project of building the temple. Solomon gathered a group of thirty thousand workers to be sent to Lebanon. These men spent one month working in Lebanon, and two months back home.
 - b. "These 30,000 Israelitish labourers must be distinguished from the remnants of the Canaanites who were made into tribute slaves (ver. 15 and ch. 9:29). The latter are called...tribute-slaves, in ch. 9:21 as in Josh. 16:10. That the Israelites were not to render the service of bondsmen is evident from the fact, that they were only rendered tribute for four months of the year, and were at home for eight months..." (Keil, p.62).
2. Verses 15-16: "And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains; Beside the chief of Solomon's officers which *were* over the work, three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work."
 - a. There were seventy thousand workers assigned to bare burdens, and eighty thousand others who worked in the mountains.
 - b. Apparently, these laborers were from among the remnants of the people of Canaan. "*And* all the people *that were* left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel, Their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen. These *were* the chief of the officers that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work" (1 Kings 9:20-23).
 - c. In addition to the men numbered above, the historian states that three thousand and three hundred overseers were in charge of the various activities. Noting some apparent differences in the numbers given in the two accounts, Keil observes that the "sum-total of the overseers is the same in both accounts (3300+550=3850 in the books of the Kings, and 3600+250=3850 in the Chronicles)...[these differences result] from a different method of classification, namely, from the fact that in the Chronicles the Canaanitish overseers are distinguished from the Israelitish (viz. 3600 Canaanites and 250 Israelites), whereas in the books of Kings the *inferiores et superiores proefecti* are distinguished. Consequently Solomon had 3300 inferior overseers and 550 superior (or superintendents), of whom 250 were selected from the Israelites and 300 from the Canaanites. In 2 Chron. 2:16,17, it is expressly stated that the 3600 were taken from...the Canaanites who were left in the land of Israel" (Keil, pp.63f).
3. Verses 17-18: "And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, *and* hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew *them*, and the stonesquarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house."
 - a. The stones were large and costly; much effort, time, and expense were required in cutting them from the quarry and transporting them to the building site. The number of workers and the time involved in the project point out the immensity of the endeavor. The time of the construction covered seven years (1 Kings 6:38).
 - b. The word *stonesquarers* is given the alternate rendering of "the Giblites" in the margin. "And the land of the Giblites, and all Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baalgad under mount Hermon unto the

entering into Hamath" (Josh. 13:5).

- c. "These great bevelled or grooved stones, measuring some twenty, others thirty feet in length, and from five to six feet in breadth, are still seen in the substructures about the ancient site of the temple; and in the judgment of the most competent observers, were those originally employed 'to lay the foundation of the house'" (JFB, p.306).
- d. "Archaeological discoveries repeatedly demonstrate harmony with Bible claims and, in accord with Hiram's involvement in the temple construction, much evidence has been found of Phoenician handiwork in Jerusalem. The Book of books sees no end to attacks upon its content, but infidels consistently fail to produce the evidence, archaeological or otherwise, which proves (not merely asserts) a discrepancy" (Berard, ADL, p.66).

1 KINGS 6

A. 1 Kings 6:1-10: Solomon's Temple.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD."
 - a. In the chart at the end of this chapter, we have figured Solomon's reign to have spanned the years of 974 to 934 B.C. This gives the date for the beginning of the temple as 970 B.C.
 - b. Four hundred and eighty years earlier, Israel had left their bondage in Egypt. This would be 1450 B.C. Forty years later, they entered Canaan.
 - c. The beginning of the temple occurred during the month of *Zif*. "This answers to a part of our April and May; and was the second month of the sacred year, but the eighth month of the civil year. Before the time of Solomon, the Jews do not appear to have had any names for their months, but mentioned them in the order of their consecutive occurrences, first month, second month, third month, &c" (Clarke, pp.402f).
2. Verses 2-4: "And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof *was* threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty *cubits*, and the height thereof thirty cubits. And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits *was* the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; *and* ten cubits *was* the breadth thereof before the house. And for the house he made windows of narrow lights."
 - a. The American Standard and New King James Versions give the following renditions:
 - 1) 1 Kings 6:2-4: "And the house which king Solomon built for Jehovah, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits. And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house. And for the house he made windows of fixed latticework" (ASV).
 - 2) 1 Kings 6:2-4: "Now the house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length *was* sixty cubits, its width twenty, and its height thirty cubits. The vestibule in front of the sanctuary of the house *was* twenty cubits long across the width of the house, *and* its width *extended* ten cubits from the front of the house. And he made for the house windows with beveled frames" (NKJ).
 - b. The dimensions of the temple are given as 60 cubits in length, by 20 cubits in width, by 30 cubits in height. Allowing eighteen inches per cubit, the measurements are 90 feet long, by 30 feet wide, by 45 feet tall. This part of the temple complex was the temple itself, which was comprised of the holy place and most holy place.
 - c. There was no need for the sanctuary itself to be large in size for it was not intended to be a gathering place for the people, but was the location where the special services of the priesthood were conducted.
 - d. The porch (portico; vestibule) extended out in front of the sanctuary. "The design of the porch, which was four times the height of the temple, was chiefly to serve as an ornament to the edifice. The view from its elevated top is said to have been very extensive—to the Mediterranean on one side, and to the Dead Sea on another, up the course of the Jordan, and over Arabia" (JFB, p.307).
 - e. Narrow windows (apertures) secured by bars or lattice-work were provided in the temple. "They were necessary, partly to let out the vapour of the lamps, the smoke of the frankincense, and partly to give light" (JFB, p.307). The LXX indicates that these windows were small on the outside and wider on the inside.
3. Verses 5-6: "And against the wall of the house he built chambers round about, *against* the walls of the house round about, *both* of the temple and of the oracle: and he made chambers round about: The nethermost chamber *was* five cubits broad, and the middle *was* six cubits broad, and the third *was* seven cubits broad: for without *in the wall* of the house he made narrowed rests round about, that *the beams* should not be fastened in the walls of the house."
 - a. The American Standard and New King James Versions give the following renditions:

- 1) 1 Kings 6:5-6: "And against the wall of the house he built stories round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of the oracle; and he made side-chambers round about. The nethermost story was five cubits broad, and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was seven cubits broad; for on the outside he made offsets *in the wall* of the house round about, that *the beams* should not have hold in the walls of the house" (ASV).
- 2) 1 Kings 6:5-6: "Against the wall of the temple he built chambers all around, *against* the walls of the temple, all around the sanctuary and the inner sanctuary. Thus he made side chambers all around it. The lowest chamber *was* five cubits wide, the middle *was* six cubits wide, and the third *was* seven cubits wide; for he made narrow ledges around the outside of the temple, so that *the support beams* would not be fastened into the walls of the temple" (NKJ).
 - b. "The number of these chambers is not stated. Ezekiel (ch. 41:6) in his visionary temple places thirty; and the Jewish writers say this was the number in Solomon's temple. On three sides there were chambers—*i.e.*, corridors or galleries, in three storeys, each storey wider than the one beneath it, as the walls were narrowed or made thinner as they ascended, by a rebate being made, on which the beams of the side floor rested, without penetrating the walls....These chambers were approached from the right-hand side, in the interior of the under story, by a winding staircase of stone, which led to the middle and upper storeys" (JFB, p.307).
 - c. "The meaning is that rebates were attached against the temple wall, at the point where the lower beams of the different side stories were to be placed, so that the heads of these beams rested upon the rebates and were not inserted in the actual wall of the temple-house. These rebates are called...reductions or contractions of the thickness of the wall. We may assume that there were four such rebates: three for the three floors of the side stories, and one for the roof" (Keil, p.71).
 - d. The chambers were possibly used as living quarters for priests; likely also, vessels and supplies used in the temple services were stored there.
 - e. The "oracle" was the most holy place; the place where God met with the High Priest during the annual atonement sacrifice. "The very fact of its being then first mentioned under the name 'oracle' implies that supernatural responses still continued to be given; though, in consequence of the institution of the prophetic order which had recently taken place, there were in all probability employed only on extraordinary emergencies, such as the death or absence of any of these accredited messengers of God, on which occasions it was found necessary to consult his will... (JFB, p.307).
4. Verse 7: "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor ax *nor* any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building."
 - a. The basic material of the temple was stone, stone which was cut and shaped at the quarry, so that no tool was heard at the building site. This bespeaks both of the skill of the stone masons and the reverence of the king for Jehovah. The relative quietness at the temple location reminds one of the statement of Habakkuk 2:20: "But the LORD *is* in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him."
 - b. "A subterranean quarry has been very recently discovered near Jerusalem, where the temple stones are supposed to have been hewn. There is unequivocal evidence to be found in this quarry that the stones were dressed there, for there are blocks exactly similar in size, as well as in the nature of the stone, to the ancient remains. Thence probably they would be moved on rollers down the Tyropean valley to the very side of the temple. The discovery of the great quarry under Bezetha has shown that these immense stones were excavated, hewn, and fully prepared on the spot, whence they were conveyed on trucks or on rollers down the gently-inclined plane to the site chosen for the temple" (JFB, p.307).
 - c. McGarvey has additional information regarding this quarry:
 - 1) "After passing out through the Damascus gate [from Jerusalem] you can follow a road which turns square to the left, and pass along the wall to the northwest corner of the city, and thence to the Joppa gate—a better route than to ride through the city; or you can turn abruptly to the right and follow a well-beaten road to the northeast corner of the city. In doing so you ride through a

cut in the Beze'tha hill, with the perpendicular rock on your left containing Jeremiah's Grotto, and the corresponding rock on the right supporting the city wall. An opening in the latter rock, just above the surface of the ground, is the entrance to Barclay's Quarry, commonly called the Cotton Grotto.

- 2) "The entrance is now closed by a wooden door. It is an immense cavern, running under the Beze'tha hill and undermining the houses of the Turkish quarter. It was first discovered in modern times by Dr. Barclay. As he was passing along the road one day his dog, attracted by the scent of some animal which had burrowed in the mouth of the cave, commenced scratching at the spot, when he suddenly dropped in and disappeared. He soon came back, but his master, suspecting that some interesting discovery might be made here, but anticipating interference if he attempted an excavation in the daytime, went out of the city one afternoon with two of his sons, allowed himself to be shut out by the closing of the gates, and then, with lights and spades, effected an entrance and explored the cavern.
 - 3) "He reported is as more than 3000 feet in circumference and 750 long. The author measured from its remote corner by the most direct route to the door, and found the distance 812 feet, but not by an entirely straight line. It runs in a southeastern direction toward the temple mount, but it extends very irregularly in various directions. Its floor, also, is very uneven, and the height of the ceiling varies from 10 to 30 feet. In many places there are mounds of chippings made in quarrying blocks of stone. Piers are left at irregular intervals to support the ceiling. In one place a very large mass of rock has fallen from the ceiling, while other masses seem ready to fall, and our guide cautioned us against passing under them.
 - 4) "On the perpendicular sides are seen in places large stones but partly cut away, and the marks of the chisels are as plainly seen as if the cutting was made but yesterday. In a kind of pit, about 15 feet deep and nearly 100 feet across, with a perpendicular side, Dr. Barclay found the skeleton of a man, who may have fallen there and broken his neck. A feeble spring of impure water, which trickles from above, is found near the remotest part. The rock is a soft, white limestone, such as is found in the walls of many houses in the city, and in some parts of the city wall. I think the conjecture that here the large stones of the temple and its substructions were quarried is erroneous, for the rock is not sufficiently hard and durable for this purpose, and the really ancient stones now visible in the temple wall are of a harder variety of limestone" (*Lands of the Bible*, pp.205f).
- d. A beautiful analogy may be drawn from this verse respecting the spiritual stones which comprise the spiritual temple of Christ, the church. Those men and women who are made part of this spiritual edifice must first be prepared.
- 1) Only those who obey the gospel are fit to become part of the Lord's church.
 - a) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - b) John 8:24: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins."
 - c) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - d) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - e) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
 - f) Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - g) Galatians 3:26-28: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek,

there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

- 2) Only those in the Lord's church who remain faithful unto death are fit to become part of the great heavenly temple, in heaven.
 - a) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - b) 2 Peter 1:5-11: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - c) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - d) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
 - e) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
- 3) Faithful Christians comprise a spiritual temple.
 - a) Ephesians 2:19-22: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."
 - b) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
5. Verses 8-10: "The door for the middle chamber *was* in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle *chamber*, and out of the middle into the third. So he built the house, and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar. And *then* he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house *with* timber of cedar."
 - a. A winding stairs led from the chambers on the lower level up to those on the upper levels. The door would have been on the outside of the edifice, for it is not likely that an exit to the chambers would have been made from either part of the sanctuary.
 - b. Verse nine speaks of the temple itself.
 - 1) "The temple is here distinguished from the wings or chambers attached to it, and its roofing was of cedar wood" (JFB, p.308).
 - 2) "This cedar-work was certainly provided with a strong covering to protect the roof and the building itself against rain; and at the sides it had no doubt a parapet, as in the case of dwelling-houses (Deut. 22:8)" (Keil, p.72).
 - c. Discussing verse ten, Keil remarks: "The height given must also be understood as referring to the height within. Consequently the side buildings had an internal height of 3 X 4 cubits, and reckoning the floorings and the roof of the whole building an external height of 18 or 20 cubits; so that the temple-house, which was thirty cubits high within and about thirty-two without, rose about twelve or fourteen cubits above the side building, and there was plenty of room for the windows in the side

walls" (p.73).

B. 1 Kings 6:11-14: God's Conditional Promise to Bless Israel.

1. Verses 11-12: "And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, *Concerning* this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father."
 - a. A message came from God to Solomon while the temple was being erected. We are not told exactly what means God used in communicating this message, but it was probably through some prophet, such as Nathan.
 - b. The message was another admonition for Solomon to live by the statutes of Jehovah, to execute his judgments, and to keep all his commandments. Faithful obedience to the will of God has always been a requirement on the part of those who would please the Creator.
 - 1) Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man."
 - 2) Matthew 7:21: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."
 - 3) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 4) 1 Peter 4:17: "For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?"
 - 5) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
 - c. If Solomon had heeded this warning, he would have saved himself from a world of trouble, and his nation might have continued to prosper.
 - d. If the king measured up to these demands, then the Lord would fulfill his word which he had given to David. "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13).
2. Verse 13: "And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel."
 - a. "The dwelling of God among the children of Israel refers to those symbols of his presence in the temple which were the visible tokens of his spiritual relation to that people" (JFB, p.308).
 - b. His providential protection and help would be upon Israel if Solomon lived in obedience to God's will. The influence of kings is so great that their manner of life is communicated to the people, to a large extent.
 - c. Although each person is responsible for his own actions, those in positions of great authority and influence bear an awful degree of responsibility. "Be not many *of you* teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment" (Jas. 3:1).
3. Verse 14: "So Solomon built the house, and finished it."
 - a. This verse summarizes the entire construction project. Solomon planned the temple, made all of the necessary arrangements for its construction, and paid for its cost.
 - b. God had denied David the privilege of building the temple, reserving this right to his son Solomon. Every privilege carries with it a certain degree of responsibility.

C. 1 Kings 6:15-36: The Temple Described.

1. Verses 15-18: "And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling: *and* he covered *them* on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir. And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls with boards of cedar: he even built *them* for it within, *even* for the oracle, *even* for the most holy *place*. And the house, that *is*, the temple before it, was forty cubits *long*. And the cedar of the house within *was* carved with knops and open flowers: all *was* cedar; there was no stone seen."
 - a. The American Standard and New King James Versions give the following translations:

- 1) 1 Kings 6:15-18: "And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar: from the floor of the house unto the walls of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the house with boards of fir. And he built twenty cubits on the hinder part of the house with boards of cedar from the floor unto the walls *of the ceiling*: he built *them* for it within, for an oracle, even for the most holy place. And the house, that is, the temple before *the oracle*, was forty cubits *long*. And there was cedar on the house within, carved with knops and open flowers: all was cedar; there was no stone seen" (ASV).
- 2) 1 Kings 6:15-18: "And he built the inside walls of the temple with cedar boards; from the floor of the temple to the ceiling he paneled the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the temple with planks of cypress. Then he built the twenty-cubit room at the rear of the temple, from floor to ceiling, with cedar boards; he built *it* inside as the inner sanctuary, as the Most Holy *Place*. And in front of it the temple sanctuary was forty cubits *long*. The inside of the temple was cedar, carved with ornamental buds and open flowers. All *was* cedar; there was no stone *to be seen*" (NKJ).
 - b. "It is probable that the walls were only wainscoted with cedar wood, the floor paved with cypress planks... (JFB, p.308). But Keil observes: "The whole of the inside of the house was covered with wood, so that nothing was to be seen of the stone wall (ver. 18). On the other hand, the biblical text knows nothing of any covering of the outer walls also with wood, as many have assumed" (Keil, p.75).
 - c. "The measurements here conform in proportion to the pattern of the tabernacle and, like the tabernacle, the most holy place prefigured Heaven itself and the holy place the 'true tabernacle,' the church, the 'greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands' (Heb. 8:2; 9:1-11)" (Berard, ADL, p.68).
2. Verses 19-22: "And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. And the oracle in the forepart *was* twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid it with pure gold; and *so* covered the altar *which was of cedar*. So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he made a partition by the chains of gold before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold. And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also the whole altar that *was* by the oracle he overlaid with gold."
 - a. Verse twenty shows that the most holy place was twenty cubits in length, width, and height—a perfect cube. The building extended above the most holy place another ten cubits, but the inside of the sanctuary was twenty cubits in height. The picture given of heaven in Revelation 21:16 depicts it as being a perfect cube (of course, we understand this to be a figurative description).
 - b. The ark of the covenant was installed in the oracle (the most holy place), the location it had occupied in the tabernacle.
 - c. "The cedar wood was beautifully embellished with figures in relieve, representing clusters of foliage and open flowers, cherubim, and palm trees; and the whole interior was overlaid with gold, so that neither wood nor stone was seen; nothing met the eye but gold, either plain or richly chased" (JFB, p.308).
 - d. Some have tried to use the beauty of the temple as authority for beautiful and expensive church buildings today. The parallel between the temple and the church is not to be found in the physical. The temple was a material edifice, but the church is the saved (faithful Christians). There is no authority here or elsewhere requiring us to erect such "sanctuaries" today.
3. Verses 23-28: "And within the oracle he made two cherubims *of olive tree*, *each* ten cubits high. And five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other *were* ten cubits. And the other cherub *was* ten cubits: both the cherubims *were* of one measure and one size. The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was it* of the other cherub. And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house. And he overlaid the cherubims with gold."

- a. The American Standard and New King James Versions give the following translations:
 - 1) 1 Kings 6:23-28: "And in the oracle he made two cherubim of olive-wood, each ten cubits high. And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other were ten cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubim were of one measure and one form. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub. And he set the cherubim within the inner house; and the wings of the cherubim were stretched forth, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house. And he overlaid the cherubim with gold" (ASV).
 - 2) 1 Kings 6:23-28: "Inside the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim *of* olive wood, *each* ten cubits high. One wing of the cherub *was* five cubits, and the other wing of the cherub five cubits: ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. And the other cherub *was* ten cubits; both cherubim *were* of the same size and shape. The height of one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was* the other cherub. Then he set the cherubim inside the inner room; and they stretched out the wings of the cherubim so that the wing of the one touched *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. And their wings touched each other in the middle of the room. Also he overlaid the cherubim with gold" (NKJ).
 - b. Two cherubim were carved from olive-wood and placed in the most holy place. They were identical in size, and evidently the same in every other way. Each wing was five cubits in length, and each of the figures was ten cubits in height. They were placed side by side, so that their wing tips touched each other, and reached the wall on each side.
 - c. "The figures had a human form, like the golden cherubs upon the ark of the covenant, and stood upright upon their feet (2 Chron. 3:13), with extended wings of five cubits in length, so that one wing of the one reached to one wing of the other in the centre of the room, and the other wing of each reached to the opposite wall, and consequently the four extended wings filled the entire breadth of the Most Holy Place (a breadth of twenty cubits), and the two cherubs stood opposite one another and ten cubits apart. The wings were evidently fastened to the back and placed close to one another upon the shoulder-blades, so that the small space between their starting-points is not taken into consideration in the calculation of their length. The figures were completely overlaid with gold. The ark of the covenant was placed between these cherubs, and under the wings which pointed towards one another. As they were made like those upon the ark, they had evidently the same meaning, and simply served to strengthen the idea which was symbolized in the cherub..." (Keil, p.79).
4. Verses 29-35: "And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, within and without. And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without. And for the entering of the oracle he made doors *of* olive tree: the lintel *and* side posts *were* a fifth part *of the wall*. The two doors also *were of* olive tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm trees. So also made he for the door of the temple posts *of* olive tree, a fourth part *of the wall*. And the two doors *were of* fir tree: the two leaves of the one door *were* folding, and the two leaves of the other door *were* folding. And he carved *thereon* cherubims and palm trees and open flowers: and covered *them* with gold fitted upon the carved work."
 - a. The rendering of the ASV and NKJ helps us see the picture a little better:
 - 1) 1 Kings 6:29-35: "And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and palm-trees and open flowers, within and without. And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without. And for the entrance of the oracle he made doors of olive-wood: the lintel *and* door-posts were a fifth part *of the wall*. So *he made* two doors of olive-wood; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubim and palm-trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread the gold upon the cherubim, and upon the palm-trees. So also made he for the entrance of the temple door-posts of olive-wood, out of a fourth part *of the wall*; and two doors of fir-wood: the two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the

other door were folding. And he carved *thereon* cherubim and palm-trees and open flowers; and he overlaid them with gold fitted upon the graven work" (ASV).

- 2) 1 Kings 6:29-35 "Then he carved all the walls of the temple all around, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*, with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. And the floor of the temple he overlaid with gold, both the inner and outer *sanctuaries*. For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors *of* olive wood; the lintel *and* doorposts *were* one-fifth *of the wall*. The two doors *were of* olive wood; and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid *them* with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees. So for the door of the sanctuary he also made doorposts *of* olive wood, one-fourth *of the wall*. And the two doors *were of* cypress wood; two panels *comprised* one folding door, and two panels *comprised* the other folding door. Then he carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers *on them*, and overlaid *them* with gold applied evenly on the carved work" (NKJ).

- b. "This completes the account of the nature of the covering of wood. In addition to the oval figures and open flowers (ver. 18), there were also figures of cherubim and palm-trees carved in the wooden panels. Nothing is said as to the distribution of these figures. But a comparison with Ezek. 41:18 shows at any rate so much, that the palm-trees alternated with the cherubs, so that there was always one cherub standing between two palm-trees. The gourd-shaped figures and the open flowers probably formed the upper and lower setting of the rows of palms and cherubs, the flowers hanging in the form of garlands above the palms and cherubs, and the rows of gourds arranged in bars constituting the boundary lines both above and below" (Keil, p.80).

- c. "The door of the most holy place was made of solid olive tree, and adorned with figures; that of the holy place was made of cypress wood, the sides being of olive wood....The date palm seems to have had a certain typical significance, for it was profusely represented in the decorations of the temple, on the walls along with the cherubim, and also on the furniture and vessels (cf. v. 35; ch. 7:36)" (JFB, p.309).

5. Verse 36: "And he built the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams."
 - a. This area seems to have been for the priests. "Furthermore he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass" (2 Chron. 4:9).
 - b. "The inner one is called the *upper* (higher) court in Jer. 36:10, from which it follows that it was situated on a higher level than the outer one, which surrounded it on all sides. It was enclosed by a low wall, consisting of three rows of hewn stones, or square stones, laid one upon another, and a row of hewn cedar beams, which were laid horizontally upon the stones, after the analogy of the paneling of the temple walls on the inside, or placed upright so as to form a palisading, in order that the people might be able to see through into the court of the priests. According to 2 Chron. 4:9, the outer court had gates lined with brass, so that it was also surrounded with a high wall. Around it there were chambers and cells (2 Kings 23:11; Jer. 25:4; 36:10) for the priests and Levites, the plans for which had already been made by David (1 Chron. 28:12). The principal gate was the east gate (Ezek. 41:1). Other gates are mentioned in 2 Kings 11:6, 2 Chron. 23:5, Jer. 20:2, 2 Kings 12:10, 2 Chron. 24:8. The size of these courts is not given. At the same time, following the analogy of the tabernacle, and with the reduplication of the rooms of the tabernacle which is adopted in other cases in the temple, we may set down the length of the court of the priests from east to west at 200 cubits, the breadth from south to north at 100 cubits; so that in front of the temple-building on the east there was a space of 100 cubits in length and breadth, or 10,000 square cubits, left free for the altar of burnt-offering and the other vessels, in other words, for the sacrificial worship. The outer or great court will therefore, no doubt, have been at least twice as large, namely, 400 cubits long and 200 cubits broad, *i.e.*, in all, 80,000 square cubits; so that the front space before the court of the priests (on the eastern side) was 150 cubits long from east to west, and 200 cubits broad from south to north, and 50 cubits in breadth or depth still remained for the other three sides" (Keil, pp.83f).

D. 1 Kings 6:37-38: Constructing the Temple Took Seven Years.

1. Verse 37: "In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the LORD laid, in the month Zif."
 - a. The foundation of the temple was laid during the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the month of Zif

(April-May).

- b. Josephus reports that in clearing the site for the temple, Solomon leveled the top of the mountain, and filled up great valleys (*Antiquities*, Book 8, Chapter 3, Section 9, p.176).
2. Verse 38: "And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which *is* the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it."
 - a. "The building was begun in the second month of the fourth year, and completed in the eighth month of the eleventh year of Solomon's reign, comprising a period of seven and a half years, which is reckoned here in round numbers. It was not a very large, but a very splendid building, requiring great care, and ingenuity, and division of labour. The immense number of workmen employed, together with the previous preparation of the materials, serves to account for the short time occupied in the process of building" (JFB, p.309).
 - b. "In comparison with other large buildings of antiquity, and also of modern times, the work was executed in a very short time....Moreover, the period mentioned probably refers to the building of the temple-house and the court of the priests only, and to the general arrangement of the outer court, and does not include the completion of the underground works which were necessary to prepare space required for them, and of which only a portion may have been carried out by Solomon" (Keil, p.84).

A Brief Review of Old Testament Hebrew History

- A. Abraham entered Canaan about 2172 B.C.
1. This date differs from the commonly-accepted view; it is derived from the author's calculations.
 2. After he entered Palestine, he spent the rest of his life in that land, except for a brief and troublesome sojourn in Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20).
 - a. His son Isaac spent his whole life in the land of promise, and like his father before him, he actually possessed only a small parcel of land which was used as a burial place.
 - b. Isaac's son, Jacob, spent most of his life in Canaan. In his old age, Jacob moved to Egypt at the invitation of his son Joseph, after that illustrious young man rose to prominence there.
 - c. Jacob and all of his twelve sons likewise died there; and their descendants were enslaved to the Egyptians.
 3. After four hundred years of bondage, God raised up Moses, and trained him for the great work of delivering the Israelites from their Egyptian taskmasters.
 - a. After a series of harsh measures directed against the idols of Egypt, Pharaoh was forced to permit Israel's departure from the land.
 - b. They soon came to Sinai, where God delivered his Law to Israel through Moses. It contained provisions for governing their civil, societal, religious and spiritual needs.
 - c. Due to sin, the Israelites were forced to remain in the wilderness for forty years, until the rebels had died.
 4. Under the leadership of Joshua, Israel entered into the land of promise, taking it from the ungodly Canaanites.
 - a. For the next 450 years (Acts 13:20), the nation was governed by a series of judges, whom God raised up to meet certain emergencies. God was their king, and the judges were selected by the Lord to carry out his will. "And after that he gave *unto them* judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet" (Acts 13:20).
 - b. But the time eventually came when the people were no longer content to continue under this arrangement. They wanted to imitate the other nations. When God's people try to compete with the world, they always come up a poor second.
 - c. When Israel insisted on a king, God selected the man for the job (1 Sam. 8-10).
- B. For 120 years, Israel existed as a United Kingdom.
1. Saul reigned for forty years.
 2. David succeeded him, and he also reigned for forty years.
 3. At his death, Solomon ruled in David's place, again for forty years.
- C. Then followed the period of the Divided Kingdom: 975-721 B.C.
1. At Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam reigned. He was so unwise that he heeded the counsel of young men, while refusing to listen older and wiser men. His policies were so stringent that a rift occurred in the nation. 1 Kings 12.
 2. The ten northern tribes, plus elements of the tribe of Levi, united under Jeroboam to form the Northern Kingdom, also called *Israel* and *Ephraim*. Jeroboam quickly saw that his throne would be secure only if he could keep his subjects from going to Jerusalem to worship at the temple. Hence, he established idols at Dan and Bethel, with an attendant religious system.
 - a. 1 Kings 12:25-33: "Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before the one, *even* unto Dan. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were

not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that *is* in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense."

- b. The Northern Kingdom went farther and farther into apostasy, rejecting the warnings of the prophets, until they were finally conquered by the Assyrian Empire in 721 B.C.
 - c. They then lost their identity as a separate nation.
3. Meanwhile, the Southern Kingdom, also called *Judah*, existed side-by-side with its idolatrous brothers to the north. It was comprised of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and elements of Levi.
- a. When Israel fell in 721 B.C., the Assyrians also tried to take Jerusalem, but were soundly defeated by the miraculous work of an angel (Isa. 37; 2 Kings 19).
 - b. But over the years, Judah also fell into idolatry and apostasy, and was overcome by the Babylonians in 606 B.C., and many were taken to Babylon: "In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the LORD came *this* upon Judah, to remove *them* out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon" (2 Kings 24:1-4).
 - c. In 597 B.C., more of them were carried into Babylonian bondage: "Jehoiachin *was* eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name *was* Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did *that which was* evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, *even* ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, *those* carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, *even* seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all *that were* strong *and* apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon" (2 Kings 24:8-16).
 - d. The final stroke came in 586 B.C., when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, and all but a remnant of the Hebrews were taken away (2 Kings 24:17—25:30; Jer. 39:1-10).
4. After seventy years of bondage (606-536 B.C.), the Israelites were permitted to begin their return to Palestine (2 Chron. 36:21). They were carried to Babylon in three deportations, and they returned to their own land in three operations.
- a. The first return was under the direction of Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. (2 Chron. 36:14-23; Ezra 1:1-11; 3:1-13; Isa. 44:28; 45:1ff). They had rebuilt the temple by 516 B.C. See Ezra 6:15.
 - b. The second return was led by Ezra in 457 B.C. This *ready scribe* in the Law of Moses (Ezra 7:6) fulfilled the great work of restoring the Law in the lives of the people (Ezra 7:1—10:14).
 - c. The third return was under Nehemiah in 445 B.C. This devout man led in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Book of Nehemiah). With the work of Nehemiah and Malachi, who were contemporaries, the inspired record of Old Testament history came to an end. Four hundred years

later, the inspired New Testament record began.

5. The following passages furnish data which helps establish the time for important events of Old Testament history:
 - a. Genesis 12:4: "So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran."
 - b. Genesis 21:5: "And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."
 - c. Genesis 25:7: "And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years."
 - d. Genesis 25:26: "And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them."
 - e. Genesis 35:28: "And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years."
 - f. Genesis 47:8f: "And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."
 - g. Genesis 47:28: "And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years."
 - h. Genesis 50:26: "So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."
 - i. Genesis 37:2: "These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report."
 - j. Genesis 15:13: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years."
 - k. Exodus 12:40-41: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."
 - l. Galatians 3:17: "And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."
 - m. I Kings 6:1: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD."
 - n. Genesis 41:46: "And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt."
6. Some fact which are show by the above verses:
 - a. Abraham entered Canaan when he was 75 years old.
 - b. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old.
 - c. Isaac was 60 when Jacob and Esau were born.
 - d. Joseph was 17 years old when he got into trouble with his brothers, who sold him into slavery.
 - e. Joseph was 30 years old when he was exalted as Pharaoh's right-hand man.
 - f. Jacob died after living 17 years in Egypt.
 - g. The 7 years of plenty passed (Gen. 41:53-54).
 - h. During the first year of famine, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt (Gen. 42:1-5).
 - i. During the second year of famine, Joseph revealed himself to his brothers (Gen. 44).
 - j. Joseph was 39 or 40 when his father learned he was still alive, and Jacob was 130 when he moved to Egypt.
 - k. Since Joseph was about 40 when Jacob was 130 (Gen. 47:9), Jacob was about 90 when Joseph was born.
 - l. Israel spent 430 years in Egypt: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years,

even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt” (Ex. 12:40-41).

- m. The Exodus took place 480 years before Solomon began to build the temple, during his 4th year.
 - n. Solomon reigned from 974-934 (according to other studies).
 - o. Giving 970 B.C. as the beginning year of the temple's construction, the Exodus occurred in 1450 B.C.
7. The following chart lists some important events and dates in Israelite history [the dates are the author's deductions]:

ABRAHAM BORN	2147 B.C.
ABRAHAM TO CANAAN	2072 B.C.
ISAAC BORN	2047 B.C.
JACOB BORN	1987 B.C.
ABRAHAM DIED	1972 B.C.
JOSEPH BORN	1897 B.C.
JOSEPH ENTERS EGYPT	1880 B.C.
JOSEPH EXALTED	1867 B.C. (AGE 30)
JACOB TO EGYPT	1857 B.C.
JACOB DIED	1840 B.C.
JOSEPH DIED	1787 B.C.
MOSES BORN	1530 B.C.
EXODUS	1450 B.C.
ISRAEL IN EGYPT 430 YEARS	1880-1450 B.C.
WILDERNESS WANDERING	1450 B.C.–1410 B.C.
ENTERED CANAAN	1410 B.C.
JOSHUA & ELDERS	1410-1380 B.C. [?]
JUDGES	1380-1054 B.C.
UNITED KINGDOM Saul David Solomon	120 YEARS: 1054-934 B.C. 1054–1014 B.C. 1014–974 B.C. 974–934 B.C.
TEMPLE BEGAN (1 Kings 6:1)	970 B.C. (480 Years After Exodus)
KINGDOM DIVIDED Israel Judah	934 B.C. 934–721 B.C. 934–586 B.C.
ISRAEL CAPTURED BY ASSYRIA	721 B.C.
NINEVEH CAPTURED BY BABYLON	612 B.C.
BABYLON DEFEATS EGYPT	606 B.C.
JUDAH UNDER BABYLON	606-539 B.C.
CAPTIVITY	70 YEARS: 606-536 B.C.
UNDER PERSIA	539-332 B.C.
1st RETURN	ZERUBBABEL: 636 B.C.
2nd RETURN	EZRA: 457 B.C.
3rd RETURN	NEHEMIAH: 444 B.C.
UNDER GREECE	332-63 B.C.
UNDER ROME	FROM 63 B.C.

A Brief Study of Prophets

A. What is a prophet?

1. The primary meaning of the word *prophet* is "to speak for another." "And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs....And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet" (Exod. 4:17; 7:1).
 - a. The literal meaning is "to boil up like a fountain" (Jer. 20:9). The secondary meaning is "to foretell."
 - b. A prophet of God was one who, having received the message from heaven, spoke for God, by inspiration. The message might relate to the past, or the future, or the present. It could be a message of comfort or warning, or have an instructional theme.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 23:2: "The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:20-21: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
2. The messages of God's prophets were not contrary to the Law, but called people back to the Law: "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee" (Deut. 13:1-5).
 - a. The predictions they gave came to pass: "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:20-22).
 - b. The prophecies that contained threats of punishment were conditional: "Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them. Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good" (Jer. 18:5-11).
3. Old Testament prophets were known by several descriptive names.
 - a. They were *seers* because they were given divine insight into certain matters: "Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer" (1 Sam. 9:9).
 - b. They were *men of God* because they belonged to the God of Heaven.
 - 1) 1 Samuel 9:6: "And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass: now let us go thither; peradventure he can show us our way that we should go."
 - 2) 1 Kings 17:18: "And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art

thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?"

- c. They were *servants of God* because their lives were lived in his service.
 - 1) 1 Kings 18:36: "And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."
 - 2) 1 Chronicles 6:49: "But Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt offering, and on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded."
 - d. They were *messengers of God* since they acted in his behalf by delivering his prescribed messages: "Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?" (Isa. 42:19).
4. There were many false prophets during the Old Testament era.
- a. Counterfeits usually arise where there is the genuine (Deut. 18:20-22; Jer. 28).
 - b. Some of these *prophesied* for political or financial gain.

B. There are two classifications of Old Testament prophets.

- 1. The non-writing prophets included:
 - a. Enoch: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints" (Jude 14).
 - b. Abraham:
 - 1) Genesis 20:7: "Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine."
 - 2) Genesis 20:17: "So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children."
 - c. Miriam: "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances" (Exodus 15:20).
 - d. Moses: [He authored the first five books of the Old Testament, but the material is not of the same type as that written by such prophets as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets]:
 - 1) Deuteronomy 18:15-18: "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 34:10: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face."
 - 3) Hosea 12:13: "And by a prophet the LORD brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved."
 - e. Deborah: "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time" (Judges 4:4).
 - f. The sons of the prophets: "After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy" (1 Sam.10:5).
 - g. Samuel; Elijah; Elisha; Micaiah; and many others.
 - h. David (2 Sam. 23:1-2) and Solomon (Proverbs; Ecclesiastes) were writers of Old Testament literature, but their type of material is not identical to the Major and Minor writing prophets. Samuel was most likely responsible for writing some of the Old Testament books of his age.
- 2. The writing prophets of the Old Testament operated shortly before and after the Assyrian and Babylonian

Exiles. (See Homer Hailey, *The Minor Prophets*, pp.18-24).

- a. Ninth century prophets.
 - 1) Obadiah–845 B.C. [Date uncertain].
 - 2) Joel–830 B.C. [Date uncertain].
 - 3) Jonah–790-750 B.C.
- b. Eighth century prophets (Assyrian Period).
 - 1) Amos–755 B.C. (Operated in the Northern Kingdom).
 - 2) Hosea–750-725 B.C. (Operated in Northern Kingdom).
 - 3) Isaiah–750-700 B.C. (Worked primarily in Jerusalem).
 - 4) Micah–735-700 B.C. (Worked in villages of Southern Kingdom).
- c. Seventh century prophets (Babylonian Period).
 - 1) Jeremiah–626-586 B.C.
 - 2) Zephaniah–630-625 B.C.
 - 3) Nahum–625-612 B.C.
 - 4) Habakkuk–625-605 B.C.
- d. Sixth century prophets (Babylonian Exile Period).
 - 1) Ezekiel–593-570 B.C.
 - 2) Daniel–605-536 B.C.
- e. Sixth and fifth century prophets (Post-exile Period).
 - 1) Haggai–520 B.C.
 - 2) Zechariah–520-518 B.C.
 - 3) Malachi–440 B.C.

1 KINGS 7

A. 1 Kings 7:1-12: Solomon's Own House.

1. Verses 1-5: "But Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house. He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof *was* an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars. And *it was* covered with cedar above upon the beams, that *lay* on forty five pillars, fifteen *in* a row. And *there were* windows *in* three rows, and light *was* against light *in* three ranks. And all the doors and posts *were* square, with the windows: and light *was* against light *in* three ranks."
 - a. Verse one is a summary of the information given in verses two through twelve. Thirteen years were required in the construction of his house, which apparently was erected after the temple. For half of his reign, therefore, major building projects were underway, seven for the temple and thirteen for his own palace.
 - b. "The time occupied in building his palace was nearly double that spent in the erection of the temple, because neither had there been the same previous preparations for it, nor was there the same urgency, as in providing a place of worship, on which the national well-being so much depended. Solomon, who was at this time animated with strong feelings of piety, acted in the spirit of Christ's admonition (Matt. 6:33). On the other hand, the Jews who returned from captivity were reprov'd for building their own habitations before the temple of God (Hagg. 1:4)" (JFB, p.309).
 - c. Cedar from Lebanon was used in constructing his palace. The size of his house is reported to be one hundred cubits (150 feet) in length, fifty cubits (75 feet) in width, and thirty cubits (45 feet) high.
 - d. "As the building was not merely a hall of pillars, but, according to ver. 3, had siderooms (...cf. ch. 6:5) above the pillars, which ran round all four sides of the building, which was 100 cubits long and fifty cubits broad in the inside, and thus surrounded the inner courtyard on all sides. Of course the building could not rest merely upon pillars, but was surrounded on the outside with a strong wall of hewn square stones (ver. 9), so that the hewn beams which were laid upon the pillars had their outer ends build into the wall, and were supported by it, so as to give the whole building the requisite strength" (Keil, pp.89f).
2. Verses 6-8: "And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof *was* fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits: and the porch *was* before them: and the *other* pillars and the thick beam *were* before them. Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, *even* the porch of judgment: and *it was* covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other. And his house where he dwelt *had* another court within the porch, *which* was of the like work. Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken *to wife*, like unto this porch."
 - a. The porch described here was a place designed for conducting public business, especially those of a judicial nature. In ancient times, the gates of a city was the place where the elders or judges heard complaints and passed judgment; this porch was intended to be a more commodious judgment hall.
 - b. "In front was the porch of judgment, which was appropriated to the transaction of public business. On the one side of this great hall was the king's house, and on the other the harem or royal apartments for Pharaoh's daughter (Esth. 2:3,9). This arrangement of the palace accords with the Oriental style of building, according to which a great mansion always consists of three divisions, or separate houses, all connected by doors and passages—the men dwelling at one extremity, the female portion of the family at the other, while public rooms occupy the central part of the building" (JFB, p.310).
3. Verses 9-12: "All these *were of* costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and *so* on the outside toward the great court. And the foundation *was of* costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits. And above *were* costly stones, after the measures of hewed stones, and cedars. And the great court round about *was* with three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar beams, both for the inner court of the house of the LORD, and for the porch of the house."
 - a. "All these (viz. the whole of the buildings described in vers. 2-8) were costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, sawn with the saw within and without (*i.e.* on the inner and outer side

of the halls and buildings, and from the foundation to the corbels, and from without to the great court....And above (the foundation, and therefore the visible walls, were) costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, and cedars....And (as for) the great court, there were round it three rows (*i.e.* it was formed of three rows) of hewn stones and a row of hewn cedar beams, as in the inner court of the house of Jehovah (see at ch. 6:36) and the hall of the house" (Keil, p.95).

- b. "Some have averred that saws for cutting stones were not invented earlier than the fourth century B.C. But this opinion is erroneous, being contradicted by the present passage. It may be noticed that Eastern saws differ from those used by European nations in this remarkable feature, that the point of the teeth is inclined *towards*, not *from* the handle, so that the sawyer makes his impression on the wood, not in thrusting the instrument from him, but in pulling it toward him" (JFB, p.310).

B. 1 Kings 7:13-22: The Brass Pillars and Chapiters.

1. Verses 13-14: "And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He *was* a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work."
 - a. "Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre. He *was* the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, a bronze worker; he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill in working with all kinds of bronze work. So he came to King Solomon and did all his work" (NKJ).
 - b. This Hiram was named after the king of Tyre, but he was the son of a widow; she was from the tribe of Naphtali; his father was a man of Tyre. Hiram was highly skilled in working with brass (bronze). "And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my father's, The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father *was* a man of Tyre, skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father" (2 Chron. 2:13-14).
 - c. "The Tyrians and other inhabitants of the Phoenician coast were the most renowned artists and workers in metal in the ancient world. Here is a specimen of the Semitic style of narration. The historian has previously declared the completion of the temple (ch. 6:9-14,37,38), stating the exact date. Besides, he has given an account of the erection of the royal palace, with the time spent in rearing it. And yet, after these statements, he recurs, in conformity with the Hebrew historiography, to the arrangement made previous to the commencement of the great undertaking for enlisting the services of an eminent Tyrian artizan. The immediate occasion of introducing his name was, that at the passage the historian enters upon a detailed enumeration of the principal articles of furniture he executed for the sacred edifice" (JFB, p.311).
 - d. "In 2 Chr. 2:14 his mother is said to have been of the daughters of Dan. The apparent discrepancy may be reconciled thus—Hiram's mother, though belonging to the tribe of Dan, had been married to a Naphtalite, so that when married afterwards to a Tyrian, she might be described as a widow of the tribe of Naphtali. Or, if she was a native of the city of Dan (Laish), she might be said to be of the daughters of Dan, as born in that place; and of the tribe of Naphtali, as really belonging to it" (JFB, p.311).
2. Verses 15-22: "For he cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece: and a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about. And he made two chapiters *of* molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapter *was* five cubits, and the height of the other chapter *was* five cubits: *And* nets of checker work, and wreaths of chain work, for the chapiters which *were* upon the top of the pillars; seven for the one chapter, and seven for the other chapter. And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one network, to cover the chapiters that *were* upon the top, with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapter. And the chapiters that *were* upon the top of the pillars *were* of lily work in the porch, four cubits. And the chapiters upon the two pillars *had pomegranates* also above, over against the belly which *was* by the network: and the pomegranates *were* two hundred in rows round about upon the other chapter. And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up

the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz. And upon the top of the pillars *was* lily work: so was the work of the pillars finished."

- a. A *chapiter* is the same as a capital, which is the top part of a column. It was an ornamental feature made into the top of a column as an embellishment.
- b. The two pillars "were made of the brass (bronze) which was taken from the king of Zobah (1 Chr. 18:8). In 2 Chr. 3:15 they are said to have been thirty-five cubits high. There, however, their joint lengths are given; whereas here the length of the pillars is given separately" (JFB, p.311). The length is rounded off in the present text from seventeen and a half to eighteen cubits.
- c. "The pillars were hollow, the brass being four finger-breadth's in thickness (Jer. 52:21); and they were cast in the Jordan valley (ver. 46)" (Keil, p.97).
- d. "The two pillars with their ornamental and functional appurtenances were possibly themselves not part of the temple structure, but of notable symbolic significance" (Berard, ADL, p.70).
- e. The names Jachin ["He shall establish"] and Boaz ["In it is strength"] were given to the pillars. "These names were symbolical and indicated the strength and stability, not so much of the material temple, for they were destroyed along with it (Jer. 52:17), as of the spiritual kingdom of God, which was embodied in the temple (JFB, p.312).

C. 1 Kings 7:23-26: The Molten Sea.

1. Verse 23: "And he made a molten sea, ten cubits from the one brim to the other: *it was* round all about, and his height *was* five cubits: and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about."
 - a. "The sea, so called because of its colossal size, was the temple counterpart of the brass laver which was placed between the tabernacle and the altar for the priests' washing prior to entrance into the holy place (Exo. 30:18-21)" (Berard, ADL, p.70). The laver represents baptism under the gospel: baptism stands between the alien and entrance into the body of Christ (the church). Just as no priest was permitted to enter the tabernacle or temple without washing at the laver, so no one is allowed to enter the church without baptism.
 - 1) Exodus 30:18-21: "Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their generations."
 - 2) Acts 2:36-47: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers....And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - b. The sea was a basin or urn of immense size and weight. It stood at a height of five cubits and was ten cubits in width; it measured thirty cubits in circumference. Jamieson estimated its weight to be about twenty-five tons, and would hold about sixteen thousand gallons of water (JFB, p.312). The historian obviously uses round numbers when he speaks of the diameter as ten and the circumference as thirty cubits. If the diameter was exactly ten, the circumference would of course be about 31.5 cubits" [Pulpit Commentary, Biblesoft].

2. Verses 24-26: "And under the brim of it round about *there were* knops compassing it, ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about: the knops *were* cast in two rows, when it was cast. It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea *was set* above upon them, and all their hinder parts *were* inward. And it *was* an hand breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies: it contained two thousand baths."
 - a. Twelve figures of oxen were placed beneath the sea, with three each looking to each direction. The number probably represents the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - b. "The rim of the basin, which rose upwards in the form of a lily, was intended to point to the holiness and loveliness of that life which issued from the sanctuary. The twelve oxen, on which it rested, pointed to the twelve tribes of Israel as a priestly nation, which cleansed itself here in the persons of its priests, to appear clean and holy before the Lord" (Keil, pp.704f).
 - c. The *knops* were ornamental buds made into the sea. "Below its brim *were* ornamental buds encircling it all around, ten to a cubit, all the way around the Sea. The ornamental buds *were* cast in two rows when it was cast" (1 Kings 7:24, NKJ).

D. 1 Kings 7:27-39: The Ten Bases of Brass.

1. Verses 27-30: "And he made ten bases of brass; four cubits *was* the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it. And the work of the bases *was* on this *manner*: they had borders, and the borders *were* between the ledges: And on the borders that *were* between the ledges *were* lions, oxen, and cherubims: and upon the ledges *there was* a base above: and beneath the lions and oxen *were* certain additions made of thin work. And every base had four brazen wheels, and plates of brass: and the four corners thereof had undersetters: under the laver *were* undersetters molten, at the side of every addition."
 - a. "The ten wheeled bases were designed to support the ten lavers of brass. The lavers were containers for water like the sea, but their purpose was distinct. The chronicler explains that they were for washing of offerings rather than for the priests themselves (2 Chr. 4:6). Thus, the need for mobility is also explained in that frequent changes of water would be required when so utilized" (Berard, ADL, p.71).
 - b. 2 Chronicles 4:6: "He made also ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt offering they washed in them; but the sea *was* for the priests to wash in."
2. Verses 31-39: "And the mouth of it within the chapter and above *was* a cubit: but the mouth thereof *was* round *after* the work of the base, a cubit and an half: and also upon the mouth of it *were* gravings with their borders, foursquare, not round. And under the borders *were* four wheels; and the axletrees of the wheels *were joined* to the base: and the height of a wheel *was* a cubit and half a cubit. And the work of the wheels *was* like the work of a chariot wheel: their axletrees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes, *were* all molten. And *there were* four undersetters to the four corners of one base: *and* the undersetters *were* of the very base itself. And in the top of the base *was there* a round compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base the ledges thereof and the borders thereof *were* of the same. For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about. After this *manner* he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, *and* one size. Then made he ten lavers of brass: one laver contained forty baths: *and* every laver was four cubits: *and* upon every one of the ten bases one laver. And he put five bases on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea on the right side of the house eastward over against the south."
 - a. "These were trucks, or four-wheeled carriages, for the support and conveyance of the lavers. The description of their structure shows that they were elegantly fitted up, and skillfully adapted to their purpose. They stood, not on the axles, but on four rests attached to the axles, so that the figured sides were considerably raised above the wheels. They were all exactly alike in form and size. The lavers which were borne upon them were vessels capable each of holding 300 gallons of water, upwards of a ton weight....Jewish writers say that the water was changed daily, so as to be always pure..."

(JFB, pp.312f).

- b. Commenting on verse 30, Keil observes: "The meaning is that the square chests stood upon axles with wheels of brass, after the style of ordinary carriage wheels (ver. 33), so that they could be driven or easily moved from one place to another; and that they did not rest directly upon the axles, but stood upon four feet, which were fastened upon the axles. This raised the chest above the rim of the wheels, so that not only were the sides of the chest which were ornamented with figures left uncovered, but, according to ver. 32, the wheels stood below the panels, and not, as in ordinary carriages, at the side of the chest" (p.106).

E. 1 Kings 7:40-51: The Lavers and Vessels.

1. Verses 40-47: "And Hiram made the lavers, and the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he made king Solomon for the house of the LORD: The two pillars, and the *two* bowls of the chapters that *were* on the top of the two pillars; and the two networks, to cover the two bowls of the chapters which *were* upon the top of the pillars; And four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, *even* two rows of pomegranates for one network, to cover the two bowls of the chapters that *were* upon the pillars; And the ten bases, and ten lavers on the bases; And one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea; And the pots, and the shovels, and the basins: and all these vessels, which Hiram made to king Solomon for the house of the LORD, *were of* bright brass. In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarthan. And Solomon left all the vessels *unweighed*, because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass found out."
 - a. "These verses contain a general enumeration of Hiram's works, as well as those already mentioned as other minor things. The Tyrian artists are frequently mentioned by ancient authors as skilful artificers in fashioning and embossing metal cups and bowls; and we need not wonder, therefore, to find them employed by Solomon in making the golden and brasen utensils for his temple and palaces" (JFB, p.313).
 - b. "It is truly surprising, that in so short a time one artist could design and execute works of such magnitude, taste, and variety, however numerous his assistants might be. The mere building of the house was a matter of little difficult in comparison of these internal works" (Clarke, pp.410f).
2. Verses 48-51: "And Solomon made all the vessels that *pertained* unto the house of the LORD: the altar of gold, and the table of gold, whereupon the showbread *was*, And the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right *side*, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs *of* gold, And the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons, and the censers *of* pure gold; and the hinges *of* gold, *both* for the doors of the inner house, the most holy *place*, and for the doors of the house, *to wit*, of the temple. So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the house of the LORD. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the LORD."
 - a. The altar and table for the showbread were made of gold; also, the candlesticks, the bowls, the snuffers, the basins, the spoons, the censers, the hinges for the doors of the inner house—all of these were of pure gold.
 - b. "All the vessels mentioned in vers. 48 and 49 belonged to the Holy Place of the temple, and were the same as those in the tabernacle....No new vessel was made for the Most Holy Place, because the Mosaic ark of the covenant was placed therein (ch. 8:4...)....As so much gold and brass had already been expended upon the building, it might appear strange that Solomon should not have used up all the treasures collected by his father, but should still be able to bring a large portion it into the treasuries of the temple. But according to 1 Chron. 22:14,16, and 29:2ff, David had collected together an almost incalculable amount of gold, silver, and brass, and had also added his own private treasure and the freewill offerings of the leading men of the nation (1 Chron. 29:7-9)" (Keil, p.116).
 - c. Note: The basic components of the Temple were the same as the Tabernacle. The following study of the Tabernacle should be helpful in understanding the activities God intended to take place at the each of these holy sites. See the outline beginning on the next page for a study of the Tabernacle.

Types and Analogies of the Tabernacle

A. INTRODUCTION:

1. The Old Testament's laws and commands are not binding on people today.
 - a. But there are many things in the Old Testament which are of great interest and importance to everyone who wishes to serve God in the Christian Age: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).
 - b. And there are many types and shadows given in the Old Testament which are fulfilled in the New Testament. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. 10:1).
 2. There are many New Testament truths illustrated by the various aspects of the Tabernacle.
 - a. This study deals with the beautifully clear, pictorial outline of certain things in the Christian system illustrated by the tabernacle. "Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb. 8:1-6).
 - b. The Lord gave the design for the Tabernacle, the materials to be used, and all the significant details pertaining to its construction and its services: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount" (Exodus 25:40).
 - c. The Tabernacle was to be a representative dwelling place for God.
 - 1) Exodus 25:8-9: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*."
 - 2) 1 Kings 8:27: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?"
 - 3) Acts 17:24: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."
 - d. God met with men in the tabernacle: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel"(Ex. 25:22).
 - e. The church of Christ is the place where God meets with men today, and he dwells in the church indirectly today.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 6:16-18: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
 - 2) Ephesians 2:21-22: "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."
 - 3) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
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B. DISCUSSION:

1. The Outer Court is representative of the world.
 - a. The Israelites could enter the court, but since the average Hebrew was not a priest, he was not allowed to enter the Tabernacle proper. One had to have certain definite qualifications before he was permitted to enter the Holy Place.
 - b. Those who would enter God's true tabernacle today (the church), must be converted from the world, and lose the stain of sin.
 - 1) Isaiah 6:1-3: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory."
 - 2) Isaiah 6:5: "Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
 - 3) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
 - 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - 5) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"
 - 6) Ephesians 2:12: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
 - 7) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
 - c. No one could enter the Holy Place without meeting the qualifications and receiving the purification of priestly appointment, so no one can enter the True Tabernacle without meeting the qualifications of gospel obedience (faith, repentance, confession), and receiving the purification provided by the blood of Christ in baptism (Revelation 1:5).
 2. The Altar of Burnt Offerings is representative of the Sacrifice of Christ.
 - a. The Altar was used in offering up the many sacrifices which God commanded Israel to offer.
 - 1) Leviticus 9:7: "And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and offer thy sin offering, and thy burnt offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people: and offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them; as the LORD commanded."
 - 2) Leviticus 17:11: "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul."
 - b. The sacrifices involved the offering of the blood of animals.
 - c. The Israelites provided the sacrifices which were costly to the individuals.
 - d. Without the shedding of the blood of the animals offered, there was no means of their approaching God. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).
 - e. The Antitype is in the Lord's sacrifice of himself for the sins of all men.
 - 1) Romans 5:8-9: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
 - 2) Hebrews 2:9: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."
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- 3) Hebrews 7:27: "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."
 - 4) Hebrews 10:1-4: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."
 - 5) Hebrews 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*."
 - 6) Hebrews 10:16-19: "This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."
 - 7) Hebrews 10:22: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
3. The Laver has its counterpart in the New Testament System.
- a. The laver was a basin containing water: "Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein" (Ex. 30:18).
 - b. The Type involves the following particulars.
 - 1) God specified its location: Between the tabernacle and altar: "Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein" (Exodus 30:18).
 - 2) Those entering the tabernacle were to lay aside their old clothes before washing and putting on the priestly garments.
 - 3) Those entering the tabernacle were to wash before entering lest they die.
 - a) Exodus 29:4: "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water."
 - b) Exodus 30:19-20: "For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD."
 - 4) After washing and before entering, they were to put on their priestly garments prior to assuming their priestly duties (Exodus 29:4ff).
 - 5) They had to be ceremonially pure before they could perform their priestly services acceptably: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their generations" (Ex. 30:17-21).
 - c. The Antitype holds true to the pattern.
 - 1) God specified the location of baptism: between Christ's sacrifice and salvation.
 - a) Acts 2:36-38: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
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- b) 1 Peter 3:21: "The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."
 - 2) We baptize rebellious children of the devil; they are rebelling against Satan and desire to obey God sincerely.
 - 3) We must lay aside our practices of sin (by repenting) before we can be washed.
 - a) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - b) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - c) Romans 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
 - d) Colossians 3:8-9: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds."
 - 4) The impurities (guilt) of sin are removed in baptism.
 - a) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - b) Romans 6:17-18: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - c) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
 - 5) After this washing, we put on our spiritual garments.
 - a) Galatians 3:26-27: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 - b) Colossians 3:15-20: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."
 - 6) We are now spiritually pure and our services can be offered acceptably: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:5,9).
4. The Holy Place typifies the church of Christ.
- a. Bible statements:
 - 1) Acts 15:16-17: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are."
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- 3) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
 - 4) Hebrews 9:7-11: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building."
- b. There are several items of significance pertaining to the Type.
- 1) There was only one entrance.
 - 2) Definite qualifications had to be met before one was authorized to enter the Holy Place: he had to be of the right lineage and age.
 - a) Exodus 28:1: "And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons."
 - b) Numbers 3:10: "And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death."
 - c) Numbers 4:1-3: "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers, From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation."
 - 3) Only those who had been washed were permitted to enter.
 - 4) Those who entered did not do so merely for their own pleasure and benefit; they entered to serve God according to his revealed will: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*" (Heb. 9:6).
 - 5) Those qualified to enter the Holy Place were afforded the privilege of eating the showbread and burning incense upon the altar.
 - 6) Those who were in the Holy Place had the benefits furnished by the candlestick.
 - 7) The only entrance into the Most Holy Place was through the Holy Place.
- c. The church is the great antitype.
- 1) There is only one entrance: Obedience to the gospel which culminates in baptism at which point the Lord adds us to the church.
 - a) Acts 2:47: "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
 - b) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - 2) The qualifications required before one can enter the Lord's church are: faith, repentance, confession of faith in Christ, and baptism for the remission of sins. Underlying this process is the fervent, loving commitment to serve the Lord.
 - 3) One must be washed from his sins.
 - a) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18-23: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for
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- you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
- c) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."
- 4) While there are immeasurable blessings and privileges of being in Christ, yet we are not in the church merely for our pleasure; we are here to serve.
- a) Ephesians 2:8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
- b) Titus 2:11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."
- 5) Only those who are faithful members of the Lord's church have the privilege of eating the Lord's supper and praying.
- a) Psalms 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*."
- b) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination."
- c) Luke 22:16-20: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."
- d) John 9:31: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."
- e) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."
- 6) Faithful members of the Lord's church see by the light of God's word.
- a) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
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- b) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
 - c) 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight."
 - d) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - e) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
 - f) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - g) 2 Peter 1:1-11: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - h) 1 John 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
- 7) Only by going through the church can any accountable person have hope of entering heaven.
- a) Ephesians 1:22-23: "And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
 - b) Ephesians 5:23-27: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
 - c) Matthew 16:17-18: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 15:24: "Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."
 - e) 2 Peter 3:5-11: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack
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concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness."

5. The Candlestick depicts the Word of God.

- a. The thick tenting material closed out all the natural light, dust, and rain. The candlestick of the Tabernacle was to burn continually, and furnished the only light for the Holy Place: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually" (Lev. 24:1-4).
- b. The Word of God is the only light needed in the Antitype, the Lord's church.
 - 1) All man-made precepts, commandments, and creeds are specifically excluded. We must insulate the church from all error!
 - a) Mark 7:7-13: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free*. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."
 - b) Galatians 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
 - c) 2 John 9: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
 - 2) God's word gives light.
 - a) Psalms 119:105: "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
 - b) Psalms 119:130: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."
 - c) Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - d) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
 - e) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
- c. While we draw light and strength from the word, we must also be proclaimers and defenders of the word.
 - 1) Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - 2) Romans 1:14-16: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to

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- the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
- 3) 1 Timothy 3:15: "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
 - 4) Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."
- d. Our lives, words, and attitudes are to be reflectors of the light of the word of God.
- 1) Matthew 5:14-16: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - 2) Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
6. The Altar of Incense has its counterpart in the Lord's Church.
- a. Exodus 30:1-9: "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits *shall be* the height thereof: the horns thereof *shall be* of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make *it*; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the veil that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that *is* over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon."
 - b. A morning and evening ceremony was held each day in obedience to God's decree that this should be done perpetually. As the priests were burning the incense in the Holy Place, the people would be outside the tabernacle praying.
 - c. Prayer is the counterpart of this service in the gospel system.
 - 1) Revelation 5:8: In John's vision, the golden vials full of odors (incense) represented the prayers of the saints.
 - 2) Prayer is a perpetual privilege and obligation for members of the Lord's church.
 - a) Matthew 6:6-15: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."
 - b) 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."
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- c) 1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."
7. The Table of Showbread has its counterpart in the Lord's Church.
- a. This table contained twelve loaves of bread which were replaced every sabbath.
- 1) The priests were to eat the loaves that were replaced. "Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute" (Lev. 24:3-9).
- 2) Only the priests were authorized to eat this bread.
- b. The Lord's Supper is the counterpart in the church of Christ.
- 1) Every first day of the week, the saints come together and eat this supper in remembrance of Christ. It is a perpetual command.
- a) Acts 20:7: "And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."
- b) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."
- 2) Only Christians have the right to partake of it.
- a) 1 Peter 2:5,9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
- b) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."
- c) Luke 22:16-20: "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which
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is shed for you."

- d) 1 Corinthians 11:20-30: "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

8. The Veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place has its counterparts.

- a. The Veil is described in Exodus 26:31-37 as a very costly and beautiful curtain: "And thou shalt make a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim *wood* overlaid with gold: their hooks *shall be of* gold, upon the four sockets of silver. And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy *place*. And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north side. And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars *of* shittim *wood*, and overlay them with gold, *and* their hooks *shall be of* gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them."
- 1) It was made of fine twined linen of cunning work and dyed with the costly colors of blue, scarlet, and purple.
 - 2) Only the High Priest could go beyond the veil, and that only on the Day of Atonement when he offered the blood of the atoning sacrifice for all: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7; cf. Lev. 16).
 - 3) The Veil concealed the items in the Most Holy Place: the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat.
- b. The Veil, and its being rent at the Lord's death, depicts several significant things.
- 1) It symbolizes the mysteries of God's eternal plan which was unrevealed until the New Testament was given
 - a) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
 - c) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that

by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- 2) It symbolizes for us death by which we leave this world and enter eternity. Its having been rent depicts the great truth that Christ, by his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, has won victory for us over death.
 - a) Isaiah 25:7-8: "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 15:20-22: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
 - c) 1 Corinthians 15:55-57: "O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - d) Hebrews 2:14-15: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
 - 3) The rending of the veil at the death of Christ symbolizes the abrogation of the Old Covenant.
 - a) Matthew 27:50-51: "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."
 - c) Hebrews 9:7-10: "But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation."
 - 4) It symbolized the separation between God and men, and the need for a mediator which role the Levitical high priest filled. The rending of the veil proclaims that all men are on equal standing with God and need no human priest as mediator.
 - a) Matthew 23:8: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren."
 - b) 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man
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Christ Jesus."

- c) 1 Peter 2:5.9: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ....But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."
 - d) Revelation 1:6: "and he made us *to be* a kingdom, *to be* priests unto his God and Father; to him *be* the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (ASV).
- 5) Its rending symbolizes the fact that Christ, our High Priest, is in heaven, and has offered the atoning sacrifice for us: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:6-17).
- 6) The veil being rent pictures the fact that the way into heaven has now been opened.
- a) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
 - b) Hebrews 10:19-22: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And *having* an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
9. The Most Holy Place represents Heaven.
- a. The Ark of the Covenant rested there.
 - 1) It contained the tables of the law, Aaron's rod that budded and a pot of manna; the golden censer of Hebrews 9:4 is likely the one from the Holy Place which was taken into the Most Holy Place on the day of atonement (Lev. 16:12-14).
 - 2) It was covered by the Mercy Seat made of pure gold.
 - 3) It was in this place, at the mercy seat, that God met with his people: "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel" (Ex. 25:22).
 - 4) No earthly light was in this place; the glory of God was sufficient light.
 - b. The Antitype is Heaven itself.
 - 1) The ark of the covenant and the tables of the law suggest the New Covenant.
 - a) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I

made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

- b) Hebrews 8:7-13: "For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, *A new covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away."
- 2) The manna suggests Christ who is the bread of life: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:47-51).
- 3) The mercy seat suggests our Advocate and Mediator in Heaven—Christ: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world" (1 John 2:1-2).
- 4) The Most Holy Place itself is Heaven.
 - a) Hebrews 6:19-20: "Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
 - b) Hebrews 9:8: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing."
 - c) Hebrews 9:24: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."
- c. There is no need for the sun, moon, or other light; the glory of God the Father and of the Son is sufficient: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23).

C. CONCLUSION:

1. God gave the details pertaining the building and services of the Tabernacle.
 - a. He commanded the placing of the furniture and the other arrangements thereof.
 - b. The showbread was eaten and the incense was burned inside, not outside, the Tabernacle.
 - 1) Leviticus 24:1-9: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually. Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your

generations. He shall order the lamps upon the pure candlestick before the LORD continually. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute."

- 2) God warned that all things were to be according to his plan.
 - a) Exodus 25:40: "And look that thou make *them* after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount."
 - b) Hebrews 8:5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."
2. Those who are in Christ do not need baptism.
 - a. Some try to move baptism and put it in the church, and speak of it as "Christian" baptism. But it is not for a Christian, but in order to become a Christian.
 - b. The Laver was outside the Tabernacle; the priests had to wash there before they were allowed to enter the Holy Place. Baptism puts one into the church (into Christ).
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 12:13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."
 - 2) Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 - 3) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."
3. On entering the Holy Place (the church of Christ), one is prepared to serve.
 - a. We are not members of the body of Christ merely for our own pleasure and profit, but to serve God and our fellowman.
 - 1) Mark 12:29-31: "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."
 - 3) Ephesians 2:8-10: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
 - b. Our obligations are ordained by the God of heaven:
 - 1) To worship of God: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).
 - 2) To live pure lives: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).
 - 3) To spread the gospel: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).
 - 4) To defend the faith: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7c; 2 Cor. 2:17).
 - c. Thus do we prepare for Heaven!

1 KINGS 8

A. 1 Kings 8:1-11: God's Glory Fills the Temple.

1. Verse 1-5: "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which *is* Zion. And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which *is* the seventh month. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that *were* in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up. And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, *were* with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude."
 - a. In the month Ethanim, the seventh month, Solomon called for the elders of Israel to assemble. It was his intention to move the ark of the covenant from its place of residence in the tent which David had built, into the newly-finished temple.
 - b. They brought the ark, and all of the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, to the temple. A vast assemblage of people and sacrificial animals were brought together.
 - c. "Mindful of the solemnity of the present circumstances and the deadly consequences of David's first attempt to move the ark, the devout Solomon no doubt moved with reverence and great care on this momentous occasion (1 Chr. 13). The priests, who were the highest order of Levites, took up the ark in the manner prescribed by the law and moved it into the appointed place (1 Kings 8:3-6; Num. 4:15-16). The priests rather than the Kohathites bore the ark, and were right in so doing in light of their general authorization to care for sacred things in the tabernacle. Precedent is found in several places (Jos. 3:6,15,17; 1 Sam. 4:4; 1 Chr. 15:11-12). The cloud filling the house after the ark's placement testified that God was pleased with Solomon's actions" (Berard, ADL, p.71).
 - d. "The public and formal inauguration of this national place of worship did not take place till eleven months after the completion of the edifice. The delay most probably originated in Solomon's wish to choose the most fitting opportunity when there should be a general rendezvous of the people in Jerusalem (v.2); and that was not till the next year. That was a jubilee year, and he resolved on commencing the solemn ceremonial a few days before the feast of Tabernacles, which was the most appropriate of all seasons, as that annual festival had been instituted in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in booths during their stay in the wilderness, as well as of the tabernacle which was then erected, in which God promised to meet and dwell with his people, sanctifying it with his glory, (cf. Neh. 8). As the tabernacle was to be superseded by the temple, there was admirable propriety in choosing the feast of Tabernacles as the period for dedicating the new place of worship, and praying that the same distinguished privileges might be continued to it in the manifestation of the Divine presence and glory" (JFB, p.314).
 2. Verses 6-9: "And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy *place*, *even* under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth *their* two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above. And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy *place* before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day. *There was* nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt."
 - a. From chapter six, we learned that two large cherubims had been fashioned to be placed in the most holy place. The ark of the covenant was placed between these two figures, under their wings.
 - b. "'And the poles were long, and there were seen their heads (*i.e.* they were so long that their heads were seen) from the Holy Place before the hinder room; but on the outside (outside the Holy Place, say in the porch) they were not seen'" (Keil, p.120). At the time this book was written, the staves were still
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in that place. This shows that 1 Kings was recorded prior to the Babylonian Captivity.

- c. The only items in the ark were the two tables of stone on which the law was inscribed. "The intention of this remark is also simply to show that the law, which enjoined that the ark should merely preserve the stone tables of the covenant (Ex. 25:16; 40:20), had not been departed from in the lapse of time" (Keil, pp.121f).

- 1) Exodus 25:16: "And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee."
- 2) Exodus 40:20: "And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy seat above upon the ark."
- 3) Exodus 16:33: "And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations."
- 4) Numbers 17:10: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not."
- 5) Hebrews 9:4: "Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant."

3. Verses 10-11: "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD."

- a. "God made his presence and approval known by this manifestation to his people (cf. Exo. 40:34-35). The awesome appearance of the cloud was immediately preceded by great praise and thanksgiving of the people (2 Chr. 5:11-14)" (Berard, ADL, p.72).

- b. "The cloud, as the visible symbol of the gracious presence of God, filled the temple, as a sign that Jehovah the covenant-God had entered into it, and had chosen it as the scene of his gracious manifestation in Israel. By the inability of the priests to stand, we are not to understand that the cloud drove them away; for it was not till the priests had come out that it filled the temple. It simply means that they could not remain in the Holy Place to perform service, say to offer an incense-offering upon the altar to consecrate it, just as sacrifices were offered upon the altar of burnt-offering after the dedicatory prayer (vers. 62,63)" (Keil, p.122).

- c. 2 Chronicles 5:11-14: "And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*: (for all the priests *that were* present were sanctified, *and* did not *then* wait by course: Also the Levites *which were* the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets;) It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up *their* voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, *saying*, For *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: that *then* the house was filled with a cloud, *even* the house of the LORD; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God."

B. 1 Kings 8:12-21: Solomon's Speech.

1. Verses 12-16: "Then spake Solomon, The LORD said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever. And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;) And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled *it*, saying, Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but I chose David to be over my people Israel."

- a. Solomon, with his face toward the temple, cited a statement the Lord had made on another occasion, and then turned to face the people.

- b. The king, on seeing the cloud in the temple, was reminded of the occasion when the tabernacle was

likewise filled with a manifestation of God's presence. "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Ex. 40:34-35).

- c. As God's presence was manifested in the dark cloud at the tabernacle, so he would be in the temple which Solomon had made. That God would dwell in thick darkness, is to be taken to mean that God would be present in the temple, in the cloud. His presence was representative, not literal.
 - d. Solomon praised the name of the Lord on account of the fact that he had fulfilled the promise which he had made to David. "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-13).
2. Verses 17-21: "And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel. And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name. And the LORD hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein *is* the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."
- a. Solomon continued his speech to the people. He reminded them that David had wanted to build the temple, but was not allowed to do so. God, however, complimented him for having the desire. He told David that his son would be the one permitted to erect the permanent house of worship.
 - b. The king affirmed that God had been true to his word; the temple was now erected, and the ark had been placed within. In that ark was the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai.
- C. 1 Kings 8:22-30: Solomon's Prayer.
1. Verses 22-26: "And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: And he said, LORD God of Israel, *there is* no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart: Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled *it* with thine hand, as *it is* this day. Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me. And now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father."
 - a. Solomon stood before the altar and prayed with outstretched hands in the presence of Israel. That his words were sincerely offered is not to be denied. He described Jehovah as being unlike all others, in heaven and on earth; he keeps his covenants and shows mercy to those who walk before him with all their hearts.
 - b. He praised the Lord for having fulfilled the promise which he had made to David, when he said that David's son would build the temple. God had done that, using Solomon as the instrument by which it was constructed.
 - c. He asked that the Lord also fulfill the other part of the promise, namely that the dynasty of David would continue. Although the time came when David's earthly dynasty came to an end, yet it does indeed continue in the spiritual kingdom of Christ, a descendant of David.
 - 1) Jeremiah 22:30: "Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah."
 - 2) Luke 1:33: "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."
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- 3) Acts 2:29-30: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne."
2. Verses 27-30: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day: That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, *even* toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place. And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive."
- a. "Solomon, unlike many of his day, knew that the true and living God was not a mere local deity with limited presence and power. Solomon's words show his understanding that God's dwelling in the temple was not a matter of his needing man's efforts in this regard nor any actual containing of the omnipresent God (Acts 17:24-25). His true dwelling is acknowledged as Heaven, but there was a sense in which he occupied the temple among his people and a special sense in which he is with the church of Christ, today (1 Kin. 8:10-13,30; Mat. 28:20; John 14:23)" (Berard, ADL, p.73).
- b. "This expression [verse 27] is full of astonishment, veneration, and delight. He is struck with the immensity, dignity, and grandeur of the Divine Being, but especially at his *condescension* to dwell with men: and though he sees, by his filling the place, that he has come now to make his abode with them, yet he cannot help asking the question, How can such a God dwell in such a place, and with such creatures?" (Clarke, p.414).
- c. Acts 17:24-25: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."
- d. He asked that God should hear the voice of his servant when he prayed toward the temple. Daniel, when in captivity at Babylon, prayed daily with his face toward Jerusalem, the site of the temple. "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Dan. 6:10).
- e. God had placed his name in the temple; it was the place he designated where he would meet with his people, in the person of the high priest, who entered the Most Holy Place each year on the day of atonement. Leviticus 16.
- D. 1 Kings 8:31-53: Occasions in Which Israel Would Need God's Help.
1. Verses 31-32: "If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness.
- a. "This general prayer is then particularized from ver. 31 onwards by the introduction of *seven* special petitions for an answer in the different cases in which, in future, prayers may be offered to God in the temple. The *first* prayer (vers. 31,32) has reference to the oaths sworn in the temple, the sanctity of which God is asked to protect" (Keil, p.128).
- b. "Solomon prays that God may not permit a false oath to be taken, but that he will discover the truth, so that the wicked shall be condemned, and the righteous justified" (Clarke, p.415)
2. Verses 33-34: "When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers."
- a. Solomon asks God to hear his people, when they have sinned and been punished by the enemy, when
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- they repent and ask his forgiveness at the temple.
- b. "When their enemies make inroads upon them, and defeat them in battle, and lead them into captivity, because God, being displeased with their transgressions, has delivered them up; then if they shall turn again; confess the name of God, which they had in effect denied, by either neglecting his worship, or becoming idolatrous; and pray and make supplication; then, says Solomon, hear thou in heaven— and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers" (Clarke, p.415).
3. Verses 35-36: "When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance."
 - a. "The *third* prayer refers to the remission of the punishment of drought threatened against the land, when the heaven is shut up, according to Lev. 26:19, Deut. 11:17, 28:23....Because God teaches his people and seeks by means of chastisement to bring them back to the good way when they fail to keep his commandments, he must forgive when they recognize the punishment as a divine chastisement and come to him with penitential prayer" (Keil, p.129).
 - b. "When, because of their sin, and their ceasing to walk in the good way in which they should have walked, God refuses to send the early and latter rain, so that the appointed weeks of harvest come in vain, as there is no crop: then, if they pray and confess their sin, hear thou in heaven..." (Clarke, p.415).
 4. Verses 37-43: "If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, *or* if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness *there be*; What prayer and supplication soever be *made* by any man, *or* by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, *even* thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) That they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers. Moreover concerning a stranger, that *is* not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as *do* thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name."
 - a. "The mildew which committed such terrible ravages in their fields, and destroyed their cereal crops, producing famine, was not then known to be of vegetable origin, and to be traceable, as modern science has taught us to trace it, to various parasitic fungi...but was ascribed to meteorological influence, or rather regarded as a pestilence inflicted by the direct hand of God..." (JFB, p.317). But God did send such punishment upon them as chastisement.
 - b. "The fourth case included several kinds of evils: 1. Famine; a scarcity or total want of bread, necessarily springing from the preceding cause, drought. 2. Pestilence; any general and contagious disease. 3. Blasting; any thing by which the crops are injured so that the ear is never matured; but instead of wholesome grain, there is a black offensive dust. 4. Mildew; any thing that vitiates or corrodes the texture of the stalk, destroys the flowers and blossoms, or causes the young shaped fruits to fall off their stems. 5. Locust, a well known curse in the east; a species of grasshopper that multiplies by millions, and covers the face of the earth for many miles square, destroying every green thing; leaving neither herb nor grass upon the earth, nor leaf nor bark upon the trees. 6. Caterpillar; the locust in its young or nympha state. The former refers to locusts brought by winds from other countries and settling on the land; the latter, to the young locust bred in the land. 7. An enemy, having attacked their defenced cities, the keys and barriers of the land. 8. Any other kind of plague; that which affects the surface of the body; blotch, blain, leprosy, ophthalmia, etc. 9. Sickness; what-ever impaired the strength....All such cases were to be brought before the Lord, the persons having a deep
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shame of the wickedness which induced God thus to afflict, or permit them to be afflicted..." (Clarke, pp.415f).

5. Verses 44-53: "If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and *toward* the house that I have built for thy name: Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. If they sin against thee, (for *there is* no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; *Yet* if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; And *so* return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: For they *be* thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, *to be* thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD."
 - a. In the next case, when Israel went out against an enemy to do battle, and because of their own sins, God should allow the enemy to defeat them and carry them into captivity, Solomon asked that God should hear their prayers.
 - b. If some future generation of Israelites should find themselves in a foreign land, under captivity to an enemy, and came to see their errors that led them into that state, then if they should turn toward the land of Canaan, where the temple had been erected, and ask for forgiveness and release, Solomon asked that God hear their petitions.

E. 1 Kings 8:54-66: Solomon Concludes his Prayer, and Offers a Sacrifice.

1. Verses 54-61: "And it was *so*, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers. And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require: That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD *is* God, *and that there is* none else. Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day."
 - a. In verse twenty-two, when Solomon began this prayer, we were only told that he spread his hand toward heaven; in verse fifty-four, we are told that he had been kneeling as he prayed. His prayer being over, the king now stands and blesses the congregation with a loud voice. The blessing is given in the rest of this passage. He prays for certain benefits and blessings to come upon Israel; in this way he pronounces a blessing upon them.
 - b. He states first that God is to be praised for having fulfilled all the promises which he had given to Moses. He then asks that God continue to be with the present generation as he had been with those generations of the past.
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- c. He asks that God might incline their hearts toward him so that they would live as he desired, and keep his commandments, statutes, and judgments which he had given to their fathers.
 - d. The king asks that the words of his petition ever be before the Lord, so that he would maintain the cause of his people, according to their present needs.
 - e. If these things are so, then the people of the world could look at Israel and know that their Lord is the true God.
 - f. Solomon calls on his people to keep their hearts perfect in the sight of God; their faithfulness in serving God was an integral part of the agreement between themselves and God.
2. Verses 62-66: "And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD for there he offered burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings: because the brazen altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too little to receive the burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings. And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, *even* fourteen days. On the eighth day he sent the people away: and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people."
 - a. After the foregoing activities were concluded, Solomon led the people in a great sacrifice, in which 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep were offered. "This enormous number of sacrificial animals, in which J.D. Michaelis found serious difficulties, Thenius endeavours to set aside as too large, by calculating that as these sacrifices were offered in seven days, reckoning the sacrificial day at twelve full hours, there must have been about five oxen and about twenty-five sheep slaughtered and offered in sacrifice every minute for the king alone. This calculation would be conclusive, if there were any foundation for the three assumptions upon which it rests: namely, (1) that the number of sacrifices mentioned was offered for the king alone; (2) that the slaughtering and preparation of the sacrificial animals could only be performed by the priests and Levites; and (3) that the whole of the flesh of these sacrificial animals was to be consumed upon the altar. But these three assumptions are all erroneous....'Solomon and all Israel' are expressly mentioned as offering sacrifice....Moreover it is very evident from the law in Lev. 1 and 3 that at the offering of sacrifices the slaughtering, flaying, and preparation of the sacrificial animals were performed by any Israelite, and that it was only the sprinkling of the blood against the altar and the burning of the sacrificial portions upon the altar which were the exclusive province of the priests....In the reign of Nero the procurator Cestius directed the priests to count the number of the paschal lambs, and that they counted 250,000, which were slaughtered for the passover between the ninth and eleventh hours of the day, and of which the blood was sprinkled upon the altar" (Keil, pp.135f).
 - b. The assembly of the people covered fourteen days. "The first seven were occupied with the dedication, and the other seven devoted to the feast of tabernacles (2 Chr. 7:9)" (JFB, p.219).
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1 KINGS 9

A. 1 Kings 9:1-9: God Appears to Solomon a Second Time.

1. Verses 1-2: "And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, That the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon."
 - a. "This first verse is connected with the eleventh, all that is contained between vv. 2-10 being parenthetical" (JFB, p.219).
 - b. After completing the building projects, which required twenty years, the Lord appeared to Solomon again as he had appeared to him at Gibeon (1 Kings 3:5-15). In both cases, the encounter was in a dream at night.
 - c. This was the second time Jehovah had appeared to Solomon in such a manner. The two occurrences were about twenty years apart. "The design of this appearance, which was in a dream, as that was at Gibeon, was to assure Solomon that God had accepted his service, and had taken that house for his dwellingplace, and would continue it, and establish him and his descendants upon the throne of Israel for ever, provided they served him with an upright heart; but, on the contrary, if they forsook him, he would abandon both them and his temple" (Clarke, p.418).
 2. Verses 3-5: "And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, *and* wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel."
 - a. The information God gave Solomon in this supernatural dream is, in principle, what the Lord says to all men, in every generation: be faithful to my word and be blessed; be disobedient and suffer the dire consequences of rebellion.
 - b. God assured Solomon that he had heard and accepted his prayers, and that he had hallowed the temple and would put his name therein.
 - c. David was one who sincerely followed the will of God, although he was guilty of stumbling on more than one occasion. Still, considering the wholeness of his life, God could properly describe him as having lived in integrity of heart, in uprightness, and had obeyed his statutes and judgments. When he sinned and came to be aware of it, he repented; so will every righteous person.
 - d. If Solomon walked in his sight as David had, then God would establish his throne for ever, just as he had promised David. The point here is that David's dynasty would continue through Solomon, and on until the time when the reign of Christ would commence. But because of open rebellion against God, Coniah was the last of David's descendants to reign on earth in Israel. "Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:30).
 3. Verses 6-9: "*But* if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments *and* my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people. And at this house, *which* is high, every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and have worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil."
 - a. Solomon is specifically warned against idolatry, an admonition that did not profit him in later years. God knew the tendencies of mankind. "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew
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all *men*, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (Jn. 2:24-25).

- b. Neither Solomon nor Israel, in years to come, took heed to God's warnings. The kingdom divided at the death of Solomon; the northern tribes quickly apostatized, and the southern tribes followed their lead. God allowed the Assyrians to conquer and enslave the northern kingdom; the Babylonians subjugated the southern kingdom.
 - c. He vowed to cut them off from the land which he had given them. Following the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D., they were removed from the land. Only a small percentage of the Jews now occupy Palestine, and their hold on it is precarious. This all shows that they forfeited their right to the land when they rebelled against the Almighty, especially when they rejected the Messiah.
 - d. God warned that as a consequence of the punishment he would render against their rebellion, they would be a proverb and a byword among the other nations. Compare:
 - 1) Deuteronomy 28:37: "And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee."
 - 2) Lamentations 2:15-16: "All that pass by clap *their* hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, *saying*, Is this the city that *men* call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth? All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, We have swallowed *her* up: certainly this *is* the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen *it*."
 - 3) "And so they are to the present; the *unbelieving Jews*, the *stubborn, stiff-necked Jews*, are words still in common use. They forsook the Lord, rejected his Christ, and are cast off, their temple destroyed, and they scattered over the face of the earth" (Clarke, pp.418f).
 - e. Jehovah depicts their future disobedience as their having "taken hold of other gods." "When an indigent person claims the protection of a superior, he casts himself down before him, and *lays hold of his feet*; and this expression is frequently used when there is no prostration: *I have taken hold of thy feet*. When a person is called into the presence of the *Burman* monarch, he is said to go to the *golden foot*—Ward's *Customs*" (Clarke, p.419).
- B. 1 Kings 9:10-28: Events Following the Twenty-Year Building Program.
1. Verses 10-14: "And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD, and the king's house, (*Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,*) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, What cities *are* these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day. And Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold."
 - a. "Seven and a half years were spent in building the temple (ch. 6:38), and twelve and a half or thirteen in the erection of his palace (ch. 7:1; 2 Chr. 8:1). This verse is only a recapitulation of the first, necessary to recover the thread of connection in the narrative" (JFB, p.320).
 - b. "The twenty cities in *Galil*, which Solomon gave to Hiram, certainly belonged therefore to the cities of the Canaanites mentioned in 2 Sam. 24:7; that is to say, they were cities occupied briefly by a heathen population, and in all probability they were in very bad condition. Consequently they did not please Hiram, and he gave to the district the contemptuous name of the land of *Cabul*....The 'land of Cabul' would therefore mean the pawned land; and in the mouths of the people this would be twisted into 'good for nothing'" (Keil, pp.141f). The marginal rendering is *Displeasing* or *Dirty*.
 - c. If these twenty cities had been within the borders of Israel, Solomon would not have been able to give them away. These cities were most likely inhabited by Canaanites. "They were probably given to Hiram, whose dominions were small, as a remuneration for his important services in furnishing workmen, materials, and an immense quantity of *wrought* gold (v.14), for the temple and other buildings....Hiram having refused these cities, probably on account of their inland situation making them unsuitable to his maritime and commercial people" (JFB, p.320).
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- d. Commenting on the 60 talents of gold, Keil observed: "This is no doubt to be regarded as a loan, which Solomon obtained from Hiram to enable him to complete his buildings. Although David may have collected together the requisite amount of precious metals for the building of the temple, and Solomon had also very considerable yearly revenues, derived partly from tribute paid by subjugated nations and partly from trade, his buildings were so extensive, inasmuch as he erected a large number of cities beside the temple and his splendid palaces (vers. 15-19), that his revenues might not suffice for the completion of these costly works; and therefore, since he would not apply the consecrated treasures of the temple to the erection of cities and palaces, he might find himself compelled to procure a loan from the wealthy king Hiram, which he probably intended to cover by ceding to him twenty cities on the border of the Phoenician territory. But as these cities did not please the king of Tyre and he gave them back to Solomon, the latter will no doubt have repaid the amount borrowed during the last twenty years of his reign" (p.142).
- e. 2 Chronicles 8:2 says that these cities were restored to Solomon: "That the cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there."
2. Verses 15-16: "And this *is* the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife."
- a. "That is, in order to pay Hiram the sixscore talents of gold which he had borrowed from him (Hiram not being willing to take the Galilean cities mentioned above; or, having taken them, soon restored them again) he was obliged to lay a tax upon the people; and that this was grievous and oppressive tax we learn from chap. 12:1-4, where the elders of Israel came to Rehoboam, complaining of their heavy state of taxation, and entreating that their yoke might be made lighter" (Clarke, p.419).
- b. "A levy refers both to men and money; and the necessity for Solomon making it, arose from the many gigantic works he undertook to erect" (JFB, p.321).
- c. "David had already built the castle of *Millo* and the wall of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:9); so that Solomon's building was in both cases merely fortifying more strongly....As Solomon thereby closed the breach of the city of David according to ch. 11:27, he probably extended the city wall so as to enclose the temple mountain; and he may possibly have also surrounded the lower city with a wall, since David had only built a fortification round about the upper city upon Zion (see at 2 Sam. 5:9)" (Keil, p.143).
- d. Hazor was an old royal city of the Canaanites (see Keil, p.143; cf. Josh. 11:1). "There are three sites of Biblical interest on the western side of the Plain of Huleh, of which the first that is reached going north is Hazor, the capital of the Jabin, who fought against Joshua. The ruins, which are insignificant on account of the long period which has intervened since the destruction of the place, are on an elevation immediately west of the northern end of Lake Huleh. Hazor was destroyed by Joshua, but was rebuilt by another Jabin in the time of the Judges. It was allotted to the tribe of Naphtali; it was fortified by Solomon; and it was finally captured and probably destroyed by the Assyrian king Tiglathpileser. It is now called *Tell Khurei'beh*" (McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, pp.333d).
- e. Gezer was also an old Canaanite city (Keil, p.143; Josh. 10:33).
- 1) Concerning Gezer, Clarke says: "This city Joshua had taken from the Canaanites, Josh. 10:33, and 12:12, and it was divided by lot to the tribe of Ephraim, and was intended to be one of the Levitical cities; but it appears that the Canaanites had retaken it, and kept possession till the days of Solomon, when his father-in-law, Pharaoh king of Egypt, retook it, and gave it to Solomon in dowry with his daughter" (pp.419f).
- 2) McGarvey adds this information: "After passing about three miles beyond Ramleh the road crosses the first hill on its way, and nearly due south of this hill is a detached eminence called *Tell el Jezer*, identified as Gezer, a city in the land allotted to Ephraim in the days of Joshua [Judges 1:29]. It was taken from the Canaanites long afterwards by Pharaoh and given to Solomon, who fortified it. It commanded one of the roads leading from the plain up to Jerusalem, and it was therefore one of the defenses of Solomon's capital. Some interesting ruins are found on the site,
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some rock-cut tombs are on the slopes of the hill, and a fine spring breaks out at its eastern foot” (pp.273f).

3. Verses 17-23: "And Solomon built Gezer, and Bethhoron the nether, And Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land, And all the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. *And* all the people *that were* left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel, Their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen. These *were* the chief of the officers that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work."
 - a. "The two Bethhorons and Gezer were very important places for the protection of the mountainous country of Benjamin, Ephraim, and Judah against hostile invasions from the Philistian plain. The situation of Megiddo on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, through which the high road from the western coast to the Jordan ran, was equally important; and so also was Hazor as a border fortress against Syria in the northern part of the land...Solomon also built, *i.e.* fortified Baalath and Tadmor in the desert....The Greeks and Romans called [Tadmor] *Palmyra*. It was situated in what is certainly now a very desolate oasis of the Syrian desert, on the caravan road between Damascus and the Euphrates...and there are still magnificent ruins which attest the former glory of this wealthy and, under queen Zenobia, very powerful city....The correctness of this explanation is placed beyond all doubt by the words 'in the wilderness'" (Keil, p.144).
 - b. "To the northwest of Gibeon, and about a mile distant, is the head of the pass, descending by the two Bethhorons into the Plain of Sharon, on the ancient road to Joppa and Caesarea. In the midst of this pass, and on a rocky point which divides it, stands the village called Bet Up el Foka, the ancient Upper Bethhoron. Below, at the bottom of the pass, is Bet Up el Tahta, the Lower Bethhoron, about three miles distant. It was in the vicinity of the former of these places that Joshua stood when, in his pursuit of the army of the Canaanites, he exclaimed, 'Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon' [Josh. 10:10-12]. At eight or nine o'clock in the morning the sun would from this point seem to hang over Gibeon; and if the moon was just entering its last quarter it would hang over the Valley of Ajalon, which stretches away to the southwest, passing the village of Latrun" (McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, p.242).
 - c. Tadmor (Palmyra) "was anciently a superb city, ten miles in circumference. It was situated in a dreary desert, in the midst of barren, uninhabited sands. It became the capital of a great kingdom, the emporium of the Eastern world; and its merchants dealt with the Romans and western nations for the products and luxuries of India and Arabia. *John of Antioch* says that the structures here erected by Solomon must have been demolished by Nebuchadnezzar, who, in his march to the siege of Jerusalem, destroyed this city. It is now a mass of magnificent ruins. In accomplishing these and various other works which were carried on throughout the kingdom, especially in the north, where Rezon of Damascus, his enemy, might prove dangerous, he employed vast numbers of the Canaanites as galley-slaves (2 Chr. 1:18), treating them as prisoners of war, who were compelled to do the drudgery and hard labour, while the Israelites were only engaged in honourable employment. The policy of employing the descendants of the Canaanites as serfs to labour in gangs, was contrary to the spirit of the Mosaic legislation, and was evidently borrowed from Egypt. Representations of the lowest caste employed as labourers on the public works...are abundant on the ancient monumental paintings....Solomon's possession of Edom, though a small territory, gave him command of the Red Sea and the great caravan routes into the country and ports of Arabia..." (JFB, p.321).
4. Verse 24: "But Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house which *Solomon* had built for her: then did he build Millo."
 - a. "When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, he brought her into the city of David (ch. 3:1), until he

- should have finished his palace and built her a house of her own within it. After this building was completed, he had her brought up from the city of David...inasmuch as the palace stood upon the loftier summit of Zion" (Keil, p.146).
- b. 1 Kings 3:1: "And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about."
 - c. "Vers. 24 and 25 contain two notices, with which the account of Solomon's buildings is brought to a close. Both verses point back to ch. 3:1-4 (viz. ver. 24 to ch. 3:1, and ver. 25 to ch. 3:2-4), and show how the incongruities which existed at the commencement of Solomon's reign were removed by his buildings" (Keil, p.146).
5. Verse 25: "And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and he burnt incense upon the altar that *was* before the LORD. So he finished the house."
- a. The three times during the year in which Solomon offered sacrifices would be Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.
 - 1) 2 Chronicles 8:13: "Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, *even* in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles."
 - 2) 2 Chronicles 31:3: "*He appointed* also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, *to wit*, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as *it is* written in the law of the LORD."
 - 3) Exodus 23:14-17: "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD."
 - b. Solomon offered these offerings, not personally, but by the hands of the qualified priests. In the Bible and in our own language, what we cause to be done, can be described as our doing.
6. Verses 26-28: "And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Eziongeber, which *is* beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought *it* to king Solomon."
- a. "These were neighbouring ports at the head of the eastern or Elantitic branch of the Red Sea. Tyrian ship-carpenters and sailors were sent there for Solomon's vessels....'Ezion-geber'—*i.e.* the giant's backbone; so called from a reef of rocks at the entrance of the harbour. 'Eloth'—Elim, or Elath; *i.e.*, 'the trees': a grove of terebinths still exists at the head of the gulf" (JFB, p.322).
 - b. 2 Chronicles 8:17-18: "Then went Solomon to Eziongeber, and to Eloth, at the sea side in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent him by the hands of his servants ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought *them* to king Solomon."
 - c. "...Solomon was obliged to call the Tyrians to his help for the building of the ships, since the Israelites, who had hitherto carried on no maritime trade at all, were altogether inexperienced in shipbuilding. Moreover, the country round Eziongeber would hardly furnish wood adapted for the purpose, as there are only palms to be found there, whose spongy wood, however useful it may be for the inside of houses, cannot be applied to the building of ships. But if Hiram had ships built for Solomon by his own men and sent him sailors who were accustomed to the sea, he would certainly have some of his own ships engaged in this maritime trade; and this explains the statement in ch. 10:22" (Keil, p.149).

- "For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks" (1 Kings 10:22).
- d. "No man knows certainly, to this day, where this *Ophir* was situated. There were two places of this name; one somewhere in India, beyond the Ganges, and another in Arabia, near the country of the Sabaeans, mentioned by Job, chap. 22:24....Calmet places this country at the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris" (Clarke, pp.420f). "Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the *gold* of Ophir as the stones of the brooks" (Job 22:24; cf. Job 28:16).
 - e. Ophir: "Place and personal name meaning, 'dusty.' Place famous in the Ancient Near East for its trade, especially in gold. Solomon's ships with help from Phoenician sailors brought precious goods from Ophir (1 Kings 9:28; 10:11; compare 1 Kings 22:48). Gold from Ophir was apparently highly valued, the phrase becoming a stock descriptive term in Ancient Near Eastern commercial language (Isa. 13:12; Job 22:24; 28:16; Ps. 45:10). Ophir is mentioned outside the Bible on a piece of broken pottery found at tell el-Qasileh, north of Tel Aviv on the plain of Sharon. See Aphek. This inscription reads, 'Gold of Ophir for Beth Horon, 30 shekels.' The geographical location of Ophir is disputed among biblical scholars. Three regions have been suggested: India, Arabia, and Africa. Scholars who support an Indian location do so because of the resemblance of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) form of Ophir to the Egyptian name for India. The available evidence with regard to trade practices indicates that Egyptian, Phoenician, and Greek fleets obtained eastern goods indirectly through ports in South Arabia and East Africa. Other scholars have suggested that Ophir was located on the Arabian Peninsula. At least five areas have been identified, but the evidence for certainty with regard to any of them is lacking. The strongest argument for an Arabian location is the occurrence of the name Ophir among the names of Arabian tribes, descendants of Joktan, in the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. Finally, one location in Africa has been suggested: the East African coast in the general vicinity of Somaliland. This location is supported because of its distance from Palestine and the products that are characteristic of Africa that are mentioned in biblical texts (1 Kings 9:28; 10:11,22). The location of Ophir will remain a matter of uncertainty. A knowledge of ancient trade routes and practices, maritime ventures in the Ancient Near East, and economic policies in ancient Israel will be helpful in determining the cite of Ophir" (Holman).
 - f. OPHIR: 1. Scriptural References: There is a clear reference also to a tribe Ophir (Gen 10:30). Ophir is the name of a land or city somewhere to the South or Southeast of Palestine for which Solomon's ships along with Phoenician vessels set out from Ezion-geber at the head of the Gulf of Aqabah, returning with great stores of gold, precious stones and "almug"—wood (1 Kings 9:28; 10:11; 2 Chron 9:10; 1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chron 8:18). We get a fuller list of the wares and also the time taken by the voyage if we assume that the same vessels are referred to in 1 Kings 10:22, "Once every three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks." The other products may not have been native to the land of Ophir, but it is certain that the gold at least was produced there. This gold was proverbial for its purity, as is witnessed by many references in the Old Testament (Ps 9; Job 28:16; Isa 13:12; 1 Chron 29:4), and, in Job 22:24, Ophir is used for fine gold itself. In addition to these notices of Ophir, it is urged that the name. occurs also in two passages under the form "Uphaz" (Jer 10:9; Dan 10:5). 2. Geographical Position: At all times the geographical position of Ophir has been a subject of dispute, the claims of three different regions being principally advanced, namely (1) India and the Far East, (2) Africa, (3) Arabia. (1) India and the Far East. - All the wares mentioned are more or less appropriate to India, even including the fuller list of 1 Kings 10:22. "Almug"—wood is conjectured to be the Indian sandal-wood. Another argument is based on the resemblance between the Septuagint form of the word (Sophera) and the Coptic name for India (Sophr). A closer identification is sought with Abhira, a people dwelling at the mouths of the Indus. Supara, an ancient city on the west coast of India near the modern Goa, is also suggested. Again, according to Wildman, the name denotes a vague extension eastward, perhaps as far as China. (2) Africa.—This country is the greatest gold-producing region of the three. Sofala, a seaport near Mozambique on the east coast of Africa, has been advanced as the site of Ophir, both on linguistic

grounds and from the nature of its products, for there all the articles of 1 Kings 10:22 could be procured. But Gesenius shows that Sofala is merely the Arabic form of the Hebrew *shephelah*. Interest in this region as the land of Ophir was renewed, however, by Mauch's discovery at Zimbabwe of great ruins and signs of old Phoenician civilization and worked-out gold mines. According to Bruce (I, 440), a voyage from Sofala to Ezion-geber would have occupied quite three years owing to the monsoons. (3) Arabia. - The claim of Southeastern Arabia as the land of Ophir has on the whole more to support it than that of India or of Africa. The Ophir of Gen 10:29 beyond doubt belonged to this region, and the search for Ophir in more distant lands can be made only on the precarious assumption that the Ophir of K is not the same as the Ophir of Gen. Of the various products mentioned, the only one which from the Old Testament notices can be regarded as clearly native to Ophir is the gold, and according to Pliny and Strabo the region of Southeastern Arabia bordering on the Persian Gulf was a famous gold-producing country. The other wares were not necessarily produced in Ophir, but were probably brought there from more distant lands, and thence conveyed by Solomon's merchantmen to Ezion-geber. If the duration of the voyage (3 years) be used as evidence, it favors this location of Ophir as much as that on the east coast of Africa. It seems therefore the least assailable view that Ophir was a district on the Persian Gulf in Southeastern Arabia and served in old time as an emporium of trade between the East and West" [International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1996 by Biblesoft].

1 KINGS 10

A. 1 Kings 10:1-13: The Visit of the Queen of Sheba.

1. Verses 1-2: "And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart."
 - a. The parallel account is found in 2 Chronicles 9:1-12. "As our Lord calls her *queen of the south* (Matt. 12:42), it is likely the name should be written *Saba, Azab, or Azaba*, all of which signify the *south*" (Clarke, p.421).
 - b. This queen came to Jerusalem, having heard of the fabulous wealth and wonderful wisdom of the king of Israel, which he had been given by Jehovah. Knowledge concerning Solomon had been spread by means of the ships which ranged the seas on their three-year-long voyages (10:22), and the natural spreading of such reports.
 - c. She sought to test him by hard questions (parables; riddles). "The love of the Arabs for riddles, and their superiority in this...is sufficiently well known from the immense extent to which the Arabic literature abounds in *Mashals*" (Keil, p.158).
 - d. Keil says that this queen was from the "kingdom of the *Sabeans*, who were celebrated for their trade in incense, gold, and precious stones, and who dwelt in Arabia Felix, with the capital *Saba*, or the Mariaba of the Greeks" (p.158).
 - 1) Sabean: "Transliteration of two Hebrew national names. 1. Descendants of Seba, son of Cush (Gen. 10:7a) expected to bring gifts signifying loyalty to Jerusalem (Ps. 72:10; Isa. 45:14; compare Ezek. 23:42). God could use the Sabeans to 'pay for' Israel's ransom from captivity (Isa. 43:3). These are often identified with people of Meroe in Upper Egypt between the white and blue Nile, thus the capital of Ethiopia. Other scholars locate it much further south, the territory east and southeast of Cush bordering on the Red Sea. Other scholars would identify at least some references here as identical with 2. below. 2. Descendants of Sheba, the son of Raamah (Gen. 10:7b) or Joktan (Gen. 10:28; compare 25:3). The rich queen of Sheba visited Solomon (1 Kings 10). Sabeans destroyed Job's flocks and herds and servants (Job 1:15). They were known as 'travelling merchants' (Job 6:19 REB; compare Ps. 72:10,15; Isa. 60:6; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 27:22; 38:13; Joel 3:8). This is usually equated with the city in southern Arabia, modern Marib in Yemen. Some scholars think this is too far south and seek biblical Sheba in northern Arabia near Medina on the wadi esh-Shaba. Sabeans could have become a general term for foreign or nomadic merchants. Sheba in southern Arabia gained riches through trade with nearby Africa and with India, whose goods they transported and sold to the empires to the north. Sheba produced and traded incense" (Holman).
 - 2) SABE'ANS (sa-be'anz). The inhabitants of a kingdom in SW Arabia, S of Ma'in, N of the kingdom of Qataban in the Yeman-Hadhramaut region of S Arabia. This general region was explored in 1950-51 by the Arabian Expedition of the American Foundation for the Study of Man organized by Wendell Phillips (see Qataban and Sheba [1955]). The excavations in S Arabia have helped to outline its general history. The kingdoms of Ma'in, Saba, Qataban, Ausan, and Hadhramaut are now much better known. Before 1200 BC there was a southward migration of Sheba and allied tribes. About 1000 BC to 700 BC there was a great expansion of Sabean influence. From about the ninth century to the middle of the fifth century B.C. priest-kings of Sheba are known. From c. 400 to 25 B.C. the kingdom of the Minaeans and the kingdom of Qataban flourished. The ruins of Mariaba (Mareb) are a mute evidence of the splendor that the Sabean monarchs possessed. About 950 BC the biblically famous Queen of Sheba (Saba) set out on a 1,200-mile trek to visit the rich and powerful king of Israel in the N, taking with her lavish gifts (1 Kings 10:1-13). Although accustomed to wealth and splendor, the queen was so

overwhelmed by Solomon's majesty that "she was breathless" (2 Chron 9:4). In Matt 12:42 and Luke 11:31 this ruler is designated as "the Queen of the South." The queen's strenuous journey to Jerusalem over inhospitable terrain was almost certainly dictated by commercial reasons. Her conference with Solomon must have involved defining the limits of commercial interests and arranging trade treaties that regulated the equitable exchange of the products of Arabia, including the lucrative incense trade and Palestinian products. Although the Queen of Sheba of Solomon's day has not been attested as yet in S Arabian inscriptions, there is not the slightest reason for denying either her or her visit to the Israelite monarch. The account is definitely not a "romantic tale" as generally used to be supposed (cf. James A. Montgomery, *Arabia and the Bible* [1934], p. 180). Although queens played little part in the later history of southern Arabia, they ruled large tribal confederacies in northern Arabia from the ninth to the seventh centuries B.C., as the cuneiform inscriptions relate. W. F. Albright's researches in S Arabia and the vast quantity of material being studied promise to shed important light on S Arabian history and on the Sabaeans. Much is now known of Sabeian religion from excavated tablets. It was of the astral type; their chief deity was Attar, the male counterpart of the goddess of procreation, the Babylonian Ishtar" [The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright © 1988].

- e. The queen brought with her a large caravan, bearing spices, gold, and precious stones. A great number of servants and guards would also be in her company. Solomon happily received her, and communed with her regarding her questions.
2. Verses 3-5: "And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not *any* thing hid from the king, which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her."
 - a. The king was able to give the correct answers to all her questions. Without the supernatural wisdom the Lord had given him, he would not have been able to make these replies.
 - b. "The degree of her astonishment is expressed in the words, 'there was no more spirit in her' (v.5). She was actually 'beside herself' with sheer wonder and amazement. She had listened to Solomon answer her questions, observed the great temple that had been built (v.4), eaten meat at his table (v.5), watched the attendants as they waited upon Solomon, and witnessed the 'ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord'" (Wacaster, ADL, p.80).
 - c. The expression "his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord" is taken by Jamieson and Keil to be a reference to the sacrifices which were offered at the temple. The ASV margin gives this alternate rendering: "His burnt offering which he offered up."
 3. Verses 6-7: "And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen *it*: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard."
 - a. The queen stated to Solomon that she had heard intriguing reports about his wisdom while she was in her own land, but she did not believe them.
 - b. However, having conversed with the king, seeing the wonders he had produced in Jerusalem, and hearing the wisdom and knowledge which flowed freely from his lips, she confessed that the original reports only half-covered the truth: "the half was not told me."
 4. Verses 8-10: "Happy *are* thy men, happy *are* these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon."
 - a. Her glowing statement does not necessarily mean that she now believed in the God of Israel, although

such a conclusion may have been indicated. The text does not say, however, that she offered sacrifice to God, which might be expected if she was now a convert.

- b. She gave to Solomon a hundred and twenty talents of gold, a very great store of spices, and many precious stones. The inspired historian notes that the king never afterwards received such a great store of spices as that which he was here given.
5. Verses 11-13: "And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones. And the king made of the almug trees pillars for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day. And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside *that* which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants."
- a. The historian states that Solomon also received vast amounts of gold from Ophir, plus almug trees and precious stones. This wood "is thought by some to be the sandal-wood, the produce of a low shrub, resembling the privet, remarkable for the fragrance of the central parts of the stem near the root, and brought from some district of India, where it is still very abundant; by others, supposed to be the Deodar (*Cedrus deodara*), a species of fragrant fir, much used in India for sacred and important works. Solomon used it as well-fitted by its red colour to be ornamental for stairs in his temple and palace (2 Chr. 9:11), but chiefly for musical instruments" (JFB, p.325).
 - b. 2 Chronicles 9:11-12: "And the king made *of* the alium trees terraces to the house of the LORD, and to the king's palace, and harps and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah. And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside *that* which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants."
 - c. Solomon gave her whatever her heart desired. "Some imagine she desired progeny from the wise king of Israel; and all the traditions concerning her state that she had a son by Solomon called *Menilek*, who was brought up at the Israelitish court, succeeded his mother in the kingdom of Saba, and introduced among his subjects the Jewish religion" (Clarke, p.422). Traditions, it should be remembered, are often untrustworthy.
 - d. "The chronicler has, 'beside that which she had brought unto the king.' That is to say, in addition to the fitting presents which he made in return for her gifts, he freely gave her whatsoever she asked for. To ask for a coveted thing is no breach of Oriental propriety. The Ethiopian Christians find in these words (and considering the character of Solomon and the license of that age, perhaps not altogether without reason) a basis for their belief that she bore Solomon a son, Melimelek by name, from whom, indeed, the present sovereigns of Abyssinia claim to derive their descent" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].

B. 1 Kings 10:14-29: The Greatness of Solomon.

1. Verses 14-17: "Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold, Beside *that he had* of the merchantmen, and of the traffic of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country. And king Solomon made two hundred targets *of* beaten gold: six hundred *shekels* of gold went to one target. And *he made* three hundred shields *of* beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon."
- a. The gold which Solomon received annually amounted to six hundred, sixty-six talents; that which came to him from the merchants was over and above this amount. "The sources whence this was derived are not mentioned; nor was it the full amount of his revenue" (JFB, p.325).
- b. Solomon made two hundred targets (bucklers—ASV) of gold and three hundred shields of beaten gold. Six hundred shekels of gold went into the composition of one target.
- c. "These defensive arms were anciently made of wood, and covered with leather; Solomon's were covered with fine gold....The targets were circular, perhaps with an *umbo* or vortex protuberance in the centre, designed to be fastened on the person for the protection of the breast. The shields, which

were only half the weight of the targets, were made probably in the form of upright bucklers, borne by an armour-bearer....They were intended for the state armoury of the palace" (JFB, p.326).

- 1) Song of Songs 4:4: "Thy neck *is* like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men."
 - 2) Isaiah 22:24: "And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons."
 2. Verses 18-20: "Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round behind: and *there were* stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom."
 - a. 1 Kings 10:18-20: "Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne *was* round at the back; *there were* armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like *this* had been made for any *other* kingdom" (NKJ).
 - b. The throne upon which Solomon sat is described as an extraordinary item. It was made of ivory and overlaid with the finest gold. Six steps led up to the seat.
 - c. "It seems to have been made, not of solid ivory, but veneered. It was in the form of an arm-chair with a carved back. The ascent to it was by six steps, on each of which stood two lions, in place of a railing; while a lion, probably of gilt metal, stood at each side....A golden footstool is mentioned (2 Chr. 9:18) as attached to this throne, whose magnificence is described as unrivalled" (JFB, p.326).
 - d. 2 Chronicles 9:18: "And *there were* six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, *which were* fastened to the throne, and *stays* on each side of the sitting place, and two lions standing by the stays."
 3. Verses 21-23: "And 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; none *were of* silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom."
 - a. "All King Solomon's drinking vessels *were* gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon *were* pure gold. Not *one was* silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. For the king had merchant ships at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys. So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom" (NKJ).
 - b. The drinking vessels used by Solomon were made of gold; none were of silver, which was not highly valued in this prosperous age. The house of the forest of Lebanon is the house which was constructed from the cedars produced in that great forest. Both the temple and his palace were made from this wood. Solomon's wealth exceeded that of all other kings of his era; also his was the greatest wisdom.
 4. Verses 24-25: "And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year."
 - a. "And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year" (NKJ).
 - b. The wisdom of Solomon was so renowned that people from many places came to hear it. His wisdom is properly described as having been instilled in him by the power of God.
 - c. Those who came to him brought presents, including vessels made of silver and of gold; garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules; there was a continuing supply of these which he received annually.
 5. Verses 26-27: "And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem. And the king made silver *to be* in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he *to be* as the sycamore trees that *are* in the vale, for abundance."
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- a. "And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. The king made silver *as common* in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedar trees as abundant as the sycamores which *are* in the lowland" (NKJ).
 - b. He possessed a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. These were dispersed in the various cities equipped to take care of them; he had some of them near him at the city of Jerusalem.
 - c. During his time, he made silver to be as plenteous as stones, and cedar was as easily obtained as sycamore.
6. Verses 28-29: "And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring *them* out by their means."
- a. "Also Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh; the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the *current* price. Now a chariot that was imported from Egypt cost six hundred *shekels* of silver, and a horse one hundred and fifty; and thus, through their agents, they exported *them* to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria" (NKJ).
 - b. "And the horses which Solomon had were brought out of Egypt; and the king's merchants received them in droves, each drove at a price. And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty; and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means" (ASV).
 - c. The king procured horses from Egypt. "It is thought that the first people who used horses in war were the Egyptians; and it is well known that the nations who knew the use of this creature in battle had greatly the advantage of those who did not. God had absolutely prohibited horses to be imported or used; but in many things Solomon paid little attention to the Divine command" (Clarke, p.424).
 - d. Regarding "linen yarn," Clarke says that the original word is hard to be understood. "The versions are all puzzled by it: the *Vulgate* and *Septuagint* make it a proper name....Some think it signifies a *tribute*....Some suppose that *Mikveh* signifies the *string* or *cord* by which one horse's head is tied to the tail of another; and that the meaning is, Solomon brought *droves* of horses, thus tied, out of Egypt....If we understand it of *thread*, it may refer to the *byssus* or *fine flax* for which Egypt was famous..." (Clarke, p.424).
 - e. "The word translated 'linen yarn' is thought now by Hebraists to mean 'a troop' or 'company.' If the present reading is retained, they would translate the passage—'As for the bringing up of Solomon's horses out of Egypt, a band of the king's merchants fetched a band (or troop) of horses at a price.' But the reading is very uncertain. The Septuagint had before them a different one, which they render 'and from Tekoa.' Tekoa, the home of Amos (Amos 1:1), was a small town on the route from Egypt to Jerusalem, through which the horses would have naturally passed. The monuments of the 18th and of later dynasties make it clear that the horse, though introduced from abroad, became very abundant in Egypt. During the whole period of Egyptian prosperity the corps of chariots constituted a large and effective portion of the army. That horses were abundant in Egypt at the time of the Exodus is evident from Ex 9:3; 14:9,23,28; Deut 17:16. That they continued numerous in later times appears from frequent allusions, both in the Historical Books of Scripture and in the prophets, as 2 Kings 7:6; 18:24; Isa 36:9; Ezek 17:15, etc. The monuments show that the horse was employed by the Egyptians in peace no less than in war, private persons being often represented as paying visits to their friends in chariots" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - f. Verse twenty-nine seems to describe the market the Egyptians had for their horses, selling them not only to Solomon, but also to the Hittites and Syrians.
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1 KINGS 11

A. 1 Kings 11:1-8: Solomon's Rebellion.

1. Verses 1-2: "But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites; Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love."
 - a. "Solomon's extraordinary gift of wisdom was not sufficient to preserve him from falling into grievous and fatal errors. A fairer promise of true greatness, a more beautiful picture of juvenile piety, never was seen, than that which he exhibited at the commencement of his reign. No sadder, more humiliating, or awful spectacle can be imagined than the besotted apostasy of his old age..." (JFB, p.327).
 - b. "The cause assigned in the biblical account for Solomon's falling away from the Lord, is that he loved many strange, *i.e.* foreign or heathen, wives, who turned his heart from Jehovah to their own gods in his old age. Consequently the falling away did not take place suddenly, but gradually, as Solomon got old..." (Keil, p.166).
 - c. God had warned Israel at the beginning not to intermarry with the Canaanites, which included the nations named here. The Lord knew that these heathen women would be able to sway the Israelites into idolatry. Solomon knew this prohibition, but he violated it despite his knowledge and marvelous wisdom. He ignored other specific warnings. "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold" (Deut. 17:17).
 2. Verses 3-4: "And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, *that* his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of David his father."
 - a. Solomon selected seven hundred princesses, the major part of these were evidently from among the Canaanites. Besides these wives, he had three hundred concubines. His marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh is not denounced.
 - b. The danger of this arrangement is depicted in verse four: they turned his heart away from Jehovah, unto idols. His heart was not perfect, in contrast to the heart of David. His idolatry constituted sin. "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin" (Neh. 13:26).
 3. Verses 5-8: "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as *did* David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that *is* before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods."
 - a. The false gods which Solomon began to serve are identified as Astoreth, Milcom, Chemosh, and Molech. He even built a high place for Chemosh on the hill before Jerusalem. While he continued to worship God, his devotion was divided between the true God and these idols.
 - 1) Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
 - 2) James 4:4: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."
 - b. Astoreth: "Canaanite goddess Solomon followed through his relationship to Sidon (1 Kings 11:5,33). Josiah finally destroyed the altars Solomon built (2 Kings 23:13)" (Holman).
 - c. Milcom: "Name of deity meaning, 'king' or 'their king.' Apparently, a form created by Hebrew scribes to slander and avoid pronouncing the name of the national god of Ammon (1 Kings 11:5,7), who may
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have been identified with Chemosh, the god of Moab. See Chemosh. From the inscription of Mesha there appears to have been a god, Athar, whose local titles were Chemosh and Milcom. See Moab. This cult may have been practiced in Jerusalem before the Israelite conquest. 'King' may have been the god's name or his title as King of the gods. David defeated Ammon and confiscated the crown (2 Sa. 12:30) of their king (KJV, NASB, NIV) or of the statue of the god Milcom (NRSV, REB; compare TEV). Solomon built sanctuaries to Milcom on the Mount of Olives at the request of his foreign wives, reviving the ancient cult (1 Kings 11:5,33). The sites of Solomon's sanctuaries were destroyed and defiled during Josiah's reforms in 621 B.C. (2 Kings 23:13). Jeremiah described past accomplishments attributed to Milcom, but in a play on Judges 11:24, he announced destruction and captivity for Milcom (Jer. 49:1,3 NRSV, NASB, REB; compare NIV, TEV). Worshiping Milcom was turning one's back on Yahweh (Zeph. 1:5-6). See Molech" (Holman).

- d. Chemosh: "Divine name meaning, 'subdue.' The deity the Moabites worshiped (Num. 21:29). He was expected to provide land for Moab (Judg. 11:24). Solomon erected a sanctuary for Chemosh on a mountain east of Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:7). Josiah subsequently defiled the sanctuary (2 Kings 23:13). Jeremiah pronounced doom on Chemosh and his people (Jer. 48:7,13,46)" (Holman).
- e. Molech: "Divine name meaning, 'subdue.' The deity the Moabites worshiped (Num. 21:29). He was expected to provide land for Moab (Judg. 11:24). Solomon erected a sanctuary for Chemosh on a mountain east of Jerusalem (1 Kings 11:7). Josiah subsequently defiled the sanctuary (2 Kings 23:13). Jeremiah pronounced doom on Chemosh and his people (Jer. 48:7,13,46)" (Holman).

B. 1 Kings 11:9-13: God's Anger Against Solomon.

1. Verses 9-10: "And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded."
 - a. God had appeared to Solomon on two different occasions, and spoke with him. These supernatural experiences should have been more than enough motivation, coupled with God's law, to promote faithfulness on the part of the king. But he allowed himself to forget, and turned from the Lord.
 - b. God had expressly warned him against idolatry. "*But* if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments *and* my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people" (1 Kings 9:6-7).
2. Verse 11: "Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant."
 - a. God had given Solomon sufficient warning, which he ultimately ignored. He may have deceived himself into believing that he was still righteous, even though he worshiped these other gods.
 - b. The Lord told him plainly that, in view of his disobedience, he would tear the kingdom from his hands and give it unto one of the king's servants. The Lord is not saying that the dynasty of Solomon would disappear; in the light of the next passage, it was his intention to remove most of the kingdom from Solomon's dynasty, leaving only a small portion to continue.
 - c. Earlier, God had promised to lengthen the days of Solomon if he remained faithful. "And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days" (1 Kings 3:14). He might have lived many more years if had been loyal.
 - d. The closing verses of Ecclesiastes indicate Solomon's repentance toward the end of his days: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil" (Eccl. 12:13-14).
3. Verses 12-13: "Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: *but* I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; *but* will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."

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- a. Out of regard for David, God promised that he would not divide the kingdom during the lifetime of Solomon, but would do it after his son took over the reins of government. This would have a very sobering effect on Solomon.
 - b. It was necessary for God to maintain the dynasty of David through Solomon and his descendants in order for his many promises to be fulfilled in Christ. But it was not necessary that the entire nation of Israel remain under the united throne of David's descendants in order for the dynasty to continue.
 - c. One tribe would be left to future kings who would reign at Jerusalem, where the temple was situated. This would keep the true worship at this place where God had inscribed his name. We learn later that the tribe of Benjamin would also be aligned with the tribe of Judah, plus elements of the tribe of Levi.
- C. 1 Kings 11:14-22: God Stirs Up Hadad Against Solomon.
1. Verses 14-16: "And the LORD stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he *was* of the king's seed in Edom. For it came to pass, when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom; (For six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom)."
 - a. God was able, in ways known only to himself, to stir up Hadad, king of Edom, against Solomon. The purpose of this move was to bring a measure of punishment upon the unfaithful king of Israel.
 - b. Earlier, when David was in Edom, after Joab had buried those slain in the operation, then did Joab remain in Edom for six months, intending to kill every male Edomite who was capable of bearing arms. "And David gat *him* a name when he returned from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt, *being* eighteen thousand *men*. And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all they of Edom became David's servants. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went" (2 Sam. 8:13-14).
 - c. "It appears from the record (2 Sam. 8:13) that David in person gained a signal victory over the Edomites in the valley of Salt (cf. Ps. 9:6-12; 68:7-13). Beyond the bare announcement of the fact, however, no information is given; and we should have been left in complete ignorance of every circumstance connected with that campaign, but for a few incidental details introduced into this passage....It was assigned to Joab, after David's return to his capital, to carry out the victory. Accordingly he proceeded to Edom, and remained for six months in that country, pursuing a war of extermination against the adult male population" (JFB, p.330).
 2. Verses 17-20: "That Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad *being* yet a little child. And they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land. And Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's household among the sons of Pharaoh."
 - a. Joab apparently was largely successful, but the son of the king escaped, being carried into Egypt by certain servants of his father. At the time, Hadad was only a little boy.
 - b. Hadad and his company went into Paran first, where certain others joined the band; from thence the whole company entered into Egypt, where they were well-received. Pharaoh gave him food and land. He gave Hadad a wife, who was sister to his own wife. Pharaoh's wife was named Tahpenes.
 - c. Hadad's wife bore him a son, named Genubath. He was brought up among the sons of Pharaoh. Indeed, Hadad had found favor with Pharaoh.
 3. Verses 21-22: "And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country. Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing: howbeit let me go in any wise."
 - a. As time passed, Hadad learned that David and Joab were both dead. He requested permission from Pharaoh that he might return into his own country. The point of the passage is to give the background to Hadad's return to power to become an enemy of Solomon. "The return of Hadad to his native land
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is clearly to be inferred from the fact that, according to vers. 14 and 25, he rose up as an adversary of Solomon" (Keil, p.175).

- b. Pharaoh, who was not inclined to release him, asked what was he lacking in his present circumstance. Everything he could desire to have was his in Egypt, except the right to rule in his own land. He persisted in his request.
- c. How did the historian know about this conversation? He was not privy to it. The obvious answer is to be found in the fact of his inspiration.

D. 1 Kings 11:23-25: God Stirs up Rezon Against Solomon.

1. Verses 23-24: "And God stirred him up *another* adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah: And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them *of Zobah*: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus."
 - a. "This man, who had probably been general of Hadadezer, and on the defeat of that great king (2 Sam. 8:3-8) had successfully withdrawn a large force, went into the wilderness, led a predatory life, like Jephthah, David, and others, on the borders of the Syrian and Arabian deserts, and having acquired great power through the aid of the marauding party that followed him, at length became king in Damascus, threw off the yoke, and was 'the adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon'" (JFB, p.331).
 - b. "Rezon was an Aramean who, during the reign of David, gathered about himself a band of men, took control of Damascus, and later became an adversary of Israel during the days of Solomon" (Wacaster, ADL, p.85). The rule of Rezon would necessarily have been during the latter stage of the reign of Solomon, for earlier, Israel would have been too strong for such opposition.
2. Verse 25: "And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad *did*: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria."
 - a. The inspired historian states the fact that Hadad did mischief against Solomon. The preceding passage merely implied the trouble Hadad caused Israel.
 - b. Rezon, himself, abhorred Israel greatly. Because of this hatred, he likewise did what he was able to do against Solomon's kingdom.

E. 1 Kings 11:26-40: Jeroboam.

1. Verses 26-28: "And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up *his* hand against the king. And this *was* the cause that he lifted up *his* hand against the king: Solomon built Millo, *and* repaired the breaches of the city of David his father. And the man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph."
 - a. We are here introduced to a man who was to become one of the worst violaters of God's law of those ancient days. For generations, other evil men were to be compared to him as a measure of their wickedness. He was a member of the tribe of Ephraim. "Then Solomon's servant, Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zereda, whose mother's name *was* Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king" (NKJ).
 - b. His record begins with a reference to a rebellion he had led against Solomon. His story is important to the narrative, not primarily because of this insurrection, but for what he subsequently does. This detail of his history furnishes the immediate background for the upcoming events. It may be that the statement in verse 29, "and it came to pass *at that time*," carries with it a subtle reference to the rebellion indicated in verse 26.
 - c. Jeroboam was a servant of Solomon, the son of a widow woman. When Solomon built Millo and repaired the breaches in the city of David, he discovered the worth of Jeroboam. He is described as a mighty man of valor, and industrious. The king made him the leader of those who were responsible for the work assigned to the house of Joseph (the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh).
2. Verses 29-33: "And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two *were* alone in the field: And Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and rent it *in* twelve pieces: And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will

rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: (But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:) Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do *that which is* right in mine eyes, and to *keep* my statutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father."

- a. On some unnamed mission, as Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, he was met by the prophet Ahijah. On first reading, it is difficult to know which of the two men had on the new garment, but on closer inspection, it must be Ahijah. "The meaning is, Ahijah the Shilonite, the prophet, went and took a fit station *in the way*, and in order that he might not be known, *he wrapped himself up*, so as closely to conceal himself, in a *new garment*, a *surtout*, which he afterwards tore in twelve pieces" (JFB, p.332).
 - b. As Jeroboam approached, Ahijah tore the new garment into twelve pieces, giving ten of these pieces to the young man. The garment represents Israel. The fact that it was a new garment indicates that God considered the nation to be still young and virile, with a long history ahead of it.
 - c. The pieces represented the twelve tribes of the nation. "In the word of God explaining the action it is striking that Jeroboam was to receive *ten* tribes, and the *one* tribe was to remain to Solomon (vers. 31,32,35,36, as in ver. 13). The nation consisted of twelve tribes, and Ahijah had torn his garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten; so that there were two remaining. It is evident at once from this, that the numbers are intended to be understood symbolically and not arithmetically. *Ten* as the number of completeness and totality is placed in contrast to *one*, to indicate that all Israel was to be torn away from the house of David...and only one single fragment was to be left to the house of Solomon out of divine compassion. This one tribe, however, is not Benjamin, the one tribe beside Judah...but, according to the distinct statement in ch. 12:20, 'the tribe of Judah only.' Nevertheless Benjamin belonged to Judah; for, according to ch. 12:21, Rehoboam gathered together the whole house of Judah *and the tribe of Benjamin* to fight against the house of Israel... and to bring the kingdom again to himself....In reality there were three tribes that fell to the kingdom of Judah, and only nine to the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh being reckoned as two tribes, since the tribe of Levi was not counted in the political classification. The kingdom of Judah included, beside the tribe of Judah, both the tribe of Benjamin and also the tribe of Simeon, the territory of which, according to Josh. 19:1-9, was within the tribe-territory of Judah and completely surrounded by it, so that the Simeonites would have been obliged to emigrate and give up their tribe-land altogether, if they desired to attach themselves to the kingdom of Israel" (Keil, pp.179f). See these following passages for additional information:
 - 1) 2 Chronicles 15:9: "And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God *was* with him."
 - 2) 2 Chronicles 34:6: "And *so did he* in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about."
 - d. Ahijah pointed out the reason God had decided to rend the nation. Solomon and others had become contaminated by idolatry, and had not walked in the ways of God.
3. Verses 34-36: "Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there."
- a. The prophet's message is to the point: God respected the memory of David so much that he would not remove the entire nation from under the rule of the house of David; he would not do the rending during the lifetime of Solomon, but would bring this about following the death of Solomon.
 - b. God would give to Jeroboam ten of the tribes, but would leave the rest to the dynasty of David. The remaining tribes would be centered about Jerusalem, where the temple was constructed. These people

were to keep the true religion and law of God alive, in preparation for the coming Messiah.

4. Verses 37-40: "And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever. Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon."
 - a. Some conditions are given to Jeroboam, which if he heeded, would result in his house being made sure against the coming centuries, just as God had done for David. The conditions were to obey the will of God fully, keeping his statutes and commandments and walking in his ways. He would also retain control of the northern kingdom. The purpose of this plan of operation was to bring punishment to the seed of David, but the penalty would not be a never-ending proposition.
 - b. Solomon learned of the rebellion in which Jeroboam had entered. The king knew that God would divide the nation (verses 11-13). Solomon may have gained information of this encounter between Ahijah and Jeroboam. He sought to kill Jeroboam, but the young rebel arose and fled to Egypt, where he remained under Shishak's protection until Solomon died.

F. 1 Kings 11:41-43: Solomon's Death.

1. Verse 41: "And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, *are* they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?"
 - a. The inspired historian made reference to another book in which the acts of Solomon were recorded, along with information pertaining to his wisdom.
 - b. "These acts were written by Nathan the prophet, Ahijah the Shilonite, and Iddo the seer; as we learn from 2 Chron. 9:29" (Clarke, p.430).
 - c. 2 Chronicles 9:29: "Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, *are* they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?"
 2. Verses 42-43: "And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel *was* forty years. And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead."
 - a. "Solomon did not live to a very great age, since he was not more than twenty years old when he ascended the throne.—Whether Solomon turned to the Lord again with all his heart...cannot be ascertained from the Scriptures. If the Preacher (*Koheleth*) is traceable to Solomon so far as the leading thoughts are concerned, we should find in this fact an evidence of his conversion, or at least a proof that at the close of his life Solomon discovered the vanity of all earthly possessions and aims, and declared the fear of God to be the only abiding good, with which a man can stand before the judgment of God" (Keil, pp.182f).
 - b. "Calmet supposes him to have been *eighteen* years old when he came to the throne, and that he died A.M. 3029, aged *fifty-eight* years; and, when we consider the excess in which he lived, and the criminal passions which he must have indulged among his thousand wives, and their idolatrous and impure worship, this life was as long as could be reasonably expected" (Clarke, p.430).
 - c. After a reign of forty years, Solomon died; his age at death is not given. His body was buried in the city of David, and his son Rehoboam ascended the throne. The glory years of Israel were virtually over; a time of division and trouble lay ahead.
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1 KINGS 12

A. 1 Kings 12:1-11: Rehoboam's Fateful Policy.

1. Verse 1: "And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king."
 - a. "He was the eldest, if not the only, son of Solomon, and had been doubtless designated by his father heir to the throne, as Solomon had been by David. The incident here related took place after the funeral obsequies of the late king, and the period for public mourning had passed. When 'all Israel came to make him king—*i. e.*, the public representatives of all Israel..." (JFB, p.333).
 - b. Shechem: "Personal and place name meaning, 'shoulder, back.' 1. District and city in the hill country of Ephraim in north central Palestine. The first capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, the city was built mainly on the slope, or shoulder, of Mount Ebal. Situated where main highways and ancient trade routes converged, Shechem was an important city long before the Israelites occupied Canaan. The city makes its earliest appearance in biblical history in connection with Abram's arrival in the land (Gen. 12:6-7). When Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, he settled down at Shechem and purchased land from the sons of Hamor (33:18-19). In Genesis 33-34, Shechem was the name of the city and also of the prince of the city. While Jacob was at Shechem, the unfortunate incident of Dinah occurred. Simeon and Levi, her full brothers, destroyed the city (Gen. 34). Later, the brothers of Joseph were herding Jacob's flock at Shechem when Joseph was sent to check on their welfare. Joseph was buried in the plot of ground that his father Jacob had purchased here (Josh. 24:32). As the Israelites conquered Canaan, they turned unexpectedly to Shechem. Joshua built an altar on Mount Ebal and led the people in its building, renewing their commitment to the law of Moses (Josh. 8:30-35; compare Deut. 27:12-13). Shechem lay in the tribal territory of Ephraim near their border with Manasseh (Josh. 17:7). It was a city of refuge (Josh. 20:7) and a Levitical city (21:21). See Cities of Refuge; Levitical Cities. Joshua led Israel to renew its covenant with God there (Josh. 24:1-17). Gideon's son Abimelech fought the leaders of Shechem (Judg. 8:31-9:49). Rehoboam, successor to King Solomon, went to Shechem to be crowned king over all Israel (1 Kings 12:1). Later, when the nation divided into two kingdoms, Shechem became the first capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (1 Kings 12:25). Samaria eventually became the permanent political capital of the Northern Kingdom, but Shechem retained its religious importance. It apparently was a sanctuary for worship of God in Hosea's time about 750 B.C. (6:9). The name Shechem occurs in historical records and other sources outside Palestine. It is mentioned as a city captured by Senusert III of Egypt (before 1800 B.C.) and appears in the Egyptian cursing texts of about the same time. 'The mountain of Shechem' is referred to in a satirical letter of the Nineteenth Dynasty of Egypt. Shechem also figures in the Amarna Letters; its ruler, Lab'ayu, and his sons were accused of acting against Egypt, though the ruler protested that he was absolutely loyal to the pharaoh. At Shechem (sometimes identified with Sychar), Jesus visited with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well (John 4). The Samaritans had built their temple on Mount Gerizim, where they practiced their form of religion." (Holman, Rich Murrell).
 - c. Shechem is located about 35 miles north of Jerusalem, in the valley that lies between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. The valley forms a natural amphitheater, making it an ideal assembling location for a large gathering. McGarvey, commenting on Joshua, said there is "a recess in the side of Mount Gerizim, which forms a vast natural amphitheatre, and by a similar recess of almost the same dimensions exactly opposite in the side of Mount Ebal. The valley is here more than half a mile wide, and the chord of each of the amphitheatres is more than a quarter of a mile long, while the slopes of each mountain from base to summit is nearly half a mile....If it were possible, under any circumstances, for one man to read so as to be heard by such a multitude, this is the very place in which to do it. A number of travelers have tried the experiment of speaking to one another from mountain to mountain, and have succeeded with ease. The author tried the experiment of standing in the middle of the valley, with one of his companions half way up Mount Gerizim and the other halfway up Mount Ebal, and reading to them the curses in the 27th chapter of Deuteronomy. He was heard distinctly by the one on

Mount Gerizim and indistinctly by the one on Mount Ebal, the thick grove of olive-trees to the eastward obstructing the passage of the sound in that direction. If, therefore, the people could have stood in this vast double amphitheatre, which seems altogether probable, Joshua could have read to them without aid so that all could hear" (J.W. McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, p.287).

2. Verses 2-3: "And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard *of it*, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying."
 - a. The previous chapter gave the background of Jeroboam, and showed how he came to be in Egypt. He remained in that land until word came about Solomon's death. The prophet Ahijah had given him information from God that he would be given ten of the tribes over which to rule as king. He now returned to Israel.
 - b. With Jeroboam at their head, the men of the northern tribes approached Rehoboam at Shechem. It appears that they had already decided to lead the nation in revolt against him.
 3. Verses 4-5: "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them, Depart yet *for* three days, then come again to me. And the people departed."
 - a. The leaders in Israel made a request of Rehoboam that he lessen the burdens the people were forced to bear under Solomon. If he should do this, they vowed to serve him faithfully. The new king asked them to give him three days to consider the proposal.
 - b. "There are strong reasons for believing that the exactions of Solomon from his own people were heavy and severe, not only in regard to their contributions in produce (ch. 4:27), but to the compulsory levies of the able-bodied, married as well as unmarried, that were drafted periodically to work on the mountains, or in the subterranean quarries, at the public buildings and diversified undertakings, which fully justified the complaint made to his son....The people looked only to the burdens, not to the benefits they derived from Solomon's peaceful and prosperous reign; and the evils from which they demanded deliverance were civil oppressions, not idolatry, to which they appear to have been indifferent, or approved of it" (JFB, p.334).
 4. Verses 6-7: "And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever."
 - a. After dismissing the leaders who had made their appeal for a break in taxation, Rehoboam consulted with the old men who had assisted Solomon. Their sage counsel was that he give them an affirmative reply to their request, for thus would he obtain their undivided loyalty.
 - b. "The way to insure the obedience of the people is to hold the reins of empire with a steady and impartial hand; let the people see that the king lives for them and not for himself; and they will obey, love, and defend him....A good king has no self-interest; and such a king will ever have obedient and loving subjects. The haughty, proud tyrant will have a suspicious and jealous people, hourly ripening for revolt" (Clarke, p.435).
 5. Verses 8-9: "But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him: And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?"
 - a. The counsel of these wise old men was displeasing to Rehoboam, who evidently thought that a king was measured by the strength with which he wielded his authority. There are those who perceive kindness to be weakness, and to concede is to show frailty.
 - b. The young men who had grown up with him were of one mind with the youthful king. Rehoboam had probably already made up his mind, but asked these young advisors what they recommended.
 - c. There is great energy and boldness in the young, but wisdom and knowledge require years of life and experience to develop.
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6. Verses 10-11: "And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little *finger* shall be thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."
- a. Their inexperience, lack of knowledge and seasoning, and bravado caused them to render the most foolish of counsel. Their reply may have had ulterior motives. Both they and Rehoboam had seen the lavish style of Solomon's life, and undoubtedly wanted to live in opulent splendor; instead of cutting back on taxation, an increase might be necessary. He was to tell them that his little finger was thicker than his father's thigh, thus to indicate how much more demanding he would be than his father.
 - b. The youthful advisors recommended that he draw a contrast between himself and his father, telling the people that he was a far stronger ruler than Solomon was, that he would multiply their load, and that Solomon had chastised them with whips, but he would use scorpions with which to afflict them.
 - c. The ordinary whip with which criminals were beaten was severe enough, but the implement called a "scorpion" was even worse. "The latter, as contrasted with the former, are supposed to mean thongs thickly set with hard knots and sharp iron points, used in the castigation of slaves; sometimes in after-times inflicted on Christian martyrs....Scourging was performed by prostrating the victim on the ground at full length; while his limbs were kept down by force, a person with a whip lashed him on the bare back. The whip having several lashes, accords with the account of the Jews, that theirs had three thongs, thirteen strokes of which gave thirty-nine lashes. It is thought by some that this was what was meant by 'scorpions,' inflicted usually on slaves; and if so, the taunt of Rehoboam implied that he would be a despot, and treat his subjects as serfs" (JFB, p.334).
- B. 1 Kings 12:12-20: Israel Rebels Against Rehoboam and Makes Jeroboam King.
1. Verses 12-15: "So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat."
 - a. When the people returned to him at the prescribed time, Rehoboam gave them the reply his young advisors had recommended. We may imagine that he delivered the response with a strong tone of voice, making it exceedingly clear that he meant what he said.
 - b. He had rejected the wise counsel of his seasoned advisors, and accepted the foolish verdict of his playmates. In the church today, there are many *young turks* occupying pulpits and classrooms, and even serving in the eldership, who are quite as foolhardy as Rehoboam's backers. These are bound to do to the church what their predecessors did to ancient Israel.
 - c. We are told by the inspired historian that the decree issued by Rehoboam was in keeping with God's plan. He had promised Jeroboam that ten pieces of Israel would be given to him, with Solomon's son retaining a tiny fragment of the whole piece. This does not mean that God operated directly on the minds of Rehoboam and his advisors so that they were forced to give this response.
 - 1) Certain individuals will react in a certain way when they are brought under certain circumstances. Even we are able to predict how a person will respond to a given set of pressures.
 - 2) God is fully able to know such things. He knew how pharaoh would respond to his demands that he release his Israelite slaves. He knew how Rehoboam would react to the circumstances noted in the text. However, he did not coerce the young king to make this decision; he knew how he would react to the situation, and made his promises accordingly.
 - d. 1 Corinthians 11:19: "For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you" (NKJ).
 2. Verses 16-20: "So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king,
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saying, What portion have we in David? neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But *as for* the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who *was* over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only."

- a. The Israelites perceived that the new king, the grandson of David, would not change his mind; it was necessary that they take drastic action. They stated that they had nothing to gain from the dynasty of David, so they would return to their own tents and see to their own affairs; let David see to his own. Of course, David had been dead for forty years, so their reference was not to him personally; it was to his dynasty, the latest representative of which was Rehoboam, and to those over whom he was to conduct his reign.
- b. The members of the northern tribes who lived within the territory of Judah remained there, under the reign of Rehoboam, but the rest of those tribes seceded from the kingdom, and went about to set up their own government.
- c. When Rehoboam sent Adoram to collect taxes in the northern territory, he was stoned to death. The wisest thing the youthful king had done to the time was quickly to flee to Jerusalem in his chariot. He had remained at Shechem, foolishly thinking that he was master over the whole nation, but the killing of Adoram put an end to this misconception.
- d. The rebellion was accomplished; the kingdom was divided; God's word delivered through Ahijah [1 Kings 11:29-31] was fulfilled. The men of Israel (the ten northern tribes) made Jeroboam their king, leaving only the tribe of Judah to serve the dynasty of David.

C. 1 Kings 12:21-24: Rehoboam Proposes a War Against the Rebels.

1. Verse 21: "And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon."
 - a. After returning to Jerusalem, Rehoboam assembled the men of Judah and Benjamin, drawing from their ranks an army of 180,000 warriors.
 - b. This was a formidable army. It was his intention to reunite the nation by force of arms. If the plan had been allowed to proceed, doubtless there would have been great bloodshed on both sides.
 - c. "With the exception of Adoram, the revolution in the Northern kingdom was a bloodless one. In all likelihood, Rehoboam would have lost his life were it not for his hasty retreat to Jerusalem. The reference to 'David' and the 'house of David' was a recognition of the complete severance of the ten tribes from Jerusalem. Little consideration was being given to the demands of Israel, so why give homage to the rule that was coming out of Jerusalem? From this point on in the narrative of the Kings, the term 'children of Israel' will be used to refer exclusively to the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom" (Wacaster, ADL, p.87).
2. Verses 22-24: "But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD."
 - a. "Rehoboam determined to assert his authority by leading a large force into the disaffected provinces. But the revolt of the ten tribes was completed when the prophet Shemaiah ordered, in the Lord's name, an abandonment of any hostile measures against the revolutionists. This seasonable and gracious interposition was designed to prevent the miseries of civil war, in attempting to undo a schism which had originated in the Divine decree, and been pre-intimated by his commissioned prophet (ch. 11:29-31). The army, overawed by the Divine prohibition, dispersed, and the king was obliged to submit"

(JFB, pp.335f).

- b. "Two important lessons can be learned from this incident. First, God can, and often does, work out his purposes and plans in spite of the wicked devices of man. That Israel's rejection was wrong cannot be denied; but it would be by this means that God would bring about his purpose of taking the kingdom away from the house of Solomon. Second, what may appear to us as a hopeless situation can work out for the good of those who are called according to the purpose of God. The present ills in the church are certainly discouraging, and no faithful saints rejoice in the division which is becoming more and more a reality with every passing day. However, God will use the present distress that is come upon us to purge his body and make it stronger" (Wacaster, ADL, p.88).
- c. 1 Corinthians 11:19: "For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you" (NKJ). "For there must be also factions among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you" (ASV). "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (KJV).

D. 1 Kings 12:25-33: Jeroboam's Sinful Decision.

1. Verses 25-27: "Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, *even* unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah."
 - a. Jeroboam at first set up his headquarters at Shechem, and later rebuilt Penuel [Judg. 8:17], which was on the east side of Jordan. Shechem's "importance must always have been of a commercial rather than a military character, for it is so completely overtopped by Mount Gerizim as to be comparatively indefensible. It was doubtless for this reason that Jeroboam, who made it the first seat of his government, soon abandoned it and chose the loftily perched Tirze in preference" (McGarvey, p.289).
 - b. Jeroboam decided that if the people continued to go to Jerusalem to worship at the temple, then before long they would return to Rehoboam's political control. In this case, he figured that they must kill him. Apparently he did not believe that God, who had given him the ten tribes, would be able to protect him. If Jeroboam had had greater faith in God, think of the awful tragedies that might have been averted.
 2. Verses 28-30: "Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before the one, *even* unto Dan."
 - a. Jeroboam reached a conclusion that determined the bitter future of his people. He decided to erect two golden calves as objects of worship. He told his people that he built them out of concern for their comfort and ease; it was too great an effort and expense for them to go to Jerusalem to worship; now they could worship at a place close to their homes.
 - b. He asserted to his people that these two gods had brought them up out of Egypt. Any Israelite who knew the history of his people could know that this was an outright falsehood. One prominent story in their history was the great error committed by the people in the episode of the golden calf; Aaron had fashioned it at the demand of the people, while Moses was in the mountain receiving God's law. They should have been well aware of the disastrous consequences of their idolatry when Moses came back to camp (Exodus 32). Solomon had paved the way to the current entrance into idolatry by his own ungodly example. The influence of leaders is too great to properly gauge; the influence of any one of us is also far greater than we may know.
 - c. Jeroboam placed one of his golden calves at Dan and the other at Bethel. Dan was on the northern end of his territory and Bethel was on the southern end. These were strategically placed to make it easier for the people to utilize.
 3. Verses 31-33: "And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that *is* in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing
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unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, *even* in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense."

- a. When Jeroboam made the decision to set up the idols, he committed himself to a whole range of sinful innovations. The idols necessitated a "holy place," a priesthood, and a complete religious system. He selected for priests the lowest of the people, men who were not of the tribe of Levi.
 - b. He appointed a feast to correspond with the one held at Jerusalem on the fifteenth day of the eighth month. He sacrificed calves on the altar he had erected at Bethel.
 - c. The inspired historian makes it clear that all of this Jeroboam "had devised of his own heart." God had given him the political office he occupied, but he had not granted him the right to establish any new religion. We were told in verse thirty, "This thing became a sin."
 - d. His religious system was one that resembled the true religion God had revealed through Moses, and which was being practiced at Jerusalem, but it was a counterfeit religion. There are many religious groups which resemble the church of Christ, but they are mere shams; they are counterfeit churches; they are empty of any God-given authority. It is easy for sectarians to perceive the errors committed by Jeroboam, but their eyes are closed so that they cannot see that they have done the same thing.
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1 KINGS 13

A. 1 Kings 13:1-10: The Younger Prophet Cries Out Against Jeroboam's Altar at Bethel.

1. Verses 1-2: "And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."
 - a. God was fully aware of the sinful conduct of Jeroboam, and had decided on a plan by which his wickedness would be exposed and punished. He sent a prophet from Judah to Bethel. His name is not given, but is only described as a "man of God." The mission of this prophet was to announce God's great displeasure with Jeroboam's religious system.
 - b. The timing of the prophet's arrival at Bethel was such that King Jeroboam, who also served as high priest, was at the altar burning incense. The courage of the prophet was unsurpassed, for despite the presence of the king himself, this great man of God cried out against the altar, and thus against the man at whose command the altar (and all that pertained to it) was built.
 - 1) The previous chapter told of the appointment of priests to serve the altars, and golden calves who were the objects of worship under this new system; he even set up feast days which corresponded to those which God had made part of the Mosaic order.
 - 2) An altar and a golden calf had been fashioned and placed at Bethel and Dan. "The altar and its accompaniments would of course exhibit all the splendor of a new and gorgeously decorated temple" (JFB, p.337). Evidently, Jeroboam erected some sort of temple at each location in which was housed an idol.
 - c. The prophetic denunciation announced that a baby would be born into the ranks of David's lineage, who would burn the priests of Jeroboam's high places upon the altars Jeroboam had erected. The name of this child is given [Josiah].
 - d. "This is one of the most remarkable and most singular prophecies in the Old Testament. It here most circumstantially foretells a fact which took place *three hundred and forty years* after the prediction; a fact which was attested by the two nations. The *Jews*, in whose behalf this prophecy was delivered, would guard it most sacredly; and it was the interest of the *Israelites*, against whom it was leveled, to impugn its authenticity and expose its falsehood, had this been possible. This prediction not only showed the *knowledge* of God, but his *power*. He gave, as it were, this warning to idolatry, that it might be on its guard, and defend itself against this Josiah, whenever a person of that name should be found sitting on the throne of David; and no doubt it was on the alert and took all prudent measures for its own defence; but all in vain, for Josiah, in the *eighteenth* year of his reign, literally accomplished this prophecy..." (Clarke, p.438).
 - e. The fulfillment of the prophecy is given in 2 Kings 23:15-20: "Moreover the altar that *was* at Bethel, *and* the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, *and* stamped *it* small to powder, and burned the grove. And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that *were* there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned *them* upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. Then he said, What title *is* that that I see? And the men of the city told him, *It is* the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel. And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria. And all the houses also of the high places that *were* in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke *the LORD* to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel. And he slew all the priests of the high places that *were* there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to

Jerusalem."

2. Verse 3: "And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This *is* the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out."
 - a. To prove that his prediction was not an empty threat, the prophet provided a miraculous sign. He described the sign before it was given: the altar would be rent and the ashes upon it would be spilled. The next two verses report the sign, which quickly followed its announcement.
 - b. The primary purpose of miracles in the Bible was to confirm the message of an inspired spokesman.
 - 1) Christ declared that he had forgiven the sins of a certain palsied man, and then furnished a miracle to prove that he could forgive sins. "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion" (Mark 2:9-12).
 - 2) Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
 - 3) Hebrews 2:2-4: "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
3. Verses 4-5: "And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD."
 - a. Jeroboam knew that his authority was being challenged by this prophet from Judah. The king put forth his hand to direct that his antagonist be apprehended and punished. Immediately Jeroboam's hand was "dried up" so that he could not pull it back. At the same time, the altar was torn so that the ashes on it were spilled.
 - b. "The whole arm became suddenly rigid; the nerves no longer communicated their influence, and the muscles ceased to obey the dictates of the will" (Clarke, pp.438f).
 - c. The sequence of the events related in the chapter to this point would have required only a short time, perhaps only a few minutes. The denunciation was delivered, the prophecy presented, and the signs were there for all to see.
 - d. "This is one of the most remarkable prophecies recorded in the Scriptures; and in its clearness, circumstantial minuteness, and exact prediction of an event that took place 360 [Clarke says 340 years] years after it, stands in striking contrast to the obscure and ambiguous oracles of the heathen. Being publicly uttered, it must have been well known to the people; and every Jew who lived at the accomplishment of the event must have been convinced of the truth of a religion connected with such a prophecy as this. A present sign was given of the remote event predicted, in a visible fissure being miraculously made on the altar. Incensed at the man's license of speech, Jeroboam stretched out his hand, and ordered his attendants to seize the bold intruder: that moment the king's arm became stiff and motionless, and the altar split asunder, so that the fire and ashes fell on the floor" (JFB, p.337).
4. Verses 6-7: "And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as *it was* before. And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward."
 - a. "Overawed by the effects of his impiety, Jeroboam besought the prophet's prayer. His request was acceded to, and the hand was restored to its healthy state" (JFB, p.337).

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- b. The king was humbled, for a moment, with this sudden event, which adversely affected his person and his self-ordained religion. He correctly perceived that the prophet had indeed spoken the word of the Almighty, and thus asked that his arm be restored.
 - c. In view of the fact that Jeroboam did not annul his religious system and return to the true religion of God, the impact of these events had no lasting effect on him. This seems so strange, for he clearly understood that God was opposed to him. Perhaps he convinced himself later that there was some natural way to explain the sudden paralysis of his arm and the rending of the altar; or maybe he was too proud and stubborn to repent.
 - d. "As Jeroboam could do nothing by force against the prophet, he endeavoured to gain him over to his side by friendliness, that at least he might render his threat harmless in the eyes of the people. For this purpose, and not to do him honour or to make him some acknowledgment for the restoration of his hand, he invited him to his house, to strengthen himself with food..." (Keil, p.204).
5. Verses 8-10: "And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel."
- a. "Jeroboam was artful, and invited the prophet to the royal table, not to do him honour, or show his gratitude for the restoration of his hand, but to win, by his courtesy and liberal hospitality, a person whom he could not crush by his power. But the prophet informed him of a Divine injunction, expressly prohibiting him from all social intercourse with any in the place, as well as from returning the same way. The prohibition not to eat or drink in Bethel was because all the people had become apostates from the true religion; and had he done so he could not have prophesied against the place, after having eaten with the people, without violating all the existing laws of hospitality....The reason of his not being allowed to return the same way was, lest he should be recognized by any whom he had seen in going, and be detained by them to discuss the nature of his mission, or be ill-treated by any of the inhabitants for his denunciations against their altar" (JFB, pp.337f).
 - b. The prophet answered Jeroboam, saying that he would not accept the invitation even if the king were to offer him half the kingdom. To have received the king's hospitality would imply that the king was not so evil after all; it would indicate that the prophet accepted him, and that since he was on a God-given mission, that Jehovah also accepted Jeroboam.
 - c. Christians are to do nothing toward those who have been withdrawn from by the church, which would suggest to them that we condone their evil conduct.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 5:9,11: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators....But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15: "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother."
 - d. Christians are to mark and avoid false teachers and to do nothing that might condone their efforts or promote their evil work.
 - 1) Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - 2) 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For
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he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

- e. Christians are not to associate too closely with sinful people of the world lest they give their influence to their evil ways.
 - 1) Ephesians 5:11: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 6:16-18: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."
- f. The prophet started back to his home in Judah, traveling by a different route from the one he used on his way to Bethel.

B. 1 Kings 13:11-19: The Old Prophet Deceives the Younger Prophet.

1. Verses 11-13: "Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them they told also to their father. And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon."
 - a. An old prophet lived at Bethel, who learned of the activities of the man of God from Judah. The man of God from Judah is usually referred to as the *young prophet*, although we are not told how old he was; our reference is based on the fact that the other prophet is said to be old. We would be more accurate in describing him as the *younger* prophet.
 - b. The old prophet wanted to know the route taken by the younger prophet, so that he might overtake him and bring him home with him. We are not told the reason for this. Having his sons to saddle his donkey, the old man went to seek his younger counterpart.
 - c. Was the old prophet a true prophet? If so, why was he residing in Bethel? Did he ever speak against Jeroboam's false religion? Was he a false prophet? Since he lied to the man from Judah, we gather that he was not a true prophet of God; at least, he was not a faithful prophet.
 2. Verses 14-15: "And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, *Art* thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, *I am*. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread."
 - a. The old prophet found the younger man sitting under an oak tree, evidently resting from the rigors of his journey. Very likely he was weary and faint from the ordeal of travel and lack of food. The older man invited the younger one to go home with him to eat.
 - b. Again, why did he offer this invitation? He may not have known that the traveler was directly told not to eat while in Jeroboam's territory; if not, then his invitation may have been out of a desire to show hospitality. If he did know, he may have wanted to entice him into a violation of his orders, and thus bring the younger man into the spiritual condition he occupied himself.
 3. Verses 16-17: "And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest."
 - a. The man from Judah told him plainly that his instructions forbade him to go with him or to eat with him. He further stated that he was not permitted to return by the same route he used in coming.
 - b. If the man of God from Judah could be induced to violate the instructions God gave him, then the message he had pronounced against the altar at Bethel would be negated in the eyes of Jeroboam's people. Things could continue as they were; the people could rationalize their violations of God's will, and be at ease in their conscience.
 - c. Self-deceit is easily practiced and difficult to remove. The only way to throw off self-deception is to take a long, open-minded look into God's word, and be ready to accept the truth found there. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth
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to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).

4. Verses 18-19: "He said unto him, *I am* a prophet also as thou *art*; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. *But* he lied unto him. So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water."
 - a. The old man asserted that he was a prophet also (which was true), and that an angel had spoken to him (which was not true). He claimed that the angel had directed him to intercept the young man of God and bring him back to his house for food and drink. The inspired historian reports that this was a lie. It is certain that God would not have inspired him to deliver a fabrication.
 - b. The young man was taken in by this falsehood. Doubtless he was tired and hungry, and the invitation came at his weakest moment. Satan tried to entice Christ to commit sin when the Lord was at his most vulnerable point, following forty days of fasting (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13).
 - c. The old prophet condoned what Jeroboam was doing, and probably had a hand in it. If the words of the man of God from Judah were not derailed, the old man would lose his influence with the king. If this old prophet was not involved with Jeroboam, then he had not done his duty; God had to import a faithful prophet to correct the problem, which would have embarrassed the old prophet. Perhaps, the old prophet had corrupted himself in some other way, so that God would not use him, which would have mortified the old man. These seem to be the most likely explanations for the sinful practice of the old prophet.

C. 1 Kings 13:20-32: The Death of the Younger Prophet.

1. Verses 20-23: "And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which *the LORD* did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers."
 - a. During the meal, an inspired message was delivered to the younger prophet through his host. This does not prove that the old prophet was approved of God, for he later used a sinful high priest to deliver a message. "And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John 11:49-52).
 - b. The message stated that the younger prophet had disobeyed God, when he returned with the old man to eat food and drink water. Consequently, his punishment would be death, and his body would not be buried in the sepulchres of his family. To disobey the word of God is to show despite for God. Notice how the two ideas are used interchangeably in these two verses:
 - 1) 2 Samuel 12:9: "**Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD**, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife *to be* thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon."
 - 2) 2 Samuel 12:10: "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; **because thou hast despised me**, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife."
 - c. The younger prophet had been given his instructions; he understood them; he even repeated them at least twice (to Jeroboam and the old prophet). He listened to the old man's words, and accepted his lie for the truth (vs. 18). If God had changed his orders for the younger man, he would have made it known to him in a way that could not be mistaken.
 - d. Balaam was ordered by the Lord not to go with the men from Moab, who sought to get him to curse Israel (Num. 22:12). Later, the Moabites returned with the same request, and offered a great reward if he would pronounce the curse (22:15-19).
 - 1) When Balaam asked God about it, the Lord told him to go (22:20). God's anger was kindled against

- the prophet. He had been given his orders not to go, but when he set his heart to go after the reward, God told him to go ahead—since this was what he was determined to do anyway.
- 2) The younger prophet had received his orders, which God had not changed; he allowed himself to be deceived by the other man into thinking it was now all right for him to disobey his orders.
 - 3) Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."
2. Verses 23-24: "And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase."
 - a. After the meal, the old man saddled the donkey for the younger prophet. As he made his way toward home in Judah, a lion attacked and slew him, leaving his body uneaten and the donkey unharmed.
 - b. "You doubtless say and reason now, just as I am disposed to do, that the old prophet was guilty of the greater sin. Let me ask you: Why didn't God kill the old man, who told the lie, rather than the young prophet, who believed the lie? I think the answer lies here. There are other passages in the Bible that have to deal with the teller of the lie. There are plenty of other scriptures and examples that deal out the punishment and portray the destiny of those who misrepresent and who are guilty of lying. But the special reason for this story's being written is to impress upon you and me the danger of believing a lie, and I don't doubt but that in due time that old gentleman received his share of condemnation for having told the lie" (N.B. Hardeman, *Tabernacle Sermons*, Vol. 2, pp.78f).
 - c. "This lie prevailed. The man who was proof against danger, against flattery, against avarice, was overcome by the plausibility of a lie. Notice, now, that it is not a bad man, but a brave and good man, who is thus overcome. Even such a man is not free from danger at this point. Many a man just as brave and true in many particulars, has been led to his own undoing by the belief of a lie....The feast ended in gloom. The young man departed with a sense of guilt weighing him down; and he wondered, no doubt, what a mysterious fate was involved in the words which had come from the Lord....What do you suppose was uppermost in his mind as his life was being crushed out of him? Was it the thought of the lion, or was it the thought of his sin? O brethren, what can be the thought of danger or pain when we are dying, compared with the thought that we are dying in sin" (J.W. McGarvey, *Sermons*, pp.231-233).
 - d. The purpose of the story of the younger prophet being placed in the inspired record is clearly shown in Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."
 - e. The grave danger of believing a lie is declared in other parts of the Scriptures.
 - 1) Matthew 15:13-14: "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
 - f. A lie that is believed, which leads one to commit some act of sin, will condemn the soul even though the individual has acted sincerely.
 - 1) Sin is the transgression of God's word (1 John 3:4), either by doing what God has forbidden (1 John 5:17) or by not doing what he has required (Jas. 4:17). The unbelievers in Israel were guilty of sin, even though they were very sincere and zealous.
 - 2) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they
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- being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
3. Verses 25-26: "And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt. And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard *thereof*, he said, *It is* the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake unto him."
 - a. When some men traveling down the road saw the dead prophet, with the lion and donkey standing nearby, they took the news to the city where the old prophet lived. He knew that the message given through him to the younger man had been fulfilled.
 - b. The sight of the lion standing near the donkey and the dead prophet was most extraordinary. "The lion, contrary to its nature, had neither consumed the prophet whom it had slain, nor torn in pieces and devoured the ass upon which he rode, but had remained standing by the corpse and by the ass, that the slaying of the prophet might not be regarded as a misfortune that had befallen him, by accident, but that the hand of the Lord might be manifest therein, so that passers-by saw this marvel and related it in Bethel" (Keil, pp.205f).
 4. Verses 27-28: "And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled *him*. And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass."
 - a. "There was a wood near Beth-el infested with lions (2 Ki. 2:24). This sad catastrophe was a severe but necessary judgment of God, to attest the truth of the message with which the prophet had been charged. The whole circumstances of this tragic occurrence—the undevoured carcase, the untouched ass, the passengers unmolested by the lion, though standing there—were calculated to produce an irresistible impression that the hand of God was in it" (JFB, p.339).
 - b. God used bears to inflict punishment on certain rebellious youths who reviled one of his prophets. "And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them" (2 Kings 2:24).
 - c. The old prophet rode out to the site, and found the scene as described. Why did he take this interest in the young man, seeing he had been instrumental in his death? Perhaps he was now convinced of his own guilt, and sought to make amends, such as he was able. The young man brought the penalty of death upon himself for his violation of God's directions.
 5. Verses 29-32: "And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him. And he laid his carcase in his own grave; and they mourned over him, *saying*, Alas, my brother! And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulchre wherein the man of God *is* buried; lay my bones beside his bones: For the saying which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which *are* in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass."
 - a. He loaded the young man's body on his animal, and brought it back to Bethel, where he mourned for him. We have no reason to doubt his sincerity in mourning for his dead "brother."
 - b. He buried him in his own tomb, and gave instructions that his own body was to be placed beside this young man's body at his death. "His motive to making this request was either that his remains might not be disturbed when the predicted events took place (see. 2 Ki. 23:18), or he had some superstitious hope of being benefitted at the resurrection by being in the same grave with a man of God" (JFB, p.339).
 - c. Generations later, reference was made to these two prophets being buried together. "Then he said, What title *is* that that I see? And the men of the city told him, *It is* the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel. And he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria" (2 Kings 23:17-18).
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D. 1 Kings 13:33-34: Jeroboam Persists in his Sinful Conduct.

1. Verse 33: "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high places."
 - a. Despite the ominous warnings thundered out by the man of God from Judah, and the miraculous signs which he had seen, Jeroboam refused to repent of the evil activities he had initiated. Why?
 - 1) The news of the young man's death by the lion may have given him an excuse to ignore the prophetic warning. He might have thought, not being privy to the reason for the lion's attack, that the man from Judah was not a spokesman from God.
 - 2) Perhaps Jeroboam's own selfishness to retain his position caused him to reject the warning.
 - b. Jeroboam continued to appoint to the priesthood any one who desired that position.
 2. Verse 34: "And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut *it* off, and to destroy *it* from off the face of the earth."
 - a. His persistence in his ungodly conduct resulted in sin for himself, and for those who followed his evil lead. It also ended eventually in the destruction of his house. The dynasty of Jeroboam came to an end, and the kingdom he established was destroyed by the Assyrians.
 - b. The effects of his sin were wide-spread and long-running.
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1 KINGS 14

A. 1 Kings 14:1-16: Jeroboam's Attempt to Deceive Ahijah the Prophet.

1. Verses 1-4: "At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam; and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there *is* Ahijah the prophet, which told me that *I should be* king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child. And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of his age."
 - a. 1 Kings 14:1-4: "At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick. And Jeroboam said to his wife, 'Please arise, and disguise yourself, that they may not recognize you as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh. Indeed, Ahijah the prophet *is* there, who told me that *I would be* king over this people. Also take with you ten loaves, *some* cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what will become of the child.' And Jeroboam's wife did so; she arose and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were glazed by reason of his age" (NKJ).
 - b. This incident likely occurred toward the end of Jeroboam's reign. "Abijah was of age, and considered by the people the heir to the throne" (JFB, p.339).
 - c. "His natural and intense anxiety as a parent is here seen, blended with the deep and artful policy of an apostate king. The reason of his extreme caution was an unwillingness to acknowledge that he looked for information as to the future, not to any of the prophets of Beth-el, but to an independent prophet of the true God; a fear that this step, if publicly known, might endanger the stability of his whole political system....For these reasons he selected his wife as in every view the most proper for such a secret and confidential errand, but recommended her to assume the garb and manner of a peasant. Strange infatuation! to suppose that the God who could reveal futurity could not penetrate a flimsy disguise" (JFB, pp.339f).
 - d. Jeroboam instructed his wife to disguise herself and go to the prophet to learn the future of the child, whether he would live or die. She was to take some bread and a container of honey, plus cracknels, which were a kind of cake or biscuit which crumbled easily (JFB, p.340).
 - e. Jeroboam thought he could deceive the old prophet, especially since he was now blind. There was no more chance of him succeeding in this underhanded scheme than it is for others to beguile Christ in the Judgment (cf. Mt. 7:21-23; Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 - f. Jeroboam had been warned that he must be obedient to God's word if he wanted the Lord's bounty. "And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee" (1 Kings 11:38).
 2. Verses 5-6: "And the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he *is* sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself *to be* another woman. And it was *so*, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself *to be* another? for I *am* sent to thee *with heavy tidings*."
 - a. The Lord revealed to the prophet that Jeroboam's wife was coming to inquire about their son, and that she would be pretending to be someone other than the king's wife. He told Ahijah what to say to the woman.
 - b. When Ahijah heard the woman's approaching step, as she entered his house, he invited the "wife of Jeroboam" to enter, and asked why she was trying to conceal her true identity. Remember that the prophet was old and blind; he could see through her disguise, even though he could not see at all.
 - c. The prophet stated that he had some hard news to reveal to her, a statement that doubtless chilled her heart.
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3. Verses 7-9: "Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, And rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and *yet* thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do *that* only *which* was right in mine eyes; But hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back."
- a. She was instructed to return to her husband with a message from God, a revelation given through the prophet which exposed the king's rebellion against God. The Lord had given ten tribes of Israel to Jeroboam, rending that part of the kingdom from David's dynasty as punishment for the sins of Solomon.
 - b. Despite this great favor, Jeroboam had not been willing to follow the law of God; this was in contrast to the obedient spirit which characterized David. Although David committed sin on occasion, when he realized his error, he sincerely repented.
 - c. The Lord accused Jeroboam with being more wicked than any who preceded him on the throne in Israel, which included Saul, David, Solomon, and Rehoboam. He had made the golden calves and had developed a religious system which was followed by the people. *He had thrown God behind his back.* The figure seems to be that of a man traveling down a road, carrying a burden; finding an item in his pack which was not worthy of transporting, the man would throw it away. This is what Jeroboam had done with the Almighty; he considered God's will to be a thing of unimportance, which could be cast aside and replaced by a system of his own invention. God's word is not cumbersome to one who sees its value: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:2-3).
4. Verses 10-13: "Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, *and* him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken *it*. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: *and* when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found *some* good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam."
- a. "Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every man-child, him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel, and will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam, as a man sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the birds of the heavens eat: for Jehovah hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thy house: *and* when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward Jehovah, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam" (ASV).
 - b. "Therefore behold! I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male in Israel, bond and free; I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as one takes away refuse until it is all gone. The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Jeroboam and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field; for the LORD has spoken! Arise therefore, go to your own house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he is the only one of Jeroboam who shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something good toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam" (NKJ).
 - c. God promises to bring evil against Jeroboam's family, to the extent that every male descendant would be cut off. Those who were "shut up and left in Israel" is a reference to those who were concealed with the greatest privacy; the offspring of the king were thus protected from public view and harm. But though Jeroboam's offspring were hidden and protected, yet God's punishment would find them.
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- d. Jeroboam's house would be thoroughly removed, just as a stable is cleaned of the refuse which builds up over the winter and is taken out in the spring. The king's descendants who would die in the city, their bodies would be consumed by dogs; those who die in the country, would be eaten by the birds. The Lord gave his word that this would happen.
 - e. The child she had come to plead for, would die as soon as she entered the city. He would be mourned for by Israel, and would be buried. They viewed Abijah as the designated successor to Jeroboam on Israel's throne. The Lord found something good in this young man, hence he would receive proper burial, in contrast to others of Jeroboam's house.
 - 1) What kind of man would Abijah have become if he had lived? What kind of king would he have made? What kind of offspring would he have produced? How much evil is he likely to have generated and spread?
 - 2) It appears that God did this young child a favor by not allowing him to live longer. But such things as these are concealed in the unfathomable will of him who always acts righteously.
5. Verses 14-16: "Moreover the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now. For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the LORD to anger. And he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin."
- a. "Moreover the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam; this is the day. What? Even now! For the LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water. He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their wooden images, provoking the LORD to anger. And He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who sinned and who made Israel sin" (NKJ).
 - b. The consequences of Jeroboam's sins would be visited upon him, his descendants, and the whole of the Northern Kingdom. The Lord described a time when they would be uprooted from the good land which he had given them. They would be taken to a place beyond the river, a reference to Assyria.
 - c. The specific reason behind this was the idolatry which Jeroboam introduced and urged upon Israel. For this, God would smite them as a reed that is shaken by the waters of a flood.
 - d. This passage began with a promise that God made about raising up another king who would cut off the house of Jeroboam; this was a certainty, which was on the verge of being brought to reality. This new king was to be Baasha (15:27).
- B. 1 Kings 14:17-20: The Death of Abijah and Jeroboam.
1. Verses 17-18: "And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: *and* when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died; And they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet."
 - a. Jeroboam's wife, with heavy heart, departed from the prophet. She came to Tirzah, the city where her husband reigned, and as soon as she passed the threshold of the door, the child died. The prophet was able to report this ahead of time: "When thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die" (14:12).
 - b. Jeroboam was succeeded on the throne by his son Nadab, who reigned over Israel two years (1 Kings 15:25-26; 14:19-20).
 2. Verses 19-20: "And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they *are* written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. And the days which Jeroboam reigned *were* two and twenty years: and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead."
 - a. Despite the warnings issued to Jeroboam by the Lord, he did not change his ways. His situation at the time of his death was one of rebellion against God.
 - b. The inspired historian notes that the acts of Jeroboam, including his wars and other details of his reign, were recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.
 - c. His reign extended over twenty-two years. He was replaced by his son Nadab, who reigned only two years (15:25).
- C. 1 Kings 14:21-31: Rehoboam's Reign.
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1. Verse 21: "And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam *was* forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammonitess."
 - a. Rehoboam reigned for seventeen years; he was forty-one years old when he ascended the throne, thus making him fifty-eight years old when he died. Since Solomon reigned for forty years, Rehoboam was born the year before his father became king. Rehoboam's mother was Naamah, who was from Ammon.
 - b. He reigned in Jerusalem, the place which God chose as the place to put his name. This city was the one God wanted to be the site of the temple, in which his name was placed.
 2. Verses 22-24: "And Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were also sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel."
 - a. Preceding generations of Israelites had been guilty of rebellion against God, but during the time of David and Solomon, they were more loyal. Solomon's idolatry paved the way for a great apostasy in Israel, and with Rehoboam on the throne, that falling away proceeded.
 - b. During the first three years of his reign, Rehoboam followed the way of God. "So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon" (2 Chron. 11:17).
 - c. The people of Judah were involved in sin, beyond those of their fathers. They built high places, idols, and groves; the inspired historian states that these were to be found on every high hill and under every green tree.
 - d. Another indication of their departure from God's way is seen in the presence of sodomites in the land. This "lifestyle" was practiced in ancient days as part of religious ritual.
 - e. "Four specific sins of Judah are listed (1 Kin. 14:22-24). The **first** one is the building of high places. Although these were once used to make offerings to Jehovah, during this period they were associated with idolatry. Solomon built 'high places' for his foreign wives (1 Kin. 11:7-8); now his son and all Judah were continuing to follow this evil precedent. These 'high places' became places for worship of an assortment of pagan deities....Their **second** sin was in setting up 'memorial stones' or pillars ('images,' KJV), which also characterized such places. The **third** sin was in the establishment of 'groves' ('Asher-im,' ASV), which is also listed among Israel's sins (1 Kin. 14:15)....Moses had forewarned against adopting these pagan practices:
 - 1) 'Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place' (Deu. 12:2-3).
 - 2) "....The **fourth** sin is mentioned briefly in 1 Kings 14:24: 'And there were also sodomites in the land.' These were not merely homosexuals, which would have been sinful enough; these were male, religious prostitutes. The Hebrew word means 'consecrated persons or devotees' of Astarte, in this instance; these men performed their religious duties by being available for other men looking for a homosexual partner" (Gary W. Summers, ADL, pp.101f).
 3. Verses 25-28: "And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, *that* Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And king Rehoboam made in their stead brazen shields, and committed *them* unto the hands of the chief of the guard, which kept the door of the king's house. And it was *so*, when the king went into the house of the LORD, that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard chamber."
 - a. Shishak: "Egyptian royal name of unknown meaning. A pharaoh of Egypt known also as Sheshonk I. He ruled about 945-924 B.C. and founded the Twenty-Second Dynasty. Just after Rehoboam began to reign in Judah, Shishak invaded Jerusalem and carted off the Temple treasures (1 Kings 14:25-26).
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- According to inscriptions on the walls of a temple to the god Amon in Karnak, Shishak captured over 150 towns in Palestine including Megiddo, Taanash, and Gibeon. Some equate him with the pharaoh whose daughter married Solomon (3:1) and who later burned Gezer and gave it to his daughter (9:16)" (Holman).
- b. "King *Shishak* of Egypt invaded the land with a powerful army, conquered all the fortified cities, penetrated to Jerusalem, and would probably have put an end to the kingdom of Judah, if God had not had compassion upon him, and saved him from destruction, in consequence of the humiliation of the king and of the chiefs of the nation, caused by the admonition of the prophet Shemaiah, so that after the conquest of Jerusalem Shishak contented himself with withdrawing, taking with him the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace" (Keil, p.215).
 - c. 2 Chronicles 12:2-9 "And it came to pass, *that* in the fifth year of king Rehoboam Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the LORD, With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people *were* without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians. And he took the fenced cities which *pertained* to Judah, and came to Jerusalem. Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and *to* the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak. Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves; and they said, The LORD *is* righteous. And when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; *therefore* I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries. So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made."
 - d. "Shishak has celebrated his expedition against Judah by a bas-relief on the outer wall of the pillar-hall erected by him in the first palace at Karnak, in which more than 130 figures are led in cords by *Ammon* and the goddess *Muth* with their hands bound upon their backs. The lower portion of the figures of this long row of prisoners is covered by eschutcheons, the border of which being provided with battlements, shows that the prisoners are symbols of conquered cities. About a hundred of these escutcheons are still legible, and in the names upon them a large number of the names of cities in the kingdom of Judah have been deciphered with tolerable certainty" (Keil, p.215).
 - e. The invaders made off with the golden shields which Solomon had made (1 Kings 10:16-17), which Rehoboam was obliged to replace with shields made of brass. These less expensive shields were kept in the guard house, not in their former location. The king's guard used these shields when the king went to the temple, indicating that he made that occasion one of pomp and ceremony.
4. Verses 29-31: "Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all *their* days. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And his mother's name *was* Naamah an Ammonitess. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead."
- a. During his reign, there was a constant state of war between Judah and Israel. After Rehoboam's death, his son Abijam reigned in his place.
 - b. The historian notes that the other acts of Rehoboam were recorded in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. We are also told that he was buried with his fathers in the city of David.
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1 KINGS 15

A. 1 Kings 15:1-8: Abijam Follows Rehoboam to the Throne in Judah.

1. Verse 1: "Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah."
 - a. Abijam is called *Abijah* in 2 Chronicles 13:1ff. Jamieson says that "Jah" (a name for God) was made part of his name, but when he later went into sin, his honorable name was changed to *Abijam* (p.342).
 - b. Abijam ascended the throne during the eighteenth year of Jeroboam's reign over the Northern Kingdom.
2. Verses 2-3: "Three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father."
 - a. Abijam was the son of Maachah, who was the daughter of Abishalom [Absalom–Margin; 2 Chron. 11:20]. More precisely, Keil shows that Maachah was the granddaughter of Absalom (p.217). Absalom had a daughter named Tamar (2 Sam. 14:27). Rehoboam married Maachah, who became one of his eighteen wives, and to this union Abijam was born (2 Chron. 11:18-21). In 2 Chronicles 13:1-2, Abijah's mother is identified as the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah, who evidently had married Tamar.
 - b. At the first, Abijam [Ahijah] was faithful to the Lord. "And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which *is* in mount Ephraim, and said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel; Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, *even* to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt? Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his lord. And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted, and could not withstand them. And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye *be* a great multitude, and *there are* with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods. Have ye not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of *other* lands? so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, *the same* may be a priest of *them that are* no gods. But as for us, the LORD *is* our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the LORD, *are* the sons of Aaron, and the Levites *wait* upon *their* business: And they burn unto the LORD every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the showbread also *set they in order* upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him. And, behold, God himself *is* with us for *our* captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper" (2 Chron. 13:4-12).
 - c. In the ensuing battle with Jeroboam, Abijam's smaller army defeated the northern army, which weakened Jeroboam's power through the rest of his reign.
 - d. However, Abijam subsequently departed from the will of God, so that he is here classified with other sinful men; he is specifically said not to have walked before the Lord as did David.
3. Verses 4-5: "Nevertheless for David's sake did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: Because David did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any *thing* that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite."
 - a. As there is a powerful evil influence which is wrought on society in general by wicked rulers, so also the influence, direct and indirect, of a godly ruler is great. Because of David's standing with the Lord, he did not bring upon Judah the punishment their evil ways deserved.
 - b. Involved in the matter was the fulfillment of the promises God had given to David.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 7:12: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom."
 - 2) Acts 2:29-32: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is

both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses."

- c. The inspired historian states that David had remained faithful to God, except in the matter of Uriah, a life of obedience which the Lord could not ignore. Hence, he left him a lamp [a candle] in Jerusalem, allowing the light of his influence to bring blessings on succeeding generations. "A lamp' in one's house is an Oriental phrase for continuance of family name and prosperity" (JFB, p.343).
4. Verses 6-8: "And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead."
 - a. The historian notes that throughout the contemporary reigns of Jeroboam and Rehoboam, a state of hostility existed. This war continued during Abijam's reign (2 Chron. 13). Following the debacle the northern kingdom suffered in fighting (2 Chron. 13), Abijam's strength increased, but Jeroboam's waned (2 Chron. 13:20-22). Jeroboam died as a consequence of being stricken by the Lord: "Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the LORD struck him, and he died. But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters. And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, *are* written in the story of the prophet Iddo" (2 Chron. 13:20-22).
 - b. After a brief reign of only three years, Abijam also died. We are reminded that his deeds were recorded in the chronicles of the kings of Judah. He was buried in the city of David. The sum of his influence was evil, for "he walked in all the sins of his father" (15:3).

B. 1 Kings 15:9-15: The Godly Reign of Asa.

1. Verses 9-10: "And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah. And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom."
 - a. During the twentieth year of Jeroboam's reign, Asa became king in Judah. His father [Abijam] was in the final analysis a wicked man, but Asa was righteous. Perhaps because he was a good king, he reigned for forty-one years.
 - b. In the Hebrew method of counting days and years, a part was considered to be a whole. Abijam's reign is given as three years (15:1-2), for it extended over part of the 18th, through the 19th, and ended during the 20th year of Jeroboam's tenure over the northern kingdom. Officially he ruled for three years, but not a full thirty-six months.
 - c. It is not likely that Abijam and Asa had the same woman as their mother (cf. 15:2,10). The margin gives *grandmother* as the alternate rendering in the present verse. It may be that Asa's mother had died, or that his grandmother (Maachah) retained the position of queen [a figurative mother; a title of dignity] during the reign of Abijam [her son] and continued in that capacity at the beginning of Asa's reign. Maachah was indeed the queen (15:13), whether she was his mother or grandmother.
 - 1) "The Sultana, or queen-dowager, was not necessarily the king's natural mother (see ch. 2:19), nor was Maachah, for she was Abijah's mother, and the beloved wife of Rehoboam. Her title, and the privileges connected with that honour and dignity, which gave her precedency among the ladies of the royal family, and great influence in the kingdom, were taken away. She was degraded for her idolatry" (JFB, p.343). "And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron" (1 Kings 15:13).
 - 2) We are told in 2 Chronicles 13:21 that Abijam [Abijah] had fourteen wives, and twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. Among these many wives, could there also have been another Maachah?
 - 3) "The difficulty by no means admits of a ready solution, but perhaps the best explanation is that the grandmother, Maachah, Rehoboam's favourite wife, retained her position, possibly by force of

- character, or because Asa's mother was dead. It is not certain, however, that if the latter had lived she would have displaced Maashah, of whose influence and imperious temper we have several indications; e.g., in the appointment of her son, though not the firstborn, to succeed his father, and in her open maintenance of idol worship, and above all in the fact that she was publicly deposed by Asa" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
2. Verses 11-12: "And Asa did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* David his father. And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made."
 - a. Asa was a different man from his father. Usually, an evil father produces an evil son; it may have been the case that some of Abijam's sons were like their father, but Asa was a righteous man.
 - b. He did that which was pleasing to God. He took away the sodomites and the idols which his predecessors had introduced. The parallel account agrees: "And Asa did *that which was* good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God: For he took away the altars of the strange *gods*, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him" (2 Chr. 14:2-5).
 3. Verse 13: "And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt *it* by the brook Kidron."
 - a. Maachah was involved in idolatry, for she had made an idol in a grove. In his restoration campaign, Asa destroyed her idol. Her practices during the reign of Abijam were acceptable to that weak king, but Asa was not concerned about falling into her disfavor; he was more committed to pleasing God.
 - b. "For the first time since the early years of Solomon, a king had arisen to follow David's footsteps. He removed the sodomites and the idols that his father had made (v.12). Then he removed Maachah from being queen; and he took her obscene image of the naked sex goddess Astarte and burned it!" (Gary Summers, ADL, p.106).
 4. Verses 14-15: "But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days. And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels."
 - a. These high places were not those which had been dedicated to idolatry, but rather were places where certain Israelites worshiped God; these were unauthorized additions to God's order. However, Asa did not personally participate in the services conducted there; this is seen in the fact that "his heart was perfect with the Lord all his days."
 - b. Despite his relative goodness, Asa was not perfect in trust. "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand....And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease *was* exceeding *great*: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians" (2 Chron. 16:7,12).
 - c. "His religious plans of religious reformation, however, were not completely carried through, 'the high places were not removed'....The suppression of this private worship on natural or artificial hills, though a forbidden service after the temple had been declared the exclusive place of worship, the most pious king's laws were not able to accomplish. The difficulty lay in the strength of the popular attachment to these places of worship" (JFB, p.343).
 - d. High places "were used in patriarchal times, and in the frequently long intervals of the ark's disappearance; so that many who continued faithful to the worship of Jehovah were, from sacred associations or traditional predilection, devotedly fond of these private chapels and altars, and eluded all the most vigilant measures which the reforming kings adopted to search them out for demolition. They were therefore tolerated by Asa, as well as by Jehosaphat (ch. 22:43; 2 Chr. 33:17), both of whom interdicted and punished all direct idolatry" (JFB, p.344).
 - e. Asa brought into the temple the holy vessels which his father had dedicated, and those which he himself had dedicated. "He brought the sacred offerings of his father and his own sacred offerings into the house of Jehovah; probably the booty, in silver, gold, and vessels, which his father Abijam had gathered
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in the war with Jeroboam (2 Chron. 13:16,17), and he himself on the conquest of the Cushites (2 Chron. 14:12,13" (Keil, p.219). It may be that some of these vessels had been used by those who worshiped at certain high places.

C. 1 Kings 15:16-24: The War Between Asa and Israel.

1. Verses 16-17: "And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah."
 - a. Baasha became king of Israel two years after Asa ascended the throne in Judah. The historian tells us that there was war between their two kingdoms during the time they were contemporaries. When Asa came to the throne, he and his people enjoyed a period of peace lasting ten years. At this point, Zerah the Ethiopian invaded Judah, but with the help of the Lord, Asa successfully defended his nation. "And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee. So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled. And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the LORD, and before his host; and they carried away very much spoil. And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them. They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem" (2 Chron. 14:9-15).
 - b. The disastrous defeat Jeroboam suffered at the hands of Abijam (2 Chron. 13) made war against Judah impossible. But after his kingdom had regained strength, Baasha mounted an attack against his southern kinsmen.
 - c. 2 Chronicles 16 reports that this was in Asa's 36th year of reign. However, 1 Kings 16 plainly states that Baasha was slain about ten years earlier.
 - 1) 1 Kings 16:8-10: "In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years. And his servant Zimri, captain of half *his* chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of *his* house in Tirzah. And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead."
 - 2) Keil says that this was during the 15th year of Asa's rule. "The next year, the sixteenth of his reign and the thirty-sixth from the division of the kingdom (2 Chron. 16:1), Baasha commenced hostilities, by advancing against Judah, taking possession of *Ramah*" (p.220).
 - 3) "Chronologers endeavour to reconcile this by saying that the years should be reckoned, not from the beginning of the reign of Asa, but from the separation of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. It is most certain that Baasha could not make war upon Asa in the *thirty-sixth* year of his reign, when it is evident from this chapter that he was dead in the *twenty-sixth* year of that king" (Clarke, p.446).
 - 4) Compare the following passages:
 - a) 2 Chronicles 14:1: "So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years."
 - b) 2 Chronicles 15:10: "So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa."
 - c) 2 Chronicles 15:19: "And there was no *more* war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa."
 - d) 2 Chronicles 16:1: "In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah."

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- d. Keil provides us with information about the strategic situation of this city: "For Ramah, from its very situation in the heart of the tribe of Benjamin and the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, can neither have been a border city nor have belonged to the kingdom of Israel. The intention of Baasha, therefore, in fortifying Ramah cannot have been merely to restrain his own subjects from passing over into the kingdom of Judah, but was evidently to cut off the kingdom of Judah all free communication with the north....The main road from Jerusalem to the north passed by Ramah, so that by shutting up this road the line of communication of the kingdom of Judah was of necessity greatly disturbed" (p.220).
- e. Also, Baasha fortified Ramah in an effort to prevent his own people from returning to Jerusalem to worship and from making contact with the people of Judah. "Ramah stood on an eminence, overhanging a narrow ravine which separated Israel from Judah, and therefore he took up a hostile position in that place" (JFB, p.344).
2. Verses 18-20: "Then Asa took all the silver and the gold *that were* left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, *There is* a league between me and thee, *and* between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me. So Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelbethmaachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali."
- a. The invasion of the Ethiopians had already been defeated, with the Lord providing the assistance Asa needed. He had asked for and obtained the Lord's help in that situation, but in the present case, he sought help from a pagan king.
- b. "This alteration in his conduct may probably be explained in part from the fact, that notwithstanding the victory, his army had been considerably weakened by the battle which he fought with the Cushites (2 Chron. 14:9), although this by no means justified his want of confidence in the power of the Lord, and still less his harsh and unjust treatment of the prophet Hanani, whom he caused to be put in the house of the stocks on account of his condemnation of the confidence which he placed in the Syrians instead of Jehovah (2 Chron. 16:7-10)" (Keil, pp.220f).
- c. Asa used the silver and gold that remained of the treasures still in his possession, and succeeded in buying the military assistance of Benhadad, king of Damascus. Benhadad dispatched his army in keeping with this agreement.
3. Verses 21-22: "And it came to pass, when Baasha heard *thereof*, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah. Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none *was* exempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah."
- a. When Baasha learned of the Syrians' entry into the affair, he stopped his construction of the fortifications at Ramah, and returned to his capital at Tirzah.
- b. Asa directed his people, with no one exempted, to carry away the stones and timbers from Ramah, which were used in building Geba and Mizpah.
4. Verses 23-24: "The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet. And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead."
- a. Asa's deeds were recorded in the chronicles of the kings of Judah. He died after reigning over Judah for forty-one years.
- b. Over all, his reign was righteous, but in his latter years, his faith seems to have waned somewhat. During his 39th year on the throne, he was diseased in his feet. Instead of seeking God's help, he sought out the physicians. "And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians" (2
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Chron. 16:12).

D. 1 Kings 15:25-34: The End of Jeroboam's Dynasty.

1. Verses 25-26: "And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."
 - a. After twenty-two years on the throne of the northern kingdom [Israel], Jeroboam died; his son Nadab took the reins of the kingdom. His reign extended only two years. His elevation took place during the second year of Asa's rule.
 - b. Nadab was of the same nature as his father; he followed the evil practices Jeroboam started, which had contaminated all of Israel.
 2. Verses 27-30: "And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon. Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead. And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite: Because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger."
 - a. Here we are told of Baasha's rise to power in Israel. He conspired against Nadab, and smote the king at Gibbethon, which pertained to the Philistines. Nadab had led his army into a siege of that city. This was during the third year of Asa's reign.
 - b. Baasha did not stop with the killing of Nadab; he slew all of the house of Jeroboam, fulfilling the prophecy of Ahijah, the prophet. "Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every man-child, him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel, and will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam, as a man sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone. 11 Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the birds of the heavens eat: for Jehovah hath spoken it" (1 Kings 14:10-11, ASV).
 3. Verses 31-34: "Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."
 - a. The record of Nadab's activities were written in the chronicles of the kings of Israel. His reign had lasted only two years.
 - b. During the entirety of Baasha's reign, hostilities existed between Israel and Judah. He began his reign in Asa's third year, and continued on the throne of Israel for twenty-four years. He followed the sinful pattern which Jeroboam had started, which had likewise been followed by Nadab.
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CHAPTER 16

A. 1 Kings 16:1-7: The End of Baasha's Reign.

1. Verses 1-4: "Then the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins; Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat."
 - a. That God had not yet given up on the northern kingdom is evident from the fact he sent prophets to them. Jehu is here sent to Baasha with a message of doom. "This is the only incident recorded in the life of this prophet. His father was also a prophet (2 Chr. 16:7)" (JFB, p.345). Compare: "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand" (2 Chron. 16:7).
 - b. The woe-filled message given Baasha is like the one given to Jeroboam by Ahijah: "Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken *it*" (1 Kings 14:11). The offspring of Baasha would not be buried in the common manner, but their bodies would be eaten by birds and dogs.
 - c. God reminded Baasha that he had been elevated to the throne because of the apostasy of Jeroboam and Nadab (1 Kings 15:25-27). "Though he had waded through slaughter to his throne, he owed his elevation to the appointment or permission of Him 'by whom kings reign'" (JFB, p.345). Compare: "And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will" (Dan. 4:32).
 - d. The implication of verse two is that Baasha occupied a lowly position (at least in a relative sense) before he became king. Although God did not condone the ugliness with which Baasha gained the kingdom, he permitted it as a means of punishing the sins of Jeroboam and Nadab.
2. Verses 5-7: "Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead. And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him."
 - a. The usual statement of the historian is given regarding a king who has died; his record, we are told, is inscribed in the chronicles of the kings of Israel. Baasha died, after a reign of twenty-four years (1 Kings 15:33), and was followed on the throne by his son Elah.
 - b. Verse seven refers back to the prophecy delivered by Jehu regarding the reason for his overthrow by the Lord. He did evil before Jehovah, slew Nadab in a conspiracy to seize the throne (see 1 Kings 15:27), and destroyed all of Jeroboam's family (1 Kings 15:29-30).
 - 1) "The very fact that Baasha continued Jeroboam's sin and caused the illegal worship to be perpetuated showed clearly enough that in exterminating the family of Jeroboam he did not act under divine direction, but simply pursued his own selfish ends" (Keil, p.224).
 - 2) God often used evil men to work out his purposes, but their wickedness was also punished. He used Assyria to destroy the northern kingdom of Israel (721 B.C.), but later allowed Babylon to destroy Assyria; he used Babylon to punish Judah (606 B.C.), but later enabled the Medes and Persians to destroy the Babylonians.

B. 1 Kings 16:8-14: The Reign of Elah in Israel.

1. Verses 8-10: "In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over

Israel in Tirzah, two years. And his servant Zimri, captain of half *his* chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of *his* house in Tirzah. And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead."

- a. Elah reigned a little less than two years. He began his reign during the twenty-sixth year of Asa and was assassinated by Zimri during the twenty-seventh year of Asa. Baasha reigned a little less than twenty-four years, but in ancient usage, a part of a year was counted an entire year.
 - b. Zimri was the captain over one half of Elah's chariots, but he was ambitious for a greater office. Elah was on a drunken binge in the house of his steward, when Zimri entered and killed the king. It is possible that the steward took part in the conspiracy.
 - c. Elah was "a prince of dissolute habits" (Jamieson), whose reign was short. The primary thing we know about his character is that he died in a drunken state.
2. Verses 11-14: "And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, *that* he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that pisseth against a wall, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends. Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?"
- a. The first act of Zimri after usurping the throne was to slay all the house of Baasha, leaving no man to challenge him for power. The expression in the KJV describing males is considered vulgar in our modern English-speaking society, but when this illustrious translation was made, that expression was obviously a commonly-accepted reference to men and boys. The NKJ and ASV give a more pleasant and better rendition:
 - 1) 1 Kings 16:11: "Then it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he was seated on his throne, *that* he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave him one **male**, neither of his relatives nor of his friends" (NKJ).
 - 2) 1 Kings 16:11: "And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he smote all the house of Baasha: he left him not a single **man-child**, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends" (ASV).
 - b. Zimri wiped out the entire male offspring of Elah. Clarke asserts: "He endeavoured to exterminate his race, and blot out his memory; and the Jews say, when such a matter is determined, they not only destroy the house of the person himself, but *the five neighbouring houses*, that the memory of such a person may perish from the earth" (p.449). But the word "house" here has reference to the relatives, not to their dwellingplace.
 - c. These acts of extermination were in keeping with the prophecy given to Baasha earlier in the chapter (verses 1-4). Again, the Lord did not order this reprisal against Baasha's family, but used this evil man (Zimri) to exact the punishment Baasha deserved. In a short time, Zimri would pay for his sins by an ignoble end (verse 18).

C. 1 Kings 16:15-20: The End of Zimri's Reign.

1. Verses 15-17: "In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah. And the people *were* encamped against Gibbethon, which *belonged* to the Philistines. And the people *that were* encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp. And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah."
 - a. Zimri's reign lasted only seven days. When he stole the throne, the army had Gibbethon, a city of the Philistines, under siege. When the people learned that Zimri had killed Elah and set himself up as king, they elevated Omri, the general of the army, as their king.
 - b. Clearly, Zimri's evil actions met with the displeasure of the army. The trouble at home was greater than the need to conquer Gibbethon, so they immediately returned to their own capital to settle the rebellion

of Zimri.

2. Verses 18-20: "And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died, For his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin. Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?"
 - a. Omri led the army to Tirzah and laid siege to it; it quickly fell. When Zimri saw that his fate was sealed, he entered into the king's palace, and burned it down, with him in it.
 - b. Zimri was an evil man, who usurped the authority of the throne. That his reign lasted only a week is indicative of the fact that the Lord did not bless his efforts. But once more, God has used him to bring punishment on the house of Baasha, as he would now use Omri to punish Zimri.

D. 1 Kings 16:21-28: Omri's Reign.

1. Verses 21-22: "Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned."
 - a. Internal strife continued in the wake of the preceding events. Half of the people supported Omri and the other half followed Tibni. Omri was the official king, but the supporters of Tibni sought to raise him to that office.
 - b. Omri's followers succeeded. It would seem likely that his supporters would be members of the army, thus would hold the greater strength. The civil war lasted about four years. It was during the twenty-seventh year of Asa that Zimri seized the throne; it was in the thirty-first year of Asa that Omri began to reign.
2. Verses 23-24: "In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria."
 - a. The reign of Omri extended over twelve years. This time included the four years of civil war. It began in the twenty-seventh year of Asa and ended during the thirty-eighth year of Asa (part of a year was considered a whole year).
 - b. One of the notable works of Omri was the purchase of a hill from Shemer for the construction of a city on it, which bore the name Samaria. The city was named after the former owner of the hill. The purchase price is listed as two talents of silver. The palace at Tirzah was in ruins, following the fire which Zimri set (verse 18). "In the centre of a wide amphitheatre of mountains, about six miles from Shechem, rises an oblong hill, with steep yet accessible sides and a long flat top, extending east and west, and rising 500 or 600 feet above the valley. What Omri in all probability built as a mere palatial residence became the capital of the kingdom, instead of Shechem....The choice of Omri was admirable, in selecting a position which combined, in a union not elsewhere—certainly not in Jerusalem—found in Palestine, strength, beauty, and fertility [Josephus, *Antiquities*, 15,8, 5]" (JFB, p.347).
 - c. "A Harvard University Expedition...found in the ruins of Samaria the foundations of Omri's palace, but nothing older than Omri, evidence that he was founder of the city" (Halley, p.197). Halley also notes that the Moabite Stone (850 B.C.) mentions "Omri, king of Israel"; that there is an inscription of Adadnirai (808-783 B.C.) which mentions "Omri"; and that the "Black Obelisk, of Shal-maneser III (860-825 B.C.) speaks of tribute from Jehu, 'successor of Omri'" (p.197).
 - d. Omri: "Personal name meaning, 'pilgrim' or 'life.' 1. King of Israel 885-874 B.C. and founder of the Omride dynasty, which ruled until 842. Omri came to the throne in a very odd manner. Zimri, a chariot captain in Israel's army, assassinated King Elah and took control of the palace of Tirzah (1 Kings 16:8-15). Half of the people rebelled and installed Omri ('captain of the host,' v. 16) as king. When Zimri realized his situation was hopeless, he burned the palace down upon himself. Omri became king only after successfully opposing another rebellion in the person of Tibni (vv. 21-22). In his reign of eleven years, Omri's greatest accomplishment was to buy the hill of Samaria and build the capital of

Israel there. He was succeeded by his son, Ahab. Assyrian sources continued to call Israel, 'the land of Omri.' Micah accused Jerusalem of following Omri's actions and also his son Ahab's. That was grounds for God's destroying Jerusalem (Mic. 6:16). 2. Officer of tribe of Issachar under David (1 Chron. 27:18). 3. Grandson of Benjamin (1 Chron. 7:8). 4. Grandfather of member of tribe of Judah who returned to Jerusalem from Exile about 537 B.C." (Holman).

e. McGarvey offers the following insightful information about Samaria:

- 1) "Samaria is eight miles from Shechem by the road (six in an air-line) and due northwest. Its situation attests the military skill of Omri, the King of Israel, who bought the hill and built the city for the capital of his kingdom [1 Kings 16:24]. It also accounts for the fact that though the city was three times besieged within the Bible period by an overpowering army, it was never taken but once, and then after a siege of three years [1 Kings 20:1; 2 Kings 6:24; 17:5-6]. It is to the confidence which its inhabitants reposed in its strength that Amos alluded when he said, 'Woe to them who are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria' [Amos 6:1].
- 2) "It was built on an isolated hill about 400 feet high, completely surrounded by an almost circular valley, and this again by a circle of mountains nearly all higher than Samaria. Its site might be compared to that of a conical swell in the centre of a deep saucer. The hill is ascended from the northeast by a steep slope, and the modern village, with a large and well-preserved *church* of the crusading period, is on the northeastern brow of the hill. The summit is now set in olive-trees and cultivated in grain. Terraces run around the hill from top to bottom, and on the second terrace from the top stand the remaining pillars of a colonnade built by Herod the Great, which once extended around the hill for a distance of 1000 yards. The terrace is about 50 feet wide, and the columns, of which about 80 are still standing, and many others are lying prostrate and broken, are 16 feet high. They are made of hard limestone.
- 3) "There are many other relics of ancient structures on the slopes of the hill, and among them one on the northern side, consisting of about a dozen columns, forming a quadrangle, the probable remains of a temple erected by Herod in honor of Augustus Caesar. He rebuilt the city, adorned it with magnificent works, and called it *Sebaste*, the Greek word for *Augustus*, and it has retained that name in a corrupted form to the present day, the Arabs calling it *Sebustiyeh*.
- 4) "Its summit is 1542 feet above the sea, and the highest point is near the southern brow. Standing there, the entire wall of surrounding mountains and the basin of the surrounding valley can be distinctly seen, and over the lower hill to the southwest the view extends to the Plain of Sharon and the sea....At the southeast curve of this valley the Valley of Shechem enters it, and at the southwest curve there is a broad opening through the hills, by which that valley passes on westward toward the sea.
- 5) "The author's party traveled down that valley on their way to Caserea, and they saw along its floor some of the best preserved pieces of ancient paved road in all Palestine. It was doubtless in the valley immediately south of Samaria that the Syrian were encamped when they thought they heard the Egyptians and the Hittites coming upon them, and it was up that gap opening toward the sea that the enemy appeared to come. The Syrian retreat was toward the Jordan, and it probably led them up the Valley of Shechem, east of their camp and past the city of Shechem [2 Kings 7:6,7,15]" (*Lands of the Bible*, pp.294-296).

f. Samaria: "Place name of mountain, city, and region meaning, 'mountain of watching,' and the residents thereof. Forty-two miles north of Jerusalem and nine miles northwest of Nablus, a hill protrudes from the broad valley which cuts across the central highlands of Israel. There lie ruins of ancient Samaria near a small village called *Sebastiya*. Samaria was the capital, residence, and burial place of the kings of Israel (1 Kings 16:23-28; 22:37; 2 Kings 6:24-30). Following the Northern Kingdom's fall to Assyria (721 B.C.), exiles from many nations settled Samaria (Ezra 4:9-10).

- 1) "Later, the Greeks conquered the region (331 B.C.) and hellenized the area with Greek inhabitants and culture. Then the Hasmoneans, under John Hyrcanus, destroyed the city (119 B.C.). After a long period without inhabitants, Samaria lived again under Pompey and the Romans (63 B.C.). Finally,

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- Herod the Great obtained control of Samaria in 30 B.C. and made it one of the chief cities of his territory. Again, the city was resettled with people from distant places, this time mercenaries from Europe. Herod renamed the city Sebaste, using the Greek word for Augustus, the emperor.
- 2) "When the Jews revolted in 66 A.D., the Romans reconquered the city and destroyed it. The Romans later rebuilt Samaria, but the city never regained the prestige it once had. Samaria is the only major city founded by Israel, the Northern Kingdom. Omri, the sixth king of Israel (885-874 B.C.), purchased the hill of Samaria for his royal residence. Shechem had been the capital of the Northern Kingdom until Jeroboam relocated it at Tirzah. When Ahab, Omri's son, became king of Israel, he built an ivory palace at Samaria. Amos denounced him for doing this (Amos 6:1,4; 1 Kings 22:39). Jezebel influenced Ahab, her husband, to make the city the center for Baal worship (1 Kings 16:29-33). Jezebel also had many prophets of Yahweh killed in Samaria (1 Kings 18:2-4). On two occasions, Benhadad, the king of Syria, besieged the city of Samaria; but both times he was unsuccessful (1 Kings 20; 2 Kings 6). Naaman, a Syrian leper, had come to Samaria to be healed by Elisha a short time prior to Ben-hadad's attack (2 Kings 5). Here Elijah destroyed the messengers of King Ahaziah, who were seeking the consultation of Baalzebub. He, likewise, prophesied of King Ahaziah's death (2 Kings 1). Later, Jehu killed Ahab's seventy sons in Samaria (2 Kings 10).
 - 3) "Finally, Samaria fell to Assyria in 721 B.C. after a three years' siege (2 Kings 17:5, 18:9-12). See Assyria. This destruction came after many prophecies concerning its sins and many warnings about its doom (Isa. 8:4; 9:8-14; 10:9; 28:1-13; 36:19; Jer. 23:13; Ezek. 23:1-4; Hos. 7; 13:16; Amos 3:12; Mic. 1:6). While the term Samaria was first identified with the city founded by Omri, it soon became associated with the entire region surrounding the city, the tribal territory of Manasseh and Ephraim. Finally, the name Samaria became synonymous with the entire Northern Kingdom (1 Kings 13:32; Jer. 31:5). After the Assyrian conquest, Samaria began to shrink in size. By New Testament times, it became identified with the central region of Palestine, with Galilee to the north and Judea to the south.
 - 4) "The name Samaritans originally was identified with the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom (2 Kings 17:29). When the Assyrians conquered Israel and exiled 27,290 Israelites, a 'remnant of Israel' remained in the land. Assyrian captives from distant places also settled there (2 Kings 17:24). This led to the intermarriage of some, though not all, Jews with Gentiles and to widespread worship of foreign gods. By the time the Jews returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple and the walls of Jerusalem, Ezra and Nehemiah refused to let the Samaritans share in the experience (Ezra 4:1-3; Neh. 4:7). The old antagonism between Israel to the north and Judah to the south intensified the quarrel.
 - 5) "The Jewish inhabitants of Samaria identified Mount Gerizim as the chosen place of God and the only center of worship, calling it the 'navel of the earth' because of a tradition that Adam sacrificed there. Their scriptures were limited to the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. Moses was regarded as the only prophet and intercessor in the final judgment. They also believed that 6,000 years after creation, a Restorer would arise and would live on earth for 110 years. On the Judgment Day, the righteous would be resurrected in paradise and the wicked roasted in eternal fire.
 - 6) "In the days of Christ, the relationship between the Jews and the Samaritans was greatly strained (Luke 9:52-54; 10:25-37; 17:11-19; John 8:48). The animosity was so great that the Jews bypassed Samaria as they traveled between Galilee and Judea. They went an extra distance through the barren land of Perea on the eastern side of the Jordan to avoid going through Samaria. Yet Jesus rebuked His disciples for their hostility to the Samaritans (Luke 9:55-56), healed a Samaritan leper (Luke 17:16), honored a Samaritan for his neighborliness (Luke 10:30-37), praised a Samaritan for his gratitude (Luke 17:11-18), asked a drink of a Samaritan woman (John 4:7), and preached to the Samaritans (John 4:40-42). Then in Acts 1:8, Jesus challenged His disciples to witness in Samaria. Philip, a deacon, opened a mission in Samaria (Acts 8:5).
 - 7) "A small Samaritan community continues to this day to follow the traditional worship near Shechem. See Israel; Sanballat" (Holman, Donald R. Potts).
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3. Verses 25-28: "But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that *were* before him. For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he showed, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead."
 - a. As bad as Jeroboam and his successors were, the inspired historian states the Omri was worse than any of them. Until now, Jeroboam was the standard by which wickedness was measured. Omri established a new standard for evil, and his son went even farther into sin.
 - b. The text does not here speak of any punishment brought to bear upon Omri, but an indication of such appears from a statement found later in this book. "And *Benhadad* said unto him, The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then *said Ahab*, I will send thee away with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away" (1 Kings 20:34).
 - c. Omri reigned twelve years, six of which were from Tirzah and six from his palace in the new city of Samaria. At his death, his son Ahab ascended the throne.
- E. 1 Kings 16:29-33: The Beginning of Ahab's Evil Reign.
1. Verse 29: "And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years."
 - a. It was during the thirty-eighth year of Asa that Ahab began his twenty-two year tenure as king. Asa's forty-one year reign is made the reference point for the reign of several kings of the northern kingdom. During Asa's reign over Judah, there were five kings in Israel.
 - b. Ahab: "Personal name meaning, 'father's brother.' 1. The seventh king of Israel's Northern Kingdom, married a foreigner, Jezebel, and incited God's anger more than any of Israel's previous kings. Ahab, was the son and successor of Omri. His 22-year reign (874-853 B.C.), while enjoying some political and military success, was marred by spiritual compromise and failure (1 Kings 16:30). His wife, Jezebel, was the daughter of Ethbaal, priest-king of Tyre (1 Kings 16:31). She was a devotee to the Tyrian god Melqart and gave open endorsement to the worship of Baal in Israel by supporting 450 Baal prophets and 400 prophets of the goddess Asherah (1 Kings 18:19). Following Ahab's death, she continued to be a significant force in Israel for ten years as queen mother. Ahab's marriage to a Phoenician princess had both commercial and political benefits. Commercially, it brought desired goods to Samaria and opened the way for expanded sea trade. Politically, it removed any military threat from Phoenicia. During Ahab's days, Israel enjoyed peace with Judah, largely as a result of a marriage he arranged between princess Athaliah and Joram, the crown prince of Judah. The resulting alliance produced cooperative efforts in sea trade (1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chron. 20:35-37) and a joint military campaign to recapture Ramoth-gilead, which had fallen under Aramean control (1 Kings 22:2-40). During his reign, effective control was maintained over Moab, producing revenue extracted by tribute, a tax the Moabite king paid to maintain his position (2 Kings 3:4). The oppression of Moab under Ahab and his father Omri finds expression in the famous Moabite Stone. In this inscription Mesha, king of Moab, observed that his land was under Israelite control for a period of 40 years. Mesha also claimed to have gained independence from Ahab's Israel. Ahab was successful in two major campaigns against the Syrian king, Ben-hadad, but was mortally wounded in the third. His participation in the great battle of Qarqar (853 B.C.), though not mentioned in the Bible, is recorded on an inscription of Shalmanezar III of Assyria. According to Shalmanezar, Ahab committed 2,000 chariots and 10,000 men to the battle. The days of Ahab in Samaria were days of growing wealth and spiritual apostasy. According to 1 Kings 22:39, he built an "ivory house" for Jezebel, the remains of which were discovered in the Harvard excavations at the site. Rooms and furniture were decorated with ivory inlay which in many cases featured Egyptian deities. His surrender to the influences of idolatry is illustrated by the construction of a temple for Baal (1 Kings 16:32), the massacre of the Lord's prophets (1 Kings 18:4,19), and seizure of an Israelite's property (1 Kings 21). Ahab appears to have been a worshiper of Yahweh, God of Israel, but probably along with other deities. He frequently consulted with Yahweh's prophets (1 Kings
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20:13-14,22,28; 22:8,16), used the divine name in naming his children (Ahaziah, Jehoram, and Athaliah) and did not interfere with the execution of the priests of Baal after the contest on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:40). The influence of Jezebel in his life, however, overshadowed any significant influence the prophets of the Lord had in his life. He became a prime example of evil (Mic. 6:16). The death of Jezebel was surrounded with the arrogance that so characterized her life. She painted her eyes and adorned herself just for the occasion of issuing verbal taunts at Jehu from the palace window. She was pushed out of that window and died and, as prophesied (1 Kings 21:23), was eaten by dogs (2 Kings 9:30-37). 2. A false prophet living in Babylon who prophesied lies and faced Jeremiah's condemnation (Jer. 29:20-23)." (Holman, John J. Davis).

2. Verses 30-31: "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that *were* before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him."
 - a. Ahab went beyond even his father in wickedness. To walk in the sins of Jeroboam was a matter of small importance to Ahab. Not only did he continue the evil idolatry started by Jeroboam, he also married Jezebel, a Zidonian, and became a worshiper and servant of Baal.
 - b. Jezebel: "Personal name meaning, 'Where is the prince?' perhaps derived from Phoenician name meaning, 'Baal is the prince.' Wife of King Ahab of Israel (874-853 B.C.), who brought the worship of Baal from Sidon, where her father Ethbaal was king (1 Kings 16:31). Jezebel tried to destroy all God's prophets in Israel (1 Kings 18:4), while installing prophets of Baal and Asherah (1 Kings 18:19, modern translations) as part of the royal household. Elijah proved these prophets to be false on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18), bringing Jezebel's threat to kill Elijah (1 Kings 19:2). Elijah ran for his life to Beersheba. When Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard, Jezebel connived with the leaders of the city who falsely accused and convicted Naboth, stoning him to death. Elijah then prophesied Jezebel's death, she being the one who had "stirred up" Ahab to wickedness (1 Kings 21). She continued her evil influence as her son Joram ruled (2 Kings 9:22). Elisha anointed Jehu to replace Joram. Jehu assassinated Joram and then went to Jezreel after Jezebel. She tried to adorn herself and entice him, but her servants obeyed Jehu's call to throw her from the window to the street, where horses trod her in the ground (2 Kings 9:30-37). Jezebel's name became so associated with wickedness that the false prophetess in the church at Thyatira was labeled, 'Jezebel' (Rev. 2:20)" (Holman).
3. Verses 32-33: "And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him."
 - a. Ahab erected a temple for Baal in Samaria and constructed an altar. He also prepared a grove in which the evil religious ceremonies could be conducted, evidently out of the view of passersby.
 - b. Summing up his wickedness, the inspired historian reports that Ahab did more to provoke the Lord than all of the kings of Israel who preceded him.
 - c. "The worship of God by symbols had hitherto been the offensive form of apostasy in Israel; but now gross idolatry is openly patronized by the court. This was done through the influence of the bigoted and blood-thirsty Jezebel, Ahab's queen. She was 'the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians.' He was priest of Ashtaroth, or Astarte, who, having murdered Philetus, king of Tyre, ascended the throne of that kingdom, being the eighth king since Hiram. Jezebel was the worthy daughter of this regicide and idol priest; and, on her marriage with Ahab, never rested till she had got all the forms of her native Tyrian worship introduced into her adopted country. The name of this furious idolatress and wicked woman is used as the type of a corrupt influence and mischievous teaching (Rev. 2:24)...No human sacrifices were offered; the fire was kept constantly burning; the priests officiated barefoot; dancing and kissing the image (ch. 19:18) were among the principal rites" (JFB, p.348).

F. 1 Kings 16:34: Fulfillment of Joshua's Prophecy.

1. Verse 34: "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest *son* Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which

he spake by Joshua the son of Nun."

- a. Following the destruction of Jericho, Joshua had uttered a prophecy regarding any who would try to rebuild the city in the future. "And Joshua adjured *them* at that time, saying, Cursed *be* the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest *son* shall he set up the gates of it" (Josh. 6:26).
 - b. "An amazing fulfillment of Joshua's prediction, 500 years before (Joshua 6:26). The ruins of Jericho show that it was inhabited continuously from pre-Abrahamic times to about 1400 B.C. with no signs of habitation from then to the 9th century B.C., time of Ahab, the ruins of which are very small. In this stratum a large house was uncovered, which may have been the house of Hiel (16:34). A jar with the remains of a child was found in the masonry of a gate, and two such jars in the walls of a house" (Halley, p.197).
 - c. "The restoration of this city as a fortification, upon which Joshua had pronounced the curse, is mentioned as a proof how far ungodliness had progressed in Israel; whilst the fulfillment of the curse upon the builder shows how the Lord will not allow the word of His servants to be transgressed with impunity. *Jericho*, on the border of the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. 16:7), which was allotted to the Benjamites (Josh. 18:21), had come into the possession of the kingdom of Israel on the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal house of David, and formed a border city of that kingdom, through the fortification of which Ahab hoped to secure to himself the passage across the Jordan" (Keil, p.229).
 - d. "The curse took effect on the family of this reckless man; but whether his eldest son died at the time of laying the foundation, and the youngest at the completion of the work; or whether he lost all his sons in rapid succession, till, at the end of the undertaking, he found himself childless, the poetical form of the ban does not enable us to determine" (JFB, p.348).
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CHAPTER 17

A. 1 Kings 17:1-7: Elijah the Tishbite.

1. Verse 1: "And Elijah the Tishbite, *who was* of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, *As* the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."
 - a. "Six chapters are given to Ahab's reign, while most of the kings have only a part of one chapter. The reason: it is largely the story of Elijah. Elijah was God's answer to Ahab and Jezebel, who had substituted Baal for God. God sent Elijah to eradicate Baalism, a vile and cruel religion. Elijah's 'rare, sudden and brief appearances, his undaunted courage and fiery zeal, the brilliance of his triumphs, the pathos of his despondency, the glory of his departure, and the calm beauty of his re-appearance on the Mt. of Transfiguration, make him one of the grandest characters Israel ever produced'" (Halley, pp.197f).
 - b. Suddenly, Elijah appears on the scene to take the necessary actions to stymie the evil influences of Ahab and Jezebel. His first recorded prophecy was spoken to Ahab, evidently in a face-to-face confrontation. He tersely stated to the king that there would be neither dew nor rain for the time frame of which he spoke, which would cover a period of years.
 - c. Elijah is called "the Tishbite" because he came from the city of Tishbeh (or Tishbe), the location of which has been disputed. The general area where it was situated is described to be Gilead, an area lying on the east side of Jordan.
 - d. Elijah: "Personal name meaning, 'my God is Yah.' The prophet from the ninth century B.C. from Tishbe of Gilead in the Northern Kingdom has been called the grandest and the most romantic character that Israel ever produced. See 1 Kings 17:1-2 Kings 2:18. He was a complex man of the desert who counseled kings. His life is best understood when considered from four historical perspectives which at times are interrelated: his miracles, his struggle against Baalism, his prophetic role, and his eschatological relationship to Messiah.
 - 1) "Miracles: His first miracle was associated with his prophecy before King Ahab (1 Kings 17:1) in which he said there would be no rain or dew apart from his declaration. Immediately after the prophecy, he retreated to the brook Cherith where he was fed by ravens. His next refuge was Zarephath where he performed the miracle of raising the widow's dead son (1 Kings 17:17-24). Here he was first called 'a man of God.' On Mount Carmel his greatest public miracle involved his encounter with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah (1 Kings 18:19-40). The contest was to determine the true God. The false prophets called on their gods, and Elijah called on His God to see which would rain fire from heaven. After the false prophets failed to hear from their gods, Elijah wet the wood on his altar to the true God by pouring four jars of water over it three times. In response of Elijah's prayer, Yahweh rained fire from heaven to consume the wet wood. As a result of their deception, Elijah ordered the false prophets killed. Elijah next prophesied that the drought was soon to end (1 Kings 18:41) after three rainless years. From Carmel, Elijah prayed. He sent his servant seven times to see if rain was coming. The seventh time a cloud the size of a hand appeared on the horizon. Ahab was told to flee before the storm. Elijah outran his chariot and the storm to arrive at Jezreel.
 - 2) "Baalism: Interwoven in the life of Elijah is his struggle with Baalism. Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon and Tyre (1 Kings 16:31), was Ahab's wife and Israel's queen. She brought the worship of her god Baal into Ahab's kingdom. Even 'Ahab served Baal a little' (2 Kings 10:18). The contest on Carmel showed a contrast between the contesting deities. Yahweh's power and Baal's impotence was further revealed through the drought. A later involvement with Naboth showed the moral superiority of Elijah's faith (2 Kings 9:25-37). Jezebel planned revenge toward Elijah for ordering the false prophets slain, so Elijah retreated to Judah and finally Mount Horeb. There he observed the power of the wind, earthquake, and fire; but the Lord was not seen in these forces. In

- a small voice the Lord commanded him to go anoint Hazael king of Syria, Jehu king of Israel, and Elisha as his own successor (1 Kings 19:1-17).
- 3) "Prophet: His prophetic role constantly placed Elijah in opposition to the majority of the people of his nation. His prophetic confrontations involved King Ahab and later his son Ahaziah. Their toleration of polytheism was the ongoing reason for Elijah's prophetic denunciations. When Ahaziah fell and injured himself, he sent messengers to ask Baal-zebub (lord of flies) about his fate. Elijah intercepted them and sent word back to Ahaziah that he was soon to die (2 Kings 1). Ahaziah sent three different detachments of fifty soldiers each to arrest Elijah. The first two units were destroyed by fire from heaven. The captain of the third group pleaded for his life. He safely escorted Elijah to the king where he delivered the prophecy of his pending death personally.
 - 4) "Relationship to Messiah: Elijah and Elisha were involved in the schools of the prophets when Elijah struck the waters of the Jordan and they parted to allow their crossing (2 Kings 2:1-12). There, immediately after conferring a double portion of his spirit on Elisha (2 Kings 2:9), the two were separated by a chariot and horses of fire which carried Elijah away in a whirlwind as Elisha watched shouting, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.' Malachi promised God would send Elijah the prophet before the coming 'day of the Lord' (Mal. 4:5). John the Baptist was spoken of as the one who would go before Messiah 'in the spirit and power' of Elijah (Luke 1:17). John personally denied that he was literally Elijah reincarnate (John 1:21,25). Some considered Jesus to be Elijah (Matt. 16:14; Mark 6:15). Elijah appeared along with Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus to discuss His 'departure.' Here Peter suggested that three tabernacles be built for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah (Matt. 17:4; Mark 9:5; Luke 9:33). Paul used as an illustration of faithfulness the 7,000 faithful worshipers in the time of Elijah (Rom. 11:2-5)...." (Holman, Nelson Price).
2. Verses 2-4: "And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. And it shall be, *that* thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."
 - a. Knowing the depraved nature of the opposition, God instructed Elijah to depart from the area during the time in which the drought would prevail on the earth.
 - b. He was directed to conceal himself by the brook Cherith, which was located near Jordan. Cherith: "Place name meaning, 'cutting' or 'ditch.' A wadi or brook east of the Jordan River, the modern wadi Qilt south of Jericho. Elijah pronounced God's judgment in the form of a two-year drought and then found God's protection at the Cherith, where he had water to drink (1 Kings 17:3). When Cherith finally went dry, he found refuge with the widow of Zarephath" (Holman).
 - c. McGarvey, in describing his trip from Jerusalem toward Jordan and the Dead Sea, gives this account:
 - 1) "About half way to Jericho the road crosses the saddle of a high ridge in passing from one wady to another, and here is the traditional site of the parable of the Good Samaritan...After crossing the ridge just mentioned the road descends more rapidly, but the hills descend more rapidly still. All is wild and desolate....Within about three miles of the Jordan Valley you see Wady Kelt, a deep, wild gorge, a short distance to the left; and when within about a quarter of a mile of the valley you pass along the edge of the precipice which forms the southern side of the chasm. It is the darkest and most desolate looking gorge in all Palestine.
 - 2) "On either side is a perpendicular wall of dark-brown rock, having a rotten and crumbling appearance, and the narrow bottom of the chasm lies more than 2000 below the road. A noisy stream dashes along its rock bed, distinctly heard on the road above, and narrow line of verdure marks its course.
 - 3) "On one occasion the author entered this gorge at its mouth, where it breaks out into the plain, and ascended it about a mile, partly on horseback and partly on foot. It is scarcely possible to conceive the wild and desolate grandeur of the place. Its brown walls are only about 20 yards apart, and they rise so high and steep as to shut out all the sky, except a narrow strip overhead. There is no reason to doubt that it is the 'brook Cherith,' in which Elijah was hidden and fed by ravens until the brook
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ran dry. It is the only brook 'before Jordan' suitable for such concealment" (*Lands of the Bible*, pp.233f).

d. God promised that he would find sufficient water from the brook for survival, and that he would send food to him by means of the ravens. Some ancient scholars (especially Jerome) thought that the Hebrew term rendered "ravens" should be understood as a reference to Arabian merchants or to the citizens of a nearby town of that name. See Jamieson, pp.349-351.

1) However, his place of concealment, of necessity, would be isolated from the population, otherwise, Ahab's agents would have discovered his hideout. Also, Jamieson states that the word [*Orebim*] is never used by itself to denote merchants. Despite the fact that some are unwilling to accept the plain statement of the text as truth, those who believe the Bible have no difficulty in subscribing to it.

2) The word for raven is the name of a family of birds, which includes the rook (not an unclean bird, by Mosaic standards). It is unimportant for us to know the details of the arrangements God made, by which he supplied food to Elijah through the agency of the birds; whatever the details, God's providence (miraculous or otherwise) was directly involved.

3. Verses 5-7: "So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land."

a. For a considerable amount of time, Elijah found refuge at the brook Cherith, where there was water and food. But in time, owing to the great drought, the brook dried up, and it was necessary for the prophet to find another means of sustenance.

b. God had the power to provide for his needs by means of miracles, but there were other things which he intended for Elijah to be doing. The heat of the search for him had by this time subsided.

B. 1 Kings 17:8-16: The Widow of Zarephath.

1. Verses 8-9: "And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which *belongeth* to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee."

a. Elijah was instructed by the Lord to go to Zarephath, a city which pertained to Zidon. Christ made mention of this. "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow" (Luke 4:25-26). This statement (and its context) shows that miracles have always been rare.

b. In some way, God had directed a widow who lived there to sustain Elijah. Zarephath: "Place name possibly meaning, 'smelting, refining.' A town on the Mediterranean seacoast just south of Sidon. At God's command Elijah fled there after prophesying a drought in Israel (1 Kings 17:2-9). While in Zarephath, he was hosted by a widow and her son. Although the drought affected the widow's income, too, her supply of meal and oil were miraculously sustained (17:12-16). Elijah also restored her son to life and health (17:17-23)" (Holman).

2. Verses 10-12: "So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, *As* the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

a. As Elijah approached the city, he met the widow to whom he was directed. The providence of God was doubtless involved to bring the two together in such an expeditious manner. When Abraham sent his servant to Mesopotamia to find a wife for Isaac, in response to the servant's prayer, he was quickly brought into contact with the intended woman (Gen. 24).

b. The woman was gathering sticks when she was approached by the prophet; he asked that she bring him a drink of water. As she went to get the water, he asked also for a morsel of bread. The widow replied that she only had a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a jar; she added that she had been

gathering sticks which she intended to dress for a meal for herself and her son—"that we may eat it, and die."

- c. Josephus reports that when "...he came to Zarephath, a city not far from Sidon and Tyre, for it lay between them, and this at the command of God, for [God told him] that he should there find a woman, who was a widow, that should give him sustenance: so when he was not far off from the city, he saw a woman that laboured with her own hands, gathering of sticks: so God informed him that this was the woman who was to give him sustenance: so he came and saluted her, and desired her to bring him some water to drink; but as she was going so to do, he called to her, and would have her bring him a loaf of bread also; whereupon she affirmed upon oath, that she had at home nothing more than one handful of meal and a little oil, and that she was going to gather some sticks, that she might knead it, and make bread for herself and her son; after which, she said, they must perish, and be consumed by the famine, for they had nothing for themselves any longer. Hereupon he said, 'Go on with good courage, and hope for better things; and first of all make me a little cake, and bring it to me, for I foretell to thee that this vessel of meal and this cruse of oil shall not fail until God send rain.' When the prophet had said this, she came to him, and made him the before-named cake: of which she had part for herself, and gave the rest to her son, and to the prophet also; nor did anything of this fail until the drought ceased. Now Menander mentions this drought in his account of the acts of Ethbaal, king of the Tyrians; where he says thus: 'Under him, there was a want of rain from the month Hyperberetaeus till the month Hyperberetaeus of the year following; but when he made supplications, there came great thunders. This Ethbaal built the city Botrys, in Phoenicia, and the city Auza, in Libya.' By these words he designed the want of rain that was in the days of Ahab; for at that time it was that Ethbaal also reigned over the Tyrians, as Menander informs us" (*Antiquities*, 8,13,2, p.190).
- d. The statement the woman made about the sticks and dying could be understood to mean that she would use the sticks for fuel with which to cook the cakes; after eating that meager meal, there was nothing else to eat, which meant starvation for herself and her son. If so, why did she gather only two sticks? Two seems too small an amount for a fire with which to prepare the cake, unless *two* simply refers to a plurality of sticks.
 - 1) The statement could mean that she and her son were going to eat the two sticks (one for each), which were poisonous, thus causing them to die. But why eat the sticks when there was enough meal and oil for at least a bite of food? The first interpretation is correct, for in the next verse, she was told to do what she intended; he is not advising her to commit suicide, but to prepare a cake.
 - 2) The Hebrew word *asah* ["dress"] means "to do, make" (Young's). The word is also used in Genesis 18;7,8; 2 Samuel 12:4; 13:5.7; 19:24; 1 Kings 18:23,25,26. The past tense ["dressed"] is used in Leviticus 7:9; cf. Hebrews 6:7.
3. Verses 13-16: "And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat *many* days. *And* the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah."
 - a. The prophet assured the lady that there was nothing to fear; he told her to go and do what she had planned to do, that is, prepare the cake. He tested her faith by asking that she prepare a cake for him first, and then to prepare cakes for herself and her son.
 - b. Elijah was not being selfish by requesting a cake for himself first, but was testing her faith in what he stated in verse fourteen. He reported that God had said that the barrel of meal would not be empty and that oil would not cease to be found in the cruse until rain fell. He is promising a miracle, which was on the order of those the Lord worked in feeding the five thousand and four thousand.
 - c. The lady did the prophet's bidding, and there was always meal in the barrel and oil in the cruse, just as the Lord had promised.

C. 1 Kings 17:17-24: The Resurrection of the Widow's Son.

1. Verses 17-18: "And it came to pass after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?"
 - a. As time passed, the son of the widow became sick; his illness increased to the point that he died. The widow was overwhelmed by this tragedy. She could not understand that the God who sustained them through this on-going drought should allow her son to die.
 - b. She cried, "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" "The pious woman discerned in this death a punishment from God for her sin, and supposed that it had been drawn towards her by the presence of the man of God....Like the blindness in the case of the man born blind mentioned in John 9, the death of this widow's son was not sent as a punishment for particular sins, but was intended as a medium for the manifestation of the works of God in her (John 9:3)..." (Keil, p.239).
 - c. Apparently she is not speaking of some particular sin, but to the fact that she had committed sin in the past, that she was a sinful person. She was calling attention to the fact that he was a man of God and she was a sinful woman.
2. Verses 19-20: "And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?"
 - a. "Without answering her bitter upbraiding, the prophet takes the child, lays it on his bed, and, after a very earnest prayer, had the happiness of seeing its restoration, and along with it, gladness to the widow's heart and home" (JFB, p.351).
 - b. "Elijah told her to carry the dead child up to the chamber in which he lived and lay it upon his bed, and then cried to the Lord, 'Jehovah, my God! hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, to slay her son?' These words, in which the word *also* refers to the other calamities occasioned by the drought, contain no reproach of God, but are expressive of the heartiest compassion for the suffering of his benefactress and the deepest lamentation, which, springing from living faith, pours out the whole heart before God in the hour of distress, that it may appeal to Him the more powerfully for His aid. The meaning is, 'Thou, O Lord my God, according to Thy grace and righteousness, canst not possibly leave the son of this widow in death.' Such confident belief carries within itself the certainty of being heard" (Keil, p.239).
3. Verses 21-23: "And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth."
 - a. Elijah stretched himself over the dead body of the child three times, and prayed that God might let the soul of the child re-enter his body. The Lord heard and answered the prophet's reverent prayer. The spirit was returned to the boy's dead body, and he revived.
 - b. He brought the child down to the lower part of the house and restored him to his mother again. The lad was alive!
4. Verse 24: "And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou *art* a man of God, *and* that the word of the LORD in thy mouth *is* truth."
 - a. This resurrection of the dead son was strong, over-powering proof that Elijah was truly a man of God. She knew beyond any doubt that the words spoken by the prophet were really the words of the Almighty.
 - b. The purpose of such miracles as this is to supply proof of the miracle-worker's identity and message, that the individual truly spoke the word of God. The benefit provided the afflicted person is subordinate to the real purpose.
 - 1) Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and

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- confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
- 2) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"
 - c. The identity and authority of Elijah are established by the miracles he wrought for all time, just as the miracles done by Christ proves him for the remainder of time to be the Son of God.
 - 1) John 20:30-31: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."
 - 2) Mark 2:1-12: "And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion."
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CHAPTER 18

A. 1 Kings 18:1-6: Ahab Searches for Water and Grass.

1. Verses 1-2: "And it came to pass *after* many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab. And *there was* a sore famine in Samaria."
 - a. "As the judgment of drought and famine did not bring king Ahab to his senses and lead him to turn from his ungodly ways, but only filled him with exasperation towards the prophet who had announced to him the coming judgment; there was no other course left than to lay before the people with mighty and convincing force the proof that Jehovah was the only true God, and to execute judgment upon the priests of Baal as the seducers of the nation" (Keil, p.240).
 - b. The New Testament reports that rain fell after a drought of three years and six months: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months" (Jas. 5:16-17). The reference to the third year in the text indicates, therefore, not the entire length of time in which the drought savaged the earth, but the amount of time that has passed since the previous episode in the historical report we are studying.
 - c. At the time then present, Elijah was instructed by the Lord to go and present himself unto King Ahab. At that point, God would bring rain to the earth, spelling the end of the famine. The historian notes in the usual quiet way of inspired writers that Samaria was in the grasp of a "sore famine."
2. Verses 3-4: "And Ahab called Obadiah, which *was* the governor of *his* house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: For it was *so*, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water)."
 - a. We are next introduced to Obadiah, the steward of Ahab's house. Obadiah was one who feared God properly, and had demonstrated his concern for the Lord by concealing a hundred true prophets in a cave, providing them with food and water. Jezebel had cut off these prophets, in an effort to wipe out those who were known to be servants of God.
 - b. In the most wicked of times, there are some who are still willing to serve God, despite the hardships attendant to that way of life under those circumstances. God later reveals to Elijah that he still had seven thousand faithful people in Israel who had not bowed before Baal (1 Kings 19:18).
3. Verses 5-6: "And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself."
 - a. Ahab ordered Obadiah to go out to the springs and brooks of the land in search of grass for his mules and horses. It was his hope that they could find enough provender to save some of these animals.
 - b. The territory was divided between the two; Obadiah was to cover the area assigned to him and Ahab was to search his part.

B. 1 Kings 18:7-16: Elijah and Obadiah Meet.

1. Verses 7-10: "And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, *Art* thou that my lord Elijah? And he answered him, I *am*: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? *As* the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, *He is not there*; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not."
 - a. Elijah met Obadiah. The king's steward fell on the ground before the prophet, asking if it were truly Elijah. The prophet admitted his identity, and asked Obadiah to bring Ahab to meet him.
 - b. Obadiah wanted to know whether he had sinned that the prophet should send him to fetch the king. He
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figured that when he returned with Ahab, the prophet would be gone, which would arouse the king's wrath so that he would kill Obadiah.

- c. Obadiah told Elijah that the king had sought for the prophet even in foreign lands, and required an oath of those people before he would believe they could not locate Elijah there. The vengeful heart of Ahab (and Jezebel) was so filled with malice against Elijah that they continued to search for him so that he might be killed. The drought had not driven Ahab to his knees in repentance, but had only hardened him in his hatred against the prophet. The ordinary man would have repented long before. The sun will melt wax and harden clay. The effect of God's word on some will soften them, but it will harden others; the difference is not in the intensity of the heat, but in the condition of the heart.
2. Verses 11-14: "And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And it shall come to pass, *as soon as* I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and *so* when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*: and he shall slay me."
 - a. Obadiah reasoned that Elijah would be sent elsewhere while he was gone to fetch the king, and that he would vent his anger against Obadiah. He knew Ahab well, and was convinced that the king was fully capable of killing even a trusted servant.
 - b. He told Elijah that he had been a servant of the Lord from his youth. He reminded him that he had saved a hundred prophets of God when Jezebel had set out to slaughter all of the true prophets.
 3. Verses 15-16: "And Elijah said, *As* the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself unto him to day. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah."
 - a. Elijah assured Obadiah that he would certainly show himself to Ahab even that very day. Obadiah had nothing to fear in that regards.
 - b. After about three and a half years, God was now ready to take action that would have a profound effect on Israel.

C. 1 Kings 18:17-20: Elijah Confronts Ahab.

1. Verses 17-18: "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art* thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim."
 - a. Ahab refused to admit that he and his predecessors were the cause of the current problem, so he tried to blame the devastation of the drought on Elijah. Only one who was unable or unwilling to look past the surface of the accusation would be taken in by it. While it was true that the drought was brought to bear upon Israel by Elijah, it was sent from God as punishment for the sins of the king and Israel.
 - b. "Ahab thought to awe him into submission; but the prophet boldly and undisguisedly told the king that the national calamity was traceable chiefly to his own and his family's patronage and practice of idolatry" (JFB, p.353).
 - c. False teachers are never willing to admit the error of their way. Ahab was unwilling to do so, and his modern counterparts deny any wrong-doing. When their errors are exposed by a faithful saint, invariably the errorists charge the loyal defender with causing the problem. This is mere sophistry; were it not for the presence of the error, there would be no confrontation; but whenever sin or error appear, the faithful are obligated to oppose it. The resultant trouble is not caused by the sound ones, but by those who introduced the error.
 - 1) Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."
 - 2) Galatians 2:4-5: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with

you."

3) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

d. When Ahab charged Elijah with being the troubler of Israel, the prophet properly affirmed that Ahab and his father's house were the ones causing the trouble. They had forsaken the word of the Lord and had practiced idolatry; the present hardships were sent as punishment for this sinful condition. Ahab was unwilling to admit his error, just as modern false teachers close their minds to the truth.

2. Verses 19-20: "Now therefore send, *and* gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel."

a. The king and queen followed different religious systems; Ahab followed Baal, who had 450 prophets; Jezebel followed Asherah (Astarte; Venus), who was served by 400 prophets. Elijah was guided by the Lord to invite these prophets to meet him on Mt. Carmel, in the presence of the nation, in order to determine who was the real God—Jehovah on the one side or Baal and Ashera on the other.

b. Ahab might have attempted to kill Elijah immediately on their present meeting, but he may have been fearful to do so, since the prophet had successfully eluded all his earlier attempts to apprehend and kill him. In the king's mind may have been the thought that the 950 prophets would be able to humiliate this one prophet.

c. Carmel: "Place name meaning, 'park, fruitful field'....The towering mountain (1 Kings 18:19) where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. The mountain is near the Mediterranean coast of Palestine between the Plain of Acco to the north and the Plain of Sharon to the south. It reaches a maximum elevation of about 1,750 feet. The Bible frequently mentions Carmel as a place of great beauty and fertility" (Holman).

D. 1 Kings 18:21-40: Elijah's Contest With the Prophets of Baal.

1. Verse 21: "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people answered him not a word."

a. The Israelites assembled at Carmel. "The spot where the contest took place is situated at the eastern extremity, which is also the highest point of the whole ridge. It is called el-Mohhrake, 'the Burning,' or 'the Burnt place.' No spot could have been better adapted for the thousands of Israel to have stood, drawn up on those gentle slopes. The rock shoots up in an almost perpendicular wall of more than 200 feet in height, on the side of the vale of Esdraelon. This wall made it visible over the whole plain, and from all the surrounding heights, where gazing multitudes would be stationed" (JFB, p.353).

b. "Mount Carmel is a ridge 14 miles long, extending from near the northwestern angle of the Plain of Esdraelon, northwest to the seashore, where it drops down suddenly, leaving a narrow beach at its foot. It is 556 feet high near this extremity; 12 miles farther inland it attains a height of 1810 feet; and toward the other extremity it makes a slight descent, being there only 1687 feet high....

1) "At the eastern extremity of the mountain there is a place on its summit called *El Mahrakah* (the *Place of Burning*), from the supposition that here Elijah called the fire from heaven to consume his sacrifice. Many ancient ruins are scattered about, some of them overgrown with young oaks, and in the midst of them is a rock-cut pool for rainwater about 35 by 20 feet and from 6 to 8 feet deep....

2) "The view toward the east includes the entire Plan of Estraelon. Mount Gilboa, with Jezreel at its foot, is in full view, as is also Jebel Duh, with Shunem at its foot; while the conical top of Mount Tabor is seen peering over the hills to the south of Nazareth. The view to the west is shut off by the higher part of the mountain in that direction, but by going less than 100 yards back from the brow of the mountain we can see over the southern slopes of its spurs down to the sea-shore, and the Mediterranean is distinctly visible for many miles above Caesarea.

3) "This is the view obtained by Elijah's servant when the little cloud was seen hanging over the sea, and the summit occupied by the ruins above mentioned is the prophet's place of prayer, and not his place of sacrifice. From the latter place Elijah 'went up to the top of Carmel' when he went to pray, and from the praying-place he sent his servant seven times to look toward the sea for signs of rain.

- 4) "We are to look elsewhere, then, for the place of sacrifice, and it must be a place of greater area than this narrow summit, in order to have accommodated the vast multitude who were present. But here it is, immediately in front of us to the east, and 300 feet below us. It is a plateau sufficiently broad for the assembly, and reached by roads which ascend the slopes of the mountain from various directions. By dismounting and leading our horses we managed to descend to it, having reached the summit by a different route. The plateau answers in every particular the demands of the narrative, even to the possibility of Ahab's chariot ascending to it, and there is no other on the mountain that does.
- 5) "Even the matter of procuring the water which was poured on the sacrifice (verses 33-35) is provided for. It could not have been obtained from the Kishon, which is 1400 feet below, and half a mile from the foot of the mountain, and was also dry after the three years old drouth, but from a spring in a well some 10 or 15 minutes' walk down the slope toward the north. This well, mentioned by all visitors to the spot, had an abundance of good water when visited by the author, although the Kishon, just opposite, was entirely dry, thus proving that the well is more unfailing than the river. Though the river must have been dry at the time of Elijah's great victory here, a heavy flood of rain was about to fall, and the bodies of the 400 prophets of Baal, which he caused to be cast into the bed of the stream, were soon washed away by the rising current" (McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible*, pp.307-309).
- c. When Elijah made his appearance, his first words were a demand to know when his people would cease trying to worship Jehovah and Baal; he challenged them to pick one or the other, implying that God would not accept their divided allegiance. It is impossible to serve God and an idol at the same time.
- 1) Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
 - 2) Matthew 12:30: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
 - 3) Revelation 3:15-17: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."
- d. "How long halt ye between two opinions?" The margin gives "thoughts" as the alternative rendering of "opinions." Clarke defines the statement to mean, "'How long hop ye about upon two boughs?' This is a metaphor taken from birds hopping about from bough to bough, not knowing on which to settle" (p.457).
- e. "They wanted to combine the worship of Jehovah and Baal, and not to assume a hostile attitude towards Jehovah by the worship of Baal; and were therefore obliged to keep silence under this charge of infatuated halving, since they knew very well from the law itself that Jehovah demanded worship with a whole and undivided heart (Deut. 6:4,5)" (Keil, p.245). "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:4-5).
2. Verses 22-24: "Then said Elijah unto the people, I, *even* I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets *are* four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay *it* on wood, and put no fire *under*: And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken."
- a. The people were fearful to answer Elijah's initial statement, knowing that if they answered according to the truth, they would incur the anger of the king.
 - b. "Elijah proposed to decide for them the controversy between God and Baal by an appeal, not to the authority of the law, for that would have no weight, but by a visible token from heaven. As fire was the element over which Baal was supposed to preside, he proposed that two bullocks should be slain, and

placed on separate altars of wood—the one for Baal and the other for God—and on whichever the fire should descend to consume it, the event should determine the true God, whom it was their duty to serve. It is evident from this language that the mass of the people, ignorant and strongly addicted to idolatry, considered Baal as identical with Jehovah; while the worshippers of Jehovah, on the other hand, maintained His exclusive title to divine honours” (JFB, pp.353f).

- c. Elijah pointed out first that he alone stood on Jehovah’s side, while Baal had 450 prophets arrayed against him. He then outlined the contest: bring two bullocks; let Baal’s prophets dismember one of them, and place it upon the altar; wood was to be put in place, but not set afire; he would arrange his altar in the same way. Each of the two parties was to call on the name of its deity; the God who answered by sending fire upon the altar was to be the God deserving of their worship.
 - d. This plan was pleasing to the Israelites. In the ancient past, during the time of Moses, God had sent fire upon an altar. "And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: *which* when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces" (Lev. 9:24). In this situation, God had sent fire from heaven upon the first sacrifice to be presented in front of the tabernacle. Elijah’s proposal was one which would clearly identify the true God, and consequently expose Baal and Astarah for the non-entities they were.
3. Verses 25-26: "And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress *it* first; for ye *are* many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire *under*. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed *it*, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But *there was* no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made."
- a. Elijah gave the false prophets the first opportunity to prove their god. They slew and dressed the bullock, and placing the offering upon the altar, began to implead Baal to send fire to ignite the wood and consume the sacrifice.
 - b. One can well imagine the impressive ceremonial activities that accompanied their efforts. They cried unto Baal from morning to noon, but there was no voice heard and no fire was forthcoming. Everything remained just as it was. There must have been a great din of noise coming from the 450 priests of Baal, as they worked themselves into a frenzy, leaping around and about the altar.
 - c. If Baal was able to send fire upon the altar, they would probably have ended the contest; it is not likely that the people would have maintained an open mind to any sign God would have sent.
4. Verses 27-29: "And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he *is* a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, *or* peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the *time* of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that *there was* neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."
- a. At noon, after several hours of fruitless efforts on the part of the false prophets, Elijah began to urge them on by mocking them. He told them not to relent in their efforts, for according to them, Baal was a god, and they needed to continue their pleas. He suggested that Baal may be meditating (or talking, margin), or perhaps he was pursuing (hunting), or is on a journey, or asleep.
 - b. The ridicule Elijah heaped upon them is most fitting, in view of the fact that a man-made object has no being. The Bible gives an apt description of the origin and absurdity of an idol. "They that make a graven image *are* all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they *are* their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image *that* is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they *are* of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; *yet* they shall fear, *and* they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out *his* rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and
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take the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish *it*. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth *it*, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth *it*; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth *himself*, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, *even* his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth *it*, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou *art* my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; *and* their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither *is there* knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten *it*: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, *Is there* not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. 44:9-20).

- c. Their fanatical pleadings continued through the afternoon, on until the time of the evening sacrifice. In keeping with heathen idolatry, the priests cut themselves, foolishly thinking that this mutilation would somehow move Baal to respond. But there was not a single sound or act to be drawn from the dead idol.
 - d. We are living in a time when paganism is enjoying a revival. Our nation came into being with a firm belief in the God of the Bible, but it has turned its official back on God—within the space of a few years. There is an active movement in the public school system to introduce paganism, being presented under the seemingly innocent guise of “native American” culture. What lay at the heart of the destruction of the American Indian civilization? Many were idolaters, following a corrupt religious system. Many also practiced extreme cruelty against others. God could not forever countenance such evil activities. To return to paganism is to spell the end of American civilization.
5. Verses 30-35: "And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD *that was* broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid *him* on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour *it* on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do *it* the second time. And they did *it* the second time. And he said, Do *it* the third time. And they did *it* the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water."
- a. The priests of Baal had had more than sufficient time to elicit a response from their god, if he indeed was a god. It was obvious to everyone, including the priests themselves, that no action was going to come from Baal.
 - b. It was the time for the evening sacrifice to be offered (verse 29) when Elijah stepped forth to take his turn. He called for the people to gather around, to make it clear to them that what was to occur was a genuine miracle. He repaired the altar of the Lord. Evidently, there was already an altar on the site which had been used in times past as a place of sacrifice unto Jehovah. He used twelve stones in erecting the altar, with the stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - c. Having restored the altar, he placed the wood for the fire, and slew the bullock and placed the pieces upon the altar. To put the forthcoming miracle beyond doubt, he dug a trench around the altar, and directed that four barrels of water were to be poured upon the sacrifice, the wood, and the altar; he had this done three times, so that the trench was full of water and the wood, the sacrifice, and the altar were completely drenched. More than a spark of fire would be required to ignite it; indeed, it would have been difficult for anyone to set this water-soaked mass on fire.
 - d. “Elijah adopted this course for the purpose of precluding all suspicion of even the possibility of fraud in connection with the miraculous burning of the sacrifice. For idolaters had carried their deceptions to such a length, that they would set fire to the wood of the sacrifices from hollow spaces concealed
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beneath the altars, in order to make the credulous people believe that the sacrifice had been miraculously set on fire by the deity. Ephraem Syrus and Hoh. Chrystostom both affirm this..." (Keil, pp.248f).

6. Verses 36-37: "And it came to pass at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou *art* God in Israel, and *that I am* thy servant, and *that I have done* all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou *art* the LORD God, and *that* thou hast turned their heart back again."
 - a. In contrast to the violent demonstrations of the pagan priests, Elijah approached the altar and offered a simple prayer unto God. He addressed God in reverent terms, asking that he bring fire upon the altar, and thus prove that Jehovah is the true God of Israel, that Elijah is his prophet, and that these things he had done were in keeping with God's word. The purpose of miracles is once again shown to be to establish the truth of the revealed word (cf. Mark 16:15-20; Heb. 2:1-4).
 - b. The goal of the entire exercise was to bring the Israelites back into fellowship with God. Remember that the people involved in this episode were citizens of the Northern Kingdom, which came into being when the nation was divided as a result of Rehoboam's foolish work.
 - c. The Gospel does not endorse what is common with modern religious sects, which put emphasis on outward form, and not on inward devotion. Our Lord did not promote his cause by flamboyant dress, spectacular oratory, or sensational programs. He presented the truth clearly, proved the veracity of his doctrine, and called on men to accept it on its merits. "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets" (Matt. 12:19).
 - 1) "Jesus was no street corner egotist, bawling for attention. Techniques of the rabble rouser, the sensationalist, and the soap-box orator were beneath his dignity....In keeping with these words concerning Christ, some of the antics of certain religionists appear to be totally improper. On Times Square in New York City, one often sees screaming advocates of this or that doctrine jostling the throngs pouring forth out of the theaters; and, although their zeal may be commendable, one cannot help remembering that the Christ drew the throngs to himself. He did not invade them, beating on a bucket, and yelling for the attention of the passers-by" (Burton Coffman, *Commentary on Matthew*, p.170).
 - 2) The Lord never intended to foment riots by his preaching. He went about teaching whenever a situation presented itself; he taught publicly, when he had opportunity; he taught privately on many occasions. But never did he seek to arouse the multitudes against the civil authorities (cf. Rom. 13:1-7). Our Lord's tactics are to be ours. He did not use street-corner antics; he did not call attention to himself by religious garb.
7. Verses 38-39: "Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that *was* in the trench. And when all the people saw *it*, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he *is* the God; the LORD, he *is* the God."
 - a. There was no misunderstanding or refuting the results of this simple prayer. Fire fell from heaven, it consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust, and the water in the trench. No excess words are given in simply, but graphically, describing the event.
 - b. No unnecessary words are given to describe the response of the people. They fell on their faces and cried out, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." When people living during the day of miracles witnessed a genuine miracle, the effect was instantaneous: they were overcome by the awesome display of power which could only have come from the Almighty.
8. Verse 40: "And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."
 - a. Acting out of judicial motives and not from personal vengeance, Elijah ordered that the 450 prophets of Baal be taken into custody; not a one of them was to be allowed to escape. He brought them to the brook Kishon, and there executed them.
 - b. "The summit is 1,000 feet above the Kishon, which nowhere runs from the sea so close to the base of

the mount as just beneath el-Mohhrake; so that the priests of Baal could in a few minutes be taken down” to the brook (JFB, p.355).

- c. “No further word of Jezebel’s four hundred prophets of Astarte is given. Elijah had asked that they be present (v.19). For some reason they must not have appeared because Elijah did not challenge them to be part of this contest, not did he command them to be put to death. They may be the four hundred who appeared later before Ahab and Jehoshaphat (1 Kin. 22:6)” (G. Summers, ADL, p.116).

E. 1 Kings 18:41-46: Elijah Prays for Rain.

1. Verses 41-42: "And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for *there is* a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees."
 - a. Ahab had been somewhat cowed by this great experience. When Elijah directed him to eat and drink, the king complied. He had the manpower to arrest and slay the prophet, but he took no such action, obviously fearing God’s awesome power.
 - b. The idolatrous priests being slain, and the heart of the people turned back to God, the curse could be lifted. Elijah speaks of the fact that rain was in the offing. Elijah had obeyed the instructions God gave him (18:1), and so now he knew the drought was about to be ended. "And it came to pass *after* many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 18:1).
 - c. “While the king was refreshing himself with food and drink, Elijah went up to the top of Carmel to pray that the Lord would complete his work by fulfilling his promise (vers. 1) in sending rain; and continued in prayer till the visible commencement of the fulfilment of his prayer was announced by his servant...” (Keil, p.250).
 2. Verses 43-45: "And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is* nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare *thy chariot*, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel"
 - a. After his fervent prayer, Elijah sent his servant to look toward the sea. There was no visible sign of any forthcoming rain. Seven times the servant went to look at the sea, and only after the seventh trip did he discover any indication of rain; this indication was the presence of a cloud which was about the size of a man’s hand.
 - b. This was enough for Elijah to know that rain was on the way. He directed Ahab to mount his chariot and head home, lest the rain hinder his journey. This shows the great trust the prophet had in God’s ability and willingness to hear and answer prayer. Quickly the little cloud developed into a great storm, bringing heavy rain upon the land.
 - c. James 5:16-18: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."
 - d. It seems beyond doubt that the arrival of rain was not miraculous, but was the result of the fervent prayers of Elijah. If the rain had been miraculous, it would have been instantly sent, with or without any clouds. But in view of the description given in the passage, and the use James made of it, the prayers of the prophet were answered by the providence of God, using the ordinary means of causing rain to fall.
 3. Verse 46: "And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel."
 - a. Though Ahab’s chariot could travel at a fast pace, we are told that Elijah was still able to precede him to Jezreel, a distance of about fourteen miles. The verse states that “the hand of the Lord was on Elijah,”
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which possibly means that the prophet was assisted in his trial by God's miraculous power.

- b. Elijah anticipated that a great restoration movement had been launched in Israel, and that the people were all ready to turn back to the Lord. He was soon to be disappointed. The nation was at a great crossroads—everything was present to bring them back to Jehovah, to overthrow Ahab's evil rule, and to destroy the golden calves and Bethel and Dan. But they were unwilling to give up their idolatrous ways and return to the temple worship ordained by God. If they had done so, the twelve tribes could have been reunited and the history of God's people would have been vastly different.
 - c. Ahab's rule in the Northern Kingdom coincided with the last part of Asa's and most of Jehoshaphat's reign in Judah.
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CHAPTER 19

A. 1 Kings 19:1-8: Elijah Flees from Jezebel.

1. Verses 1-3: "And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. And when he saw *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there."
 - a. Ahab wasted no time in relating to his pagan queen all that Elijah had done on Carmel, complete with a report of his slaughter of the 450 prophets of Baal (cf. 18:40). There is this feature of human nature that generally moves us to broadcast information about recent events, often without regard to the effect the story will have on other people. We deem it very important to our pride to be the first to bring the report.
 - b. Jezebel wasted no time in spewing forth words of vengeance against Elijah. Confirming her promise by appealing to her gods, she vowed that the prophet would be as dead as the 450 prophets of Baal by the same time the next day.
 - c. Elijah believed she fully intended to carry out the threat. He had gone to Jezreel (18:46), full of courage, thinking that the nation was on the verge of being delivered from idolatry. But now, he was moved with fear, and fled for his life, going all the way to Beersheba, where he left his servant.
2. Verse 4: "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers."
 - a. Going on from Beersheba, Elijah went a day's journey into the wilderness. He sat down in the shade of a juniper tree, apparently tired after his day-long flight into the deserted region.
 - 1) "Beer-sheba and its surrounding area factors significantly in the Old Testament from the earliest sojourns of the patriarchs (Gen. 21; 22; 26) to the return of the Hebrew exiles with Nehemiah (Neh. 11:27,30). Since it was an important crossroad to Egypt in the geographic center of the dry, semi-desert region known as the Negeb, Beersheba also served as the administrative center of the region. Settlement of the Beersheba area began before 3000 B.C.
 - a) "Abraham and a nearby king, Abimelech, swore to protect Abraham's right to the water of this region (Gen. 21:22-33). Abraham then named the place 'Beer-sheba,' meaning 'well of the oath' or preferably 'well of the seven,' referring to seven lambs involved in the agreement. Here he called on the Lord (Gen. 21:33) and lived for some time (Gen. 22:19). The Lord confirmed His promises with Isaac at Beer-sheba (Gen. 26:23-25), where Isaac renamed his father's well 'Shibah.' A well is found today outside the ruins of biblical Beer-sheba (Tell es-Saba), however, it cannot be the patriarchal well since it is dated much later, around the twelfth century.
 - b) "Isaac also lived in the area of Beer-sheba, and his son Jacob left there for Haran to seek a wife (Gen. 28:10). A crossroad to Egypt, Beer-sheba was a stopping place for Jacob many years later when he was encouraged by the Lord to continue on to Egypt where Joseph was awaiting him (Gen. 46:1-5). Because of these patriarchal events at Beer-sheba, it is thought that the city eventually and unfortunately became a pilgrimage destination for idolatry later during the monarchy (Amos 5:5; 8:14).
 - c) "Joshua gave Beer-sheba to the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:28), and then to the tribe of Simeon whose territory lay within Judah's boundaries (Josh. 19:1,2,9). Samuel's sons Joel and Abiah were unfair judges in Beer-sheba right before the monarchy began with Saul (1 Sam. 8:1-3).
 - d) "Beer-sheba is mentioned idiomatically twelve times to indicate the northern and southern extremes of Israel, 'Dan to Beersheba' (2 Sam. 24:2, 1 Kings 4:25). This type of phrase served to speak of Israel in its entirety and its unity; for instance, in its resolve to punish the tribe of Benjamin (Judg. 20:1) and its recognition of Samuel as a true prophet (1 Sam. 3:20). This idiom also served to show the extent of the reforms of three southern kings: Jehoshaphat (2 Chron.

- 19:4, 'Beer-sheba to mount Ephraim'), Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:5, 'Beer-sheba even to Dan'), and Josiah (2 Kings 23:8, 'from Geba to Beer-sheba').
- e) "Archaeology has shown Beer-sheba to be the administrative center of the Negeb by uncovering its large commercial storerooms and fortifications which were superior to the lesser cities in the area. The fortifications were inadequate, however, against the Assyrians who sacked the city and left in ruins until the Persian period. After the punitive Exile of Judah, the people returned to Beer-sheba and its surrounding satellite towns with Nehemiah in the fifth century (Neh. 11:27,30).
 - f) "As the 'gateway to the desert,' Beer-sheba was in a precarious place climatically, which is the backdrop of two person's prayers concerning death. Hagar pleads at a distance not to see her son die (Gen. 21:14-16), and Elijah prays for death in the desert rather than at the order of Queen Jezebel (1 Kings 19:3,4)" (Holman, Daniel C. Fredericks).
- 2) Juniper: "1 Kings 19:4, a tree under which Elijah the prophet rested as he fled the wrath of Jezebel. The same plant is mentioned in Job 30:4 and Psalm 120:4. The Hebrew word thus translated probably refers to a kind of shrub that grows in the Arabian deserts. Modern translations read 'broom'" (Holman).
- b. In his fatigued and discouraged state, Elijah asked God to take away his life, believing that he had no chance of avoiding Jezebel's wrath. Fear and faith cannot both be strong in a person at the same time; as one increases, the other decreases.
 - 1) The prophet had been filled with faith, which gave him great courage, when he vied with the prophets of Baal on Carmel; but now his courage melted away, as his faith dwindled. Perhaps he thought that the victory over the prophets of Baal would be his last battle, that the nation had been delivered from its idolatrous practices. He was overwhelmed by the harshness of Jezebel's threat.
 - 2) He quickly forgot the protection and support which God had provided him during the preceding three and one-half years. Despite the miraculous works he had been empowered to perform, in the final analysis, it was necessary that he maintain his faith in God and be willing to endure the dangers that arose. Did he expect God to fight the battles for him?
 - 3) It was not easy for Elijah to remain faithful to God, despite living in an age of miracles; and it is not easy for us to maintain our faith in our difficult times. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).
 - c. There is another view of the proceedings, which gives greater credit to Elijah. Keil observes: "For it is obvious that Elijah did not flee from any fear of the vain threat of Jezebel, from the fact that he did not merely withdraw into the kingdom of Judah, where he would have been safe under Jehoshaphat from all the persecutions of Jezebel, but went to Beersheba, and thence onwards into the desert, there to pour out before the Lord God his weariness of life (ver. 4)...he went upon his soul, or his life, *i.e.* not to save his life (as I once thought, with many other commentators), for his wish to die (ver. 4) is opposed to this; but to care for his soul in the manner indicated in ver. 4, *i.e.* to commit his soul or his life to the Lord his God in the solitude of the desert, and see what he would determine concerning him" (p.253). However, the common view is more obviously correct.
3. Verses 5-7: "And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise *and* eat. And he looked, and, behold, *there was* a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise *and* eat; because the journey *is* too great for thee."
 - a. The prophet slept until an angel awakened him with a touch, telling him to arise and eat. He looked and saw a cake of bread, fresh from the coals, and a container of water. Obviously, he had taken no food with him, depending on God to sustain him, or expecting God to take away his life.
 - b. Elijah ate and drank, and lay down again. The angel touched him a second time, directing him to arise and eat, since he had a great journey ahead of him. God was not through with the prophet, for he was to take this trip, and afterwards there were other great experiences in his future, including the call of Elisha to replace him in the prophetic office.
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4. Verse 8: "And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God."
- a. On the strength of the miraculously-prepared food, Elijah went without eating anything more for the next forty days and nights, during which time he traveled to Horeb, the mountain range in which Mt. Sinai was situated.
 - b. The distance from Beersheba to Sinai is put at 150 miles (Clarke, p.461) or 200 miles (Keil, p.255), a considerable distance in either case to a man traveling on foot.
 - c. "He re-enacted in his own person the leading of Israel through the wilderness. Trial was the essential quality common to both events. The food which the angel brought him, and which lasted for the whole time, corresponded to the manna. Horeb is called the mount of God, in consequence of all the solemn manifestations on its summit (cf. Exod. 3:2 with 23, 34...). At the same time, considering that the distance from Beer-sheba to mount Horeb is only a journey of eight or nine days, it is very probable that the number *forty* should be understood indefinitely for a great length of time..." (JFB, p.357). However, we have no reason to doubt the literal meaning of the forty days and nights.
 - d. "The distance from Beersheba to Horeb is about 200 miles. Consequently Elijah would not have required forty days to travel there, if the intention of God had been nothing more than to cause him to reach the mountain....But in the strength of the food provided by the angel Elijah was not only to perform the journey to Horeb, but to wander in the desert for forty days and forty nights, *i.e.* forty whole days, as Moses had formerly wandered with all Israel for forty years; that he might know that the Lord was still the same God who had nourished and sustained his whole nation in the desert with manna from heaven for forty years. And just as the forty years' sojourn in the desert had been to Moses a time for the trial of faith and for exercise in humility and meekness (Num. 12:3), so was the strength of Elijah's faith to be tried by the forty days' wandering in the same desert, and to be purified from all carnal zeal for the further fulfilment of his calling..." (Keil, p.255).
 - e. The three who were together in the Transfiguration (Christ, Moses, and Elijah: Matt. 17:1-5) also had in common the experience of having fasted forty days and nights.
 - 1) Moses: "When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, *even* the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water" (Deut. 9:9). "And I fell down before the LORD, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger" (Deut. 9:18). It appears that Moses had this experience twice.
 - 2) Elijah: "And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God" (1 Kings 19:8).
 - 3) Jesus: "And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered" (Matt. 4:2).

B. 1 Kings 19:9-18: Seven Thousand in Israel Were Still Faithful.

1. Verses 9-10: "And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."
 - a. While on this journey, Elijah took refuge in a cave, where the Lord spoke to him. The prophet was asked why he was there. "What doest thou here, Elijah? was a searching question addressed to one who had been called to so arduous and urgent a mission as his. By an awful exhibition of Divine power he was made aware of the Divine speaker who addressed him" (JFB, p.357).
 - b. The prophet responded by stating his dedication to the cause of God, and referred to Israel's sinful rejection of God's covenant, and their having torn down God's altars and slain his prophets. He also stated that he was the only faithful prophet left, and his life was in danger. This further indicates that his flight had been caused by his fear for his life. It is also clear that Elijah was greatly discouraged by Israel's rejection of his efforts to turn them back to Jehovah.
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2. Verses 11-13: "And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was *so*, when Elijah heard *it* that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, *there came* a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?"
- The question may suggest that Elijah was out of his proper place, however he had been directed to go on the journey (verse 7). God's conversation with the prophet showed him, among other things, that he was never beyond the view and protection of the Almighty.
 - God called on Elijah to stand on the mount in the presence of the Lord. God then passed by him and a great and strong wind tore at the mountains, breaking the rocks in pieces. But God was not to be seen in this great wind. He is a Spirit (John 4:24; Luke 24:39), not some visible or audible feature of the creation.
 - An earthquake then occurred, but again God was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake, a fire was manifested to the prophet, but God was not in the fire. Finally, Elijah heard a small, still voice, but that voice was of God.
 - The first three manifestations were not God, but were agents of God. "God is a spirit; and though the common mass of the Hebrew people might not have realized this great conception, yet there were certain individuals who, like Elijah, had more refined and elevated notions in regard to the pure spirituality of the Divine nature. Progress had been made in religious knowledge from the time of the burning bush. The attention of the prophet was arrested by the phenomena that took place. His petulance was silenced, his heart was touched, and he was bid without delay return to the land of Israel, and prosecute the Lord's work there. The design of this remarkable scene was to show Elijah that it was not according to the character of God to destroy or to coerce, but by the rational weapons of argument and preaching the Word, to persuade, the idolaters to abandon a false, and to embrace the true, religion. But, to convince him that an idolatrous nation will not be unpunished, he commissions him to anoint three persons who were destined in Providence to avenge God's controversy with the people of Israel" (JFB, p.357).
 - God spoke to Elijah in a small still voice. "When Elijah heard this, he covered up his face in his cloak...and went out to the entrance of the cave" (Keil, pp.258f). The prophet showed reverence for the Lord by wrapping the cloak about his face, which indicates that he was not worthy to look upon even a manifestation of a Divine Being.
 - "Tempest, earthquake, and fire, which are even more terrible in the awful solitude of the Horeb mountains than in an inhabited land, are signs of the coming of the Lord to judgment (cf. Ps. 18:8ff). It was in the midst of such terrible phenomena that the Lord had once come down upon Sinai, to inspire the people who were assembled at the foot of the mountain with a salutary dread of his terrible majesty, of the fiery zeal of his wrath and love, which consumes whatever opposes it (see at Ex. 19:16ff). But now the Lord was not in these terrible phenomena; to signify to the prophet that he did not work in his earthly kingdom with the destroying zeal of wrath, or with the pitiless severity of judgment. It was in a soft, gentle rustling that he revealed himself to him" (Keil, p.258).
3. Verse 14: "And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."
- "Elijah tried to explain that he was a servant of God who had been worn down by the very people God sent him to teach. He was a lonely man. He gave various reasons for his despair: The people had forsaken God's covenant, thrown down his altars, and slain his prophets. At that point he even thought that in all the land he alone remained loyal to God" (James Boyd, ADL, pp.116f).
 - "And behold he heard the question a second time, 'What doest thou here, Elijah?' and answered with a repetition of his complaint see vers. 9 and 10. While the appearance of God, not in the tempest, the
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earthquake, and the fire, but in a gentle rustling, revealed the Lord to him as a merciful and gracious God, long-suffering, and of great goodness and truth (Ex. 34:6), the answer to his complaint showed him that he did not leave guilt unpunished (Ex. 34:7), since the Lord gave him the following command, vers. 15ff.." (Keil, p.259).

4. Verses 15-17: "And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael *to be* king over Syria; And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint *to be* king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint *to be* prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, *that* him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay."
 - a. "God did not rebuke nor criticize Elijah as we might think he deserved, but he gave Elijah three assignments. These working orders would take a discouraged man and put him back into the service of God. These assignments, alongside the evidences that God was with him, would be encouragement enough for him once again to become the stalwart prophet he had been. He was to (1) anoint Jehu to eventually become king over Israel, (2) anoint Hazael to become king of Syria (Syria and the homeland of Elijah were enemies throughout this period...), and (3) anoint Elisha to become his own successor as the leading prophet of the Lord" (James Boyd, ADL, p.117).
 - b. The best way out of an emotional depression, discouragement, or fear is activity. By giving Elijah some work to do, not mere make-work, but work that needed to be done, God was able to bring the prophet back to his former zeal and courage.
 - c. Coupled with the assignment was the assurance that his avowed enemies would be slain, by either of the two men Elijah was to anoint to regal offices in their respective kingdoms. If any escaped from the swords of Hazael and Jehu, then Elisha would take action against them.
 - d. "Such assignments would take Elijah away from the fears of the past and force him to focus on the future which would prove to be a time of vindication for the prophet. What must have been a source of encouragement to this bedraggled prophet was the assurance that his enemies, particularly the house of Ahab, would be slain, if not by Jehu, then by Hazael, and by Elisha. There would be no escape from the retribution of God." (James Boyd, ADL, p.117).
5. Verse 18: "Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."
 - a. The prophet was discouraged by the belief that he alone remained loyal to Jehovah. The Lord told him, to the contrary, that there were 7,000 in Israel who remained faithful. Seven thousand, while much greater than the number the prophet figured, was still only a few in comparison to the majority in the kingdom who were unfaithful.
 - b. The statement here has become somewhat proverbial, used by brethren in times of apostasy to remind themselves of the fact that there are still a sizeable number of loyal saints. Only the Lord knows how many there are living on earth today who are his faithful followers.
 - c. The harsh reality is that in virtually every generation, those who are faithful comprise the distinct minority. The only exceptions to this rule would be the early times of human history and the first few generations following the flood.

C. 1 Kings 19:19-21: Elijah Meets Elisha.

1. Verse 19: "So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him."
 - a. The fact that there were twelve yoke of oxen involved in the farming operation in progress indicates that Elisha was from a family of substance. Each yoke was pulling a plow; Elisha was driving one of the yokes.
 - b. "The eastern plough is a very simple, primitive implement. Usually a man ploughs with a one-handled plough and two heifers, holding the handle with his right hand and the cord with the left. It is just a part of a tree, very slightly altered, and fitted with an iron shoe or point" (JFB, p.353).
 - c. As Elijah passed Elisha, the prophet cast his cloak about the young plowman. "The prophet's cloak was a sign of the prophet's vocation, so that throwing it to him was a symbol of the call to the prophetic

- office” (Keil, pp.260f).
2. Verse 20: "And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?"
 - a. Elisha understood the significance of the cloak being cast upon him; he realized this was a call to the prophetic office, a call that issued, not merely by Elijah, but from God. "As he has ploughed his earthly field with his twelve pair of oxen, he was now to plough the spiritual field of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 9:62)" (Keil, p.261).
 - b. He requested permission to return to his parents' home to kiss them good-bye. Elijah gave him leave to do so. "The words 'what have I done to thee?' can only mean, I have not wanted to put any constraint upon thee, but leave it to thy free will to decide in favour of the prophetic calling" (Keil, p.261).
 - c. "There is not a word of reproof here, as Wordsworth and Rawlinson imagine. Indeed, it would have been strange if there had been. A greater readiness to obey the prophetic summons, Elisha could not well have showed. Forthwith, as soon as he realized his call, 'he left the oxen and ran after' his new master. True, he asks permission—and why should he not? for 'grace is no enemy to good nature' —to give a parting embrace to the father and mother to whom he owed his life, and whom he had been required by God to honour. But there is no proof of 'a divided heart' here. If he had begged to be allowed to stay and bury his mother and father (Luke 9:59-61) it might have been otherwise. But he suggests nothing of the kind. He says: 'One kiss, one farewell, and then I will follow thee'" [from The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
 3. Verse 21: "And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him."
 - a. "Then Elisha returned, took the pair of oxen with which he had been ploughing, sacrificed, *i.e.* slaughtered them (used figuratively), boiled the flesh with the plough, gave a farewell meal to the people (of his place of abode), *i.e.* his friends and acquaintance, and then followed Elijah as his servant, *i.e.* his assistant" (Keil, p.261).
 - b. The preparations were now in progress which would result in Elisha taking Elijah's place when that grand old man made his spectacular departure from the earth.
 - c. Elijah had accomplished one of the assignments he was given by the Lord (verses 15-17). We are told of the anointing of Jehu in 2 Kings 9. "According to what follows, all that Elijah accomplished immediately was to call Elisha to be his successor; whereas the other two commissions were fulfilled by Elisha after Elijah's ascension to heaven (2 Kings 8 and 9)...The anointing of Hazael and Jehu is mentioned first, because God had chosen these two kings to be the chief instruments of his judgments upon the royal family and people for their idolatry. It was only in the case of Jehu that a real anointing took place (2 Kings 9:6); Hazael was merely told by Elisha that he would be king (2 Kings 8:13ff), and Elisha was simply called by Elijah to the prophetic office by having the cloak of the latter thrown upon him" (Keil, p.259f).
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Minorities Of The Bible

- I. INTRODUCTION: "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2).
- A. For many years our nation has been obsessed with minority concerns.
1. We fear lest we ride roughshod over some downtrodden minority.
 2. We have corrected the evil treatment of some of our minorities, which is a good thing.
 3. One extreme often leads to an opposite extreme; now the majority is often mistreated.
 4. Minorities are usually mistreated by our world; history is filled with many examples.
 5. Being in a minority can bring trouble and hardship.
- B. God's people almost always are in the minority.
1. Exodus 23:2: "You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice" (NKJ).
 2. A dead fish floats with the current; only a living fish can go upstream. We can expect opposition if we live right. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12).
 3. No courage or dedication to the truth is needed to go with the popular majority.
 4. A survey of the Scriptures shows that God's people are a minority: truth and faithfulness to God and holiness of character will put us in the minority.
- II. DISCUSSION.
- A. Noah belonged to a minority.
1. Passages:
 - a. Genesis 6:5-11: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God....The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."
 - b. 1 Peter 3:20: "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."
 - c. 2 Peter 2:5: "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."
 2. What caused Noah to stand out from his generation and to receive God's special help? "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).
 3. The only time when God's people held majority positions since Eden was when Noah and his family left the ark.
 4. Christ said the world would be much like it was in Noah's day before the flood, when he returns, going about their regular business, giving very little heed to the will of God. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:37-39). [The world will not likely be as corrupt as that of Noah's time, but certainly it is headed in that direction].
- B. Abraham belonged to a minority.
1. He was the most outstanding man of his generation. He was very rich and had a powerful influence,
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but he was always among the minority.

2. He lived only a few generations this side of the flood, but men were already corrupted again.
 - a. Even his own father was an idolater: "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (Josh. 24:2).
 - b. He left a land of idolaters and entered another land of idolaters.
3. What made Abraham different? His faith.
 - a. Romans 4:18-22: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness."
 - b. Hebrews 11:8-10: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."
 - c. Hebrews 11:17-19: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

C. Lot belonged to a minority.

1. He erred when he chose the well-watered plain of the south: "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly" (Gen. 13:8-13).
2. He soon found himself living and raising his family in wicked Sodom: "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)" (2 Peter 2:7-8).
3. When two angels came, the men of Sodom surrounded his house to get at them (Gen. 19).
4. The whole city was destroyed; only Lot and 2 daughters escaped.

D. Joseph belonged to a minority.

1. He stood apart from his ten older brothers. Jacob recognized his special worth.
2. His father gave him a coat of many colors. This coat and the dreams he had led his brothers to hate him enough to sell him into slavery.
3. Joseph was an outcast in Egypt, where he was imprisoned for righteous conduct.
4. God's providence exalted him in due time; his willingness to stand with the minority led to the preservation of Israel. "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life" (Gen. 45:5).
5. Joseph had an undying faith in God's promises: "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones" (Heb. 11:22).

E. Moses belonged to a minority.

1. He was born in a foreign land, into a nation of slaves.
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2. God, knowing his worth, delivered him from Egyptian murderers when he was still an infant.
 3. He was reared in the house of Pharaoh; he received an Egyptian education; he enjoyed wealth: while in this situation, he was part of an exalted minority.
 4. Moses willingly chose to rejoin Israel: "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" (Heb. 11:23-24).
 - a. He became a member of a minority nation of slaves.
 - b. He was in a minority when he stood before Pharaoh.
 - c. He was in a minority when withstood the Egyptian magicians.
 - d. He was in another minority on the bank of the Red Sea (Exodus 14).
 - e. He was in a minority when Israel rebelled time and again in the wilderness.
- F. God's prophets belonged to a minority when facing Ahab.
1. Micaiah:
 - a. 1 Kings 22:8: "And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so."
 - b. Four hundred false prophets opposed him; he stood alone
 - c. King Ahab also stood against him, but God was on his side.
 2. Elijah: 1 Kings 18-19.
 - a. Only 7000 in Israel were on Lord's side!
 - b. Four hundred and fifty false prophets opposed him.
- G. The Early Christians belonged to a minority.
1. This condition was foretold by the Lord.
 - a. Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
 - b. Matthew 10:16-18: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles."
 - c. Luke 13:22-24: "And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."
 2. Peter was in a minority.
 - a. Acts 2:23,36,38: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain....Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ....Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Acts 4:19-20: "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."
 3. Stephen stood alone against a Jewish mob: Acts 6:9-7:60.
 4. Paul often stood alone.
 - a. Acts 13:44-46: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but
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seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

b. 2 Corinthians 11:32-33: "In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands."

c. See also Acts 19.

H. Christ belonged to a minority.

1. He came to earth knowing this would be his lot in life.

a. Isaiah 53:2-12: "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

b. John 1:11-12: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

2. He was betrayed by one disciple, and forsaken by the rest.

3. Only few spoke for him.

a. Matthew 27:19: "When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."

b. Matthew 27:54: "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."

c. John 19:4-5: "Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!"

4. Pilate gave the Jewish mob a choice: "Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection. And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them. But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. And so Pilate, willing to content

the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified" (Mark 15:6-15). A thief was more popular than God's Son!!

III. CONCLUSION

A. God's people today belong to a minority.

1. This we know and accept!
2. Our great work is to persuade many others to place themselves with us.
3. One who has God on his side is unbeatable.
 - a. Romans 8:31: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"
 - b. Hebrews 13:5: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

B. Each of us must cast a ballot to stay with the majority or enter the minority.

1. The majority will end in the Devil's Torment!
 2. The faithful minority will enter God's Gloryland!
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CHAPTER 20

A. 1 Kings 20:1-12: Benhadad Seeks to Humble Ahab.

1. Verses 1-4: "And Benhadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and *there were* thirty and two kings with him, and horses, and chariots: and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Benhadad, Thy silver and thy gold *is* mine; thy wives also and thy children, *even* the goodliest, *are* mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I *am* thine, and all that I have."
 - a. Ben-hadad, with a great army that consisted of thirty-two lesser kings, with horses and chariots, besieged Samaria. "This monarch was the son of that Ben-hadad who, in the reign of Baasha, made a raid on the northern towns of Galilee (ch. 15:20). The thirty-two kings that were confederate with him were probably tributary princes. The ancient kings of Syria and Phoenicia ruled only over a single city, and were independent of each other, except when one great city, as Damascus, acquired the ascendancy; and even then they were allied only in time of war" (JFB, pp.358f).
 - b. Ben-hadad sent a message into Samaria that all of Ahab's silver, gold, wives, and children were now forfeit to Ben-hadad. To this demand Ahab quickly agreed, which indicates his weakness as king. (To lose Jezebel would have been no loss to Ahab).
2. Verses 5-6: "And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Benhadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children; Yet I will send my servants unto thee to morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, *that* whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put *it* in their hand, and take *it* away."
 - a. A thief is not satisfied with what he takes; he always wants more. This high-ranking thief was no better. When Ahab acceded to the first demand, Ben-hadad raised the demands.
 - b. The Syrian invader now stated his intention to send his servants the next day to search the premises of Ahab and his servants, taking everything that Ahab valued.
 - c. "Yet I will send my servants unto thee tomorrow about this time This proposal was definite and immediate, the first demand was vague and general. 'In the first Ahab was to send what he thought fit to give; in the second, Ben-hadad's servants were to take into their own hands whatsoever they thought fit to seize' (Wordsworth)], and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in [Heb. the desire of] thine eyes....The object of Ben-hadad was to couch his message in the most offensive and humiliating terms, and 'the desire of thine eyes' would be likely to cut deeper and wound more than 'the desire of their eyes,' they shall put it in their hand, and take it away. If Ahab ever hoped by his abject submission to conciliate the Syrian king, he now finds that his words have had just the opposite effect. For all that the latter concluded from it was that Ahab was one upon whom he might trample at pleasure, and this servility encouraged Ben-hadad to renew his demands in a still more galling and vexatious form. This second message discloses to us still more plainly the royal bully and braggart, and shows us what the '*comity of nations*' in the old world was often like" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft]. [Note: "Comity" means "friendly civility or courtesy"].
3. Verses 7-9: "Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this *man* seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold; and I denied him not. And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Hearken not *unto him*, nor consent. Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Benhadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and brought him word again."
 - a. When Ben-hadad's messengers delivered his latest demand, Ahab consulted the elders of Israel, stating that it was clear the invader was simply trying to provoke Ahab to resistance, which would result in everything of value being destroyed or taken.

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- b. The elders recommended to the king that he refuse to acquiesce to this demand. Ahab agreed, and gave the message to Ben-hadad's servants.
 - c. "Then the king of Israel called all the elders. The king stated to them the unjust demands of the Syrian oppressor, Ben-hadad. A dilemma confronted them: (1) Should they refuse these unjust demands and thus prolong the siege? Or, (2) should they acquiesce and permit this brigand, who called himself a king, to pillage their city? And all the elders...said unto him, Hearken not. The representatives of the people stood behind the king's decision. 9. Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king. Using the deferential language of a skilled diplomat, Ahab rejected the terms of surrender" [Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1962 by Moody Press].
4. Verses 10-12: "And Benhadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me. And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell *him*, Let not him that girdeth on *his harness* boast himself as he that putteth it off. And it came to pass, when *Benhadad* heard this message, as he *was* drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions, that he said unto his servants, Set *yourselves in array*. And they set *themselves in array* against the city."
- a. The Syrian king was angered by Ahab's response, and sent him a threatening message which asserted that by the same time tomorrow there would not be enough dust remaining of Samaria to fill the hands of his soldiers.
 - b. With uncharacteristic wisdom, Ahab replied (in our words), "Let not him who is just now taking up his weapons boast as the one who has already finished a victorious battle." Ahab was capable of an occasional statement of wisdom and an infrequent incidence of honor.
 - c. Ben-hadad was in his tent, drinking, when Ahab's message was delivered. He ordered his soldiers to set themselves in battle array against Samaria.
- B. 1 Kings 20:13-21: Israel Routs the Syrians.
1. Verses 13-14: "And, behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD. And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the LORD, *Even* by the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall order the battle? And he answered, Thou."
 - a. An unnamed prophet came to Ahab, and delivered a message from Jehovah. He was assured that God would deliver the great Syrian army into Ahab's hands. The purpose of the deliverance was not due to the goodness of the king or of the people, but was intended to prove to them all that Jehovah is truly God.
 - b. Ahab wanted to know by whom the deliverance would be given; the prophet said that it would be by the young men of the provinces. The king asked about the commander of this force, and was told that he was to serve in that capacity.
2. Verses 15-18: "Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty two: and after them he numbered all the people, *even* all the children of Israel, *being* seven thousand. And they went out at noon. But Benhadad *was* drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him. And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Benhadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria. And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive."
- a. The number of the young men of the provinces was found to be 232; there were 7,000 fighting men present. There may have been far more soldiers scattered through the kingdom who were unable to get into Samaria due to the siege.
 - b. This tiny army went out of Samaria: seven thousand fighting men preceded by the 232 young men. In comparison to the Syrians, they represented an insignificant force. Ben-hadad was still in his tent, drinking himself drunk, when the word came that men were coming out of Samaria. He told his men to capture them alive, whether they came out to fight or to make peace. He was supremely confident that his vast army would have no difficulty in subduing Israel's puny force.
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3. Verses 19-21: "So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them. And they slew every one his man: and the Syrians fled; and Israel pursued them: and Benhadad the king of Syria escaped on an horse with the horsemen. And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter."
- But Israel's soldiers slew every man they encountered, so that the Syrians fled. A rout ensued, with the king escaping on one of the horses. The inspired historian quietly reports that the Syrians were defeated with a great slaughter. On the surface to an observer, everything that happened on the battle field was entirely natural, but in some unidentified manner, God enabled Israel to rout the enemy; without his help, the Syrians would have easily destroyed the Israelites.
 - The Syrians had used psychological warfare to intimidate Ahab. But God used their own fear to cause panic in the Syrian army. It would be easy for a proud, unbelieving person to think that the victory was due to Israel's own power and wisdom. The Syrian leadership had rendered themselves unfit for battle by imbibing strong drink; this figured into Israel's triumph.
 - "Ben-hadad, with his vassals and princes, were already, at that early hour—scarcely mid-day—deep in their cups; and though informed of this advancing company, yet confiding in his numbers, or it may be, excited with wine, he ordered, with indifference, the proud intruders to be taken alive, whether they came with peaceable or hostile intentions. It was more easily said than done: the young men smote right and left, making terrible havoc among their intended captors, and their attack, together with the sight of the 7,000, who soon rushed forward to mingle in the fray, created a panic in the Syrian army, who immediately took to flight. Ben-hadad himself escaped the pursuit of his victors on a fleet horse, surrounded by a squadron of horse-guards. This glorious victory, won so easily, and with such a paltry force opposed to overwhelming numbers, was granted that Ahab and his people might know (v. 13) that God is the Lord. But we do not read of this acknowledgment being made, or of any sacrifices being offered in token of their national gratitude" (JFB, p.360).

C. 1 Kings 20:22-34: Israel Defeats the Syrians Again.

- Verses 22-23: "And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee. And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods *are* gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they."
 - The same prophet who had given Ahab assurance of the victory, returned to the king, cautioning him to be forewarned that the Syrians would return the next year, at the same time. Ahab was advised to strengthen his military force, and otherwise prepare for another battle. Involved in this message is a subtle warning that he and his nation needed to recognize the right of Jehovah to receive their obedience; the victory was itself a strong warning to that end.
 - Meanwhile, the Syrians were trying to make sense out of their tragic defeat. His counselors told Benhadad that the gods of Israel were primarily gods of the hills, and that if they were to fight them on the plain, on level ground, Israel could be mastered. Syria's might lay in their chariot force, which would be more effective on the plains. But their defeat was mandated, not by not using their chariots or by their own poor strategy, but by the providence of God.
 - The Syrians were idolaters; their religion was polytheistic. They knew of the idolatrous practices of the Israelites, and failed to take note of the fact that Israel was supposed to be worshipers of the one true God. Thus they disparaged and limited the power of God, a fatal mistake that brought his power against them in the upcoming battle.
 - "Brooding over their late disastrous defeat, the attendants of Ben-hadad ascribed the misfortune to two causes—the one arose from the principles of heathenism, which led them to consider the gods of Israel as local deities—'gods of the hills'—whereas their power to aid the Israelites would be gone if the battle was maintained on the plains. The war-chariots of the Syrians would have full scope for action there; while the Hebrews were utterly deficient in that species of force (cf. Judg. 5:8; 1 Sam. 13:19-22)...The other cause to which the Syrians courtiers traced their defeat at Samaria, was the presence of the tributary kings, who had probably been the first to take flight; and they recommended 'captains
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to be put in their rooms'..." (JFB, p.360).

2. Verses 24-27: "And do this thing, Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their rooms: And number thee an army, like the army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, *and* surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so. And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Benhadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel. And the children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country."
 - a. The Syrians thought the kings who were over the previous army were deficient, and so Ben-hadad was advised to replace them with captains. Kings are not noted for their willingness to sacrifice their lives or their comfort for the good of the country. Professional soldiers were placed over the new army.
 - b. The following spring, the Syrians raised an army similar in size to the one of the preceding year. They went up to Aphek to meet Israel in battle.
 - c. Aphek: "Place name for several Old Testament cities or encampments in Palestine. The name is also recorded in Hebrew as Aphik (Josh. 19:30; Judg. 1:31) and Aphekah (Josh. 13:4; 15:53; 1 Sam. 29:1; 1 Kings 20:26,30). Aphek appears to derive from a word meaning 'fortress' or 'stronghold.' Some references may be to military encampments or fortresses rather than to cities. 1. The king of Aphek was one of the thirty-one kings Joshua led Israel to defeat during the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 12:18). No certain location can be derived from the text. Some identify this Aphek with a city on the plain of Sharon north of Joppa and ten miles east of the Mediterranean (modern ras el-Ain). Settlement here reaches back before 3000 B.C. Archaeology shows it was destroyed about 1200. Providing access into the hill country of Ephraim, it may also have served later as the staging ground for the Philistines' defeat of Israel when the ark of the covenant was captured and Eli's sons were killed (1 Sam. 4:1) and perhaps for their victory at Jezreel, ending Saul's life (1 Sam. 29:1). This became the site of Roman Antipatris. 2. Joshua 13:4 mentions a city called Aphek as territory yet to be possessed at the end of Joshua's life (compare Judg. 1:31). This seems to be a different city from the one defeated in the conquest. The Hebrew text actually names this city Aphekah. Because it is referenced in context with the Sidonians and the Amorites, its location was probably in the far north (modern Afqa, Lebanon, fifteen miles east of Byblos). 3. The city where Benhadad, king of Syria, gathered his forces in the days of King Ahab (1 Kings 20:26-30). Elisha's dying prophecy that Joash would defeat the Syrians at Aphek (2 Kings 13:14-19) likely refers to the same city. It may be located at modern Fiq, three miles east of the Sea of Galilee on the highway to Damascus. 4. Joshua 19:30 lists Aphek as one of the cities assigned to the territory of the sons of Asher. Rather than being on the border of Asher, this Aphek is presented as within its territory. This may be modern tell Kerdanah, six miles southeast of Acco. See Judges 1:31. 5. The Aphekah located in the hill country of Judah near Hebron (Josh. 15:53) is yet another city, whose location is not known" (Holman, Michael Fink).
 - d. When the two armies were situated at the battle site, the Israelites looked like two little flocks of kids, but the Syrians filled the whole country. On the surface of the situation, Israel stood no chance of victory. The invaders would be filled with confidence and the Israelites would be filled with great dismay.
 3. Verse 28: "And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, Because the Syrians have said, The LORD *is* God of the hills, but he *is* not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD."
 - a. God knew the predicament Israel faced, and since the Syrians had disparaged his name and might, as well as his desire to preserve his people, he sent a prophet to reassure Ahab.
 - b. Once again, the Lord told Ahab that the ensuing victory would prove to him that the Lord is God. There is a strong message in this that Ahab and Israel were to recognize him as such.
 - c. There is a great lesson in this for all enemies of God today. His ultimate victory over all who oppose him is assured, despite his seeming uninvolvedness. This means that, though his church is disparaged and opposed in this world, and seems to be disintegrating, it will nevertheless endure.
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4. Verses 29-30: "And they pitched one over against the other seven days. And *so* it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined: and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day. But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and *there* a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand of the men *that were* left. And Benhadad fled, and came into the city, into an inner chamber."
- The two armies were encamped at Aphek for seven days, before the battle was joined on the seventh day. The details are omitted; only the result is given. Israel was victorious, slaying 100,000 of the Syrians. Twenty-seven thousand more of them died when the wall of Aphek fell on them.
 - "The flying Syrians had probably some of them climbed the wall of the city to offer resistance to the Israelites in pursuit, and some of them sought to defend themselves by taking shelter behind it. And during the conflict, through the special interposition of God, the wall fell and buried the Syrians who were there. The cause of the fall is not given" (Keil, p.266).
 - Ben-hadad took refuge in an inner chamber (room) within Aphek. The original language indicates that he went from room to room, trying to evade the Israelites (cf. margin).
5. Verses 31-33: "And his servants said unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel *are* merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: peradventure he will save thy life. So they girded sackcloth on their loins, and *put* ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Benhadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, *Is* he yet alive? he *is* my brother. Now the men did diligently observe whether *any thing would come* from him, and did hastily catch *it*: and they said, Thy brother Benhadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Benhadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot."
- Knowing the futility of avoiding capture, the servants of Ben-hadad recommended that they throw themselves on the mercy of Ahab, having heard of the compassion characteristic of Israelite kings. The customary measure taken in such cases was for the ones asking for quarter to clothe their loins with sackcloth and place ropes over their heads.
 - It may be the case that the ropes were placed around their necks, in token of surrender. "The citizens of Calais are reported to have acted nearly in the same way, when they surrendered their city to Edward III, king of England, in 1346" (Clarke, p.467). "Captives were dragged by ropes round their necks, bound together in companies, or in a line, the loop of the rope being passed round each neck, and their hands tied behind their backs, as is depicted on the monuments of Egypt, also on the Persian sculptures at Behistun" (JFB, p.361).
 - Ben-hadad accepted the counsel of his men, who approached Ahab with the request for mercy. They were alert for some indication of compassion from their conqueror. When Ahab inquired whether Benhadad *my brother* was yet alive, they seized upon the expression as a hopeful sign they would be spared.
6. Verse 34: "And *Benhadad* said unto him, The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then *said Ahab*, I will send thee away with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away."
- When Ben-hadad had come before Ahab, he promised the Israelite king that he would assign streets in Damascus in honor of Ahab, just as had been done for Ben-hadad's father in Samaria. He also vowed to restore the cities which his father had taken from Ahab's father. With a covenant of peace agreed upon, Ahab sent Ben-hadad away, free and unharmed.
 - Jamieson says that the promise concerning the streets in Damascus implied "that a quarter of that city was to be assigned to Jews, with the free exercise of their religion and laws, under a judge of their own. The provision was designed for the benefit of trading and commercial colonies of Jews who might be resident there" (p.361).
- D. 1 Kings 20:35-43: "As Thy Servant Was Busy Here and There".
- Verses 35-36: "And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour in the word of the LORD, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him. Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him."
 - Following the conclusion of peace, and in an unusual method of showing Ahab that he was unwise in
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- allowing Ben-hadad to go unpunished, a prophet approached another prophet, telling him to strike him. This was not a mere request, for he spoke "in the word of the Lord."
- b. The man who refused this strange request was told that since he had not obeyed the voice of the Lord, as soon as they parted company with the man of God a lion would slay him. The historian reports that the prophet's words were literally fulfilled.
2. Verses 37-38: "Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded *him*. So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face."
 - a. The first prophet found another man, who agreed to smite him, wounding the man of God in the process. The prophet intended to approach Ahab to deliver a devastating message to the king, but he needed the injury to gain the king's attention.
 - b. The unnamed prophet was obviously well-known to Ahab, for he had to disguise himself to keep the king from recognizing him prematurely.
 3. Verses 39-40: "And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So *shall* thy judgment *be*; thyself hast decided *it*."
 - a. When Ahab passed by, the prophet called out to the king and gained his attention long enough to give the information he intended. The wound he had contrived gave credence to the story he was to tell.
 - b. "Whether the event recorded here [*i.e.*, the story the prophet told the king] was an actual happening or is a story that was used to drive home the desired point is difficult to determine. We do know that God often used actual events to teach what he wanted taught. Also, there were times when stories were used to accomplish the same purpose, such as when Nathan told his parable to David wherein David's sin with Bathsheba was condemned" (James Boyd, ADL, p.121).
 - c. The story related by the prophet reported that a certain man turned a prisoner over to him, during the second battle with the Syrians, threatening him with death or a fine of a talent of silver if the captive should escape. The prophet stated that while he was *busy here and there*, the Syrian escaped.
 - d. Ahab told the prophet that the very penalty he had admitted would be enforced. In other words, the king intended to have him put to death for his negligence
 4. Verses 41-43: "And he hasted, and took the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he *was* of the prophets. And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Because thou hast let go out of *thy* hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria."
 - a. The prophet quickly removed the ashes from his face so that Ahab would recognize him. The king immediately knew him.
 - b. The prophet spoke his inspired message: "Because you allowed an evil man to go free, his own life would be required." The evil man was Ben-hadad; God had decided that that evil ruler must pay for his crimes. It was his plan that he should die by the hand of Ahab (directly or indirectly). The king should have slain Ben-hadad, according to God's decree, but Ahab thought his plan was better.
 - c. This message had a depressing effect on the king, who had so recently been filled with euphoria over the great victory.
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CHAPTER 21

A. 1 Kings 21:1-4: Ahab Covets Naboth's Vineyard.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass after these things, *that* Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which *was* in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria."
 - a. After a period of time, Ahab took notice of a certain vineyard belonging to Naboth. The location was adjacent to the king's palace in Jezreel. He perceived that the plot of ground would make an excellent vegetable garden.
 - b. Ahab is referred to as the king of Samaria, since his throne was situated there; he resided at Jezreel during certain seasons of the year, evidently the growing season.
 2. Verses 2-3: "And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it *is* near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; *or*, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."
 - a. The king did not confiscate the property, which suggests his wish to abide by the legal conventions. Ahab asked Naboth to sell or trade the vineyard to him, for a price that would be agreeable to both, or he would give him another, better vineyard. From Ahab's point of view, his offer was proper and fair.
 - b. Naboth replied that he was not permitted to sell the property, for its sale was contrary to the will of God. When the land of Canaan was originally meted out to the Israelites, God had ordained that the property should stay in the hands of the family throughout their generations. No one, not even King Ahab, had the right to force Naboth to disobey God's will.
 - 1) Leviticus 25:23-28: "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land *is* mine; for ye *are* strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away *some* of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold. And if the man have none to redeem it, and himself be able to redeem it; Then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; that he may return unto his possession. But if he be not able to restore *it* to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee: and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession."
 - 2) Numbers 36:7-9: "So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers. Neither shall the inheritance remove from *one* tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance."
 - c. "Naboth was not actuated by any feelings of disloyalty or disrespect to the king, but solely from a conscientious regard to the divine law, which, for important reasons, had prohibited the sale of a paternal inheritance, or if, through extreme poverty or debt, an assignation of it to another was unavoidable, the conveyance was made on the condition of its being redeemable at any time—at all events, of its reverting at the jubilee to the owner..." (JFB, p.362).
 - d. It would appear that Naboth was one of the seven thousand in Israel who still honored God (1 Kings 19:18). His willingness to incur the wrath of the king in order to remain obedient to the Lord in this matter bespeaks of a high degree of faith.
 3. Verse 4: "And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread."
 - a. Behaving in a most unkingly manner, Ahab returned to his palace in a state of extreme sorrow and agitation, went to bed and turned his face away from the view of the household; he refused to eat.
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- b. "This childish mode of giving expression to his displeasure at Naboth's refusal to comply with his wish, shows very clearly that Ahab was a man sold under sin (ver. 20), who only wanted [lacked] the requisite energy to display the wickedness of his heart in vigorous action" (Keil, p.270).
- B. 1 Kings 21:5-16: Jezebel Arranges for Naboth's Death.
1. Verses 5-7: "But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, *and* eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."
 - a. Jezebel inquired of her husband the cause of his behavior. He openly replied, telling of his efforts to obtain the vineyard from Naboth, and bitterly reported the refusal. His anger and frustration were obvious.
 - b. Jezebel asked him whether he exercised the powers of the regal throne. This appears to be a scornful insult at his lack of resolve to take what he wanted. The evil queen advised her husband to get up and eat, and that she would procure the vineyard.
 - c. "Ahab seems not to have contemplated acquiring the much-wished-for plot of ground by injustice and cruelty. He never dreamed of the desperate expedient of realizing his desires by the method which Jezebel devised—at least he did not hint at such a thing; while her unscrupulous mind at once and unhesitatingly determined on the truly Oriental, despotic plan of getting rid of Naboth by murder" (JFB, p.363).
 2. Verses 8-10: "So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed *them* with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that *were* in his city, dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And *then* carry him out, and stone him, that he may die."
 - a. Jezebel wrote letters to the elders and other leading men of Jezreel, and sealed them with the king's seal. They would have no reason to suspect that someone other than Ahab had authored the letters. Knowing the nature of Ahab, they would be afraid to reject the proposal, if they had any scruples against the demand. Since the general population was involved in idolatry, they had little regard for the moral principles of God's law.
 - b. Her plan was wicked to the core. The letters she sent to the prominent citizens in the city went right to the point and did not merely hint at the actions they were to do, but directly ordered them to do what she had devised. The plan was to murder Naboth by manipulating the law. They were to proclaim a fast and bring Naboth in before the people. Two false witnesses were to be suborned, who were to testify against Naboth at the proper time. On the surface, it would appear that the proceedings were entirely legal.
 - 1) Numbers 35:30: "Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person *to cause him* to die."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 17:6-7: "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you."
 - 3) Deuteronomy 19:15: "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."
 - c. "Jezebel ordered the fasting for a sign, as though some public crime or heavy load of guilt rested upon the city, for which it was necessary that it should humble itself before God (1 Sam. 7:6). The intention was, that at the very onset the appearance of justice should be given to the legal process about to be instituted in the eyes of all the citizens, and the stamp of veracity impressed upon the crime of which

Naboth was to be accused” (Keil, pp.270f).

- d. “The seal-ring contained the name of the king, and gave validity to the documents to which it was affixed (Esth. 8:8; Dan. 6:17). Besides rings with a seal attached to them, there were other forms of seal or signet, neither set in metal nor worn on the fingers; these were engraved stones, on part of the surface of which the necessary figures and characters were inscribed. This practice probably originated with the Egyptians; but it was afterwards adopted by the Phoenicians. The stone was cut by a lapidary, in the form of a cylinder, a pyramid, or a square, according to the taste or fancy of the owner; at other times it was bisected, and on the convex superficies of the cut diameter the form of a scarabaeus or beetle was engraved; while the flat under-surface contained the legend or inscription for the seal. It has been conjectured, from Jezebel’s Phoenician extraction and her ready command of the king’s seal, that Ahab’s might be of the Phoenician description. By allowing her the use of his signet, Ahab passively consented to Jezebel’s proceeding. Being written in the king’s name, it had the character of a royal mandate” (JFB, p.363).
3. Verses 11-14: "And the men of his city, *even* the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, *and* as it *was* written in the letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, *even* against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead."
 - a. During the Old Testament days, the Israelites fasted when some extraordinary situations arose in which there was some special danger to the nation.
 - 1) 2 Chronicles 20:3: "And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah."
 - 2) Ezra 8:21: "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our sub-stance."
 - 3) Joel 1:14: "Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders *and* all the inhabitants of the land *into* the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD."
 - 4) Joel 2:15: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly."
 - b. “These obsequious and unprincipled magistrates did according to orders. Pretending that a heavy guilt lay on one, or some unknown party, who was charged with blaspheming God and the king, and that Ahab was threatening vengeance on the whole city unless the culprit were discovered and punished, they assembled the people to observe a solemn fast” (JFB, p.363).
 - c. Naboth was summoned into the solemn meeting, and placed before the assembly. “During a trial the panel, or accused person, was placed on a high seat, in the presence of all the court, in order that he might be identified by the witnesses. But as the guilty person was supposed to be unknown, the setting of Naboth on high among the people must have been owing to his being among the distinguished men of the place” (JFB, pp.363f). It seems more likely, however, that they put him before the court as the accused, although the assembly was doubtless called to discover the identity of the one causing the supposed offense.
 - d. The charge of blaspheming God and the king was leveled against Naboth by the two “sons of Belial” (the false witnesses). This offense was especially repulsive, but in the case of Naboth, it was a false accusation. Under the Mosaic Law, one guilty of blasphemy was guilty of a capital offense. "Thou shalt not revile God, nor curse a ruler of thy people" (Ex. 22:28, ASV; cf. Deut. 13).
 - e. “The law, which forbade cursing the rulers of the people, does not specify the penalty for this offense; but either usage had sanctioned, or the authorities of Jezreel had originated, stoning as the proper punishment. It was always inflicted out of the city (Acts 7:58)....The whole of this infamous proceeding, conducted ostensibly according to the regular forms of criminal prosecution, furnishes clear proof that the constitution of the northern remained exactly the same as that of the southern kingdom. The regulation which required two witnesses (Num. 35:30; Deut. 18:6,7; 19:5), the charge made upon a

ground purely theocratic (Exod. 22:28), the punishment left to the discretion of the magistrate, but awarded according to analogous cases (Deut. 13; 17:5)—all combine to show that the Mosaic law remained the established national code in Israel....Accordingly Ahab, when he could not prevail upon Naboth to part with an inheritance of which the law gave him the sole and independent right of disposing, thought of nothing else than submitting to the authority of constitutional law; and even Jezebel, unprincipled and lawless as she was, durst not openly use violent measures, but was obliged to seek the attainment of her iniquitous end by pursuing an apparent course of legal investigation into a calumnious charge” (JFB, p.364).

- f. Accepting the false testimony of the two “sons of Belial,” the court condemned Naboth, and ordered his execution by stoning. Naboth’s sons were also slain, according to 2 Kings 9:26: "Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take *and* cast him into the plat *of ground*, according to the word of the LORD."
4. Verses 15-16: "And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it."
 - a. When word came to Jezebel that Naboth was dead, she told her husband to arise and take possession of the coveted vineyard. Ahab rose up and went to the vineyard to take it.
 - b. “As Naboth’s sons were put to death at the same time, according to 2 Kings 9:26, the king was able to confiscate his property; not, indeed, on any rule laid down in the Mosaic law, but according to a principle involved in the very idea of high treason. Since, for example, in the case of blasphemy the property of the criminal was forfeited to the Lord as *cherem* (Deut. 13:16), the property of traitors was regarded as forfeited to the king” (Keil, p.271). "And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the LORD thy God: and it shall be an heap for ever; it shall not be built again" (Deut. 13:16).
 - c. There is no indication of any remorse on Ahab’s part in having obtained this property by his wife’s perversion of justice. His immediate desire was gratified, and he happily went to take over the land which God had decreed to belong to Naboth.
- C. 1 Kings 21:17-24: The Death of Ahab and Jezebel Foretold.
1. Verses 17-19: "And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which *is* in Samaria: behold, *he is* in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine."
 - a. The word of the Lord came to Elijah, directing him to take a hand in the punishment of the Ahab and Jezebel for their horrible treatment of Naboth. Elijah has disappeared from the historian’s report since he was last named in chapter 19. This great prophet appears suddenly on the scene, as the king was surveying his new vineyard. The timing of his arrival could not have been better.
 - b. Elijah was directed to tell Ahab that where the dogs had licked up the blood of Naboth, dogs would lick up the blood of Ahab. This would be a most appropriate punishment for his crime. Indeed, the wicked will reap what they have sown. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8). 1 Kings 22 will furnish the full details of how God brought punishment upon Ahab.
 2. Verses 20-22: "And Ahab said to Elijah, hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found *thee*; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked
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me to anger, and made Israel to sin."

- a. As Elijah approached the king, Ahab said to him, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" The greetings Ahab gave to Elijah have become somewhat proverbial. "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art* thou he that troubleth Israel?" (1 Kings 18:17).
 - b. The prophet responded that he had found him, because the king had sold himself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. How could Ahab have a part in the murder of Naboth, after having seen the supernatural powers of God demonstrated on Carmel, only a few miles from his present location? He may have thought as many do today, that their evil deeds are undetected.
 - 1) Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
 - 2) Ecclesiastes 8:11: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."
 - 3) Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
 - c. Elijah conveyed the word of the Lord to Ahab, promising that he would take away the posterity of the king, leaving not a man among his descendants. "Behold, I will bring calamity on you. I will take away your posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both bond and free" (1 Kings 21:21, NKJ).
 - d. God vowed that he would make the house of Ahab to be like the house of Jeroboam and the house of Baasha. It will be remembered that these two evil kings were severely punished for their wicked ways, to the extent that neither left any descendants.
3. Verses 23-24: "And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat."
- a. The Lord did not overlook the evil part that Jezebel had played in the sordid affair. Because of her wickedness, her body would be eaten by the wall of Jezreel. 2 Kings 9:30-37 reports the details of her horrible end: "And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard *of it*; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, *Had* Zimri peace, who slew his master? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who *is* on my side? who? And there looked out to him two *or* three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and *some* of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed *woman*, and bury her: for she *is* a king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of *her* hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This *is* the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; *so* that they shall not say, This *is* Jezebel."
 - b. The verdict of the Lord would be fulfilled minutely. The members of Ahab's house would be slain; the ones not eaten in the city by dogs, would be eaten in the fields by the birds. They would not be given a decent burial.

D. 1 Kings 21:25-29: Ahab is Humbled.

1. Verses 25-26: "But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all *things* as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel."
 - a. The inspired historian gives a summary depiction of the evils of Ahab. He sold himself to work evil; he allowed his wife to stir him up to these wicked works; he did very abominably in serving idols.
 - b. He should have been forewarned against idolatry, for it was because of idolatry that the Amorites were originally cast out of Canaan—a prominent fact in Israel's history.
2. Verses 27-29: "And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth

himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: *but* in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house."

- a. "This terrible threat made such an impression upon Ahab, that he felt deep remorse, and for a time at least was sincerely penitent. Rending the clothes, putting on the mourning garment of hair, and fasting, are frequently mentioned as external signs of humiliation before God or of deep mourning on account of sin.... This repentance was neither hypocritical, nor purely external; but it was sincere even if it was not lasting and produced no real conversion. For the Lord himself acknowledged it to be humiliation before him (ver. 29), and said to Elijah, that because of it he would not bring the threatened calamity upon Ahab's house in his own lifetime, but only in the days of his son" (Keil, p.273).
 - b. We are told that Ahab, for a time, "went softly." According to Jamieson and Clarke, this phrase means that he went "barefoot" with "his head hanging down." The picture of contrition is seen in the expression.
 - c. Because of this repentance, God told Elijah that he would not bring about the full penalty on Ahab's house during his own lifetime, but would do so during the life of his son (Ahaziah).
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CHAPTER 22

A. 1 Kings 22:1-14: Ahab Seeks the Help of Jehoshaphat in Capturing Ramothgilead.

1. Verses 1-5: "And they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead *is* ours, and we *be* still, *and* take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramothgilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I *am* as thou *art*, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day."
 - a. The historian who penned 2 Chronicles also discussed the events of this chapter. "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. And after *certain* years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that *he had* with him, and persuaded him to go up *with him* to Ramothgilead. And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I *am* as thou *art*, and my people as thy people; and *we will be* with thee in the war" (2 Chron. 18:1-3).
 - b. In chapter 20, we were told of the disastrous defeat the Syrians suffered in two succeeding attempts to conquer Israel. Syria being weakened by those defeats, Ahab figured the present was a good time to recover Ramoth-gilead, which the Syrians had taken from Israel. To aid in this operation, Ahab enlisted the aid of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.
 - c. Jehoshaphat was one of the few good kings in Judah. It was to his shame that he agreed to join hands with Ahab, one of the vilest kings Israel had. Among the kings in the northern kingdom (Israel), not a single godly king is to be found. It was Jehoshaphat who asked Ahab to make inquiry of the Lord regarding the fortunes of the proposed venture, indicative of his righteous disposition.
 - d. "It was singular that a friendly league between the sovereigns of Israel and Judah should, for the first time, have been formed by princes of such opposite characters—the one pious, the other wicked. Neither this league, nor the matrimonial alliance by which the union of the royal families was more closely cemented, met the Lord's approval (2 Chr. 19:2)" (JFB, p.365). "And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore *is* wrath upon thee from before the LORD" (2 Chron. 19:2).
 - e. Jehoshaphat may have been moved to join with Ahab on account of the repentance that Ahab showed in 21:25-29. His instability was caused in part by the "stirring-up" Jezebel did (21:25).
2. Verses 6-9: "Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king. And Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might inquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, *There is* yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Hasten *hither* Micaiah the son of Imlah."
 - a. The parallel account is found in 2 Chronicles 18:4-24.
 - b. Before putting the military action into force, Ahab called about 400 prophets to inquire of the Lord concerning the advisability of the mission. These prophets all pronounced their approval, asserting that the Lord would deliver the city into his hand.
 - c. There was something about these prophets that gave Jehoshaphat a sense of uncertainty. Perhaps their reply was too glib; also, those who served as advisors to the king are notorious for saying what they know the king wants to hear. Could these 400 prophets have been Jezebel's men, the ones who had escaped execution on Carmel, when Elijah slew the 450 prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18)? Probably not, since ostensibly they made inquiry, not of some idol, but of the Lord. Clearly these were false prophets, who outwardly seemed to be servants of Jehovah. Jehoshaphat asked whether there was yet another prophet that could be consulted.

- d. Ahab admitted there was one other prophet, but that he hated this prophet, since he never spoke anything good about Ahab. This prophet's name was Micaiah.
 - e. MICAIAH: "Personal name meaning, 'Who is like Yahweh?' 1. Son of Imlah and prophet of Yahweh who predicted the death of Ahab and the scattering of Israel's forces at Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings 22:7-28). Having witnessed Yahweh's heavenly council, Micaiah was certain Ahab's 400 prophets were possessed by a lying spirit. When accused and imprisoned on a charge of false prophesy, Micaiah replied, 'If you return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me' (22:28 NRSV). 2. Form of Micaiah modern translations prefer" (Holman).
3. Verses 10-12: "And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them. And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the king's hand."
 - a. When the prophets were summoned to appear before the two kings, Ahab and Jehoshaphat were seated on thrones, wearing their royal robes, in an open place near the gate of Samaria. The false prophets appeared before them there.
 - b. One of these false prophets, Zedekiah, made a set of iron horns, which he used in a dramatic fashion to allege that Ahab would push back the Syrians. All of the other prophets maintained that success would be forthcoming, that the Lord would deliver Ramoth-gilead to him.
 4. Verses 13-14: "And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets *declare* good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak *that which is* good. And Micaiah said, *As* the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak."
 - a. A messenger was quickly dispatched to bring Micaiah before the kings. The messenger told Micaiah that all the other prophets had spoken to encourage the military operation, and warned him that his words must agree with what the others had said.
 - b. Micaiah responded by vowing to speak only that which the Lord revealed to him. He was not one to say what the king wanted to hear. This is the only proper way for any preacher or teacher of the gospel today to operate. His message will be of no value to anyone's soul if he tells the people only what they want to hear.
- B. 1 Kings 22:15-28: Micaiah Speaks to Ahab.
1. Verses 15-16: "So he came to the king. And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver *it* into the hand of the king. And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but *that which is* true in the name of the LORD?"
 - a. Ahab asked Micaiah whether he should go up against Ramoth-gilead; the prophet replied, "Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."
 - b. This response seems to belie Micaiah's stated intent to report what the Lord gave him to say. But it is obvious from Ahab's reaction that he knew the words meant the direct opposite of their surface meaning. In other words, Micaiah spoke the words Ahab wanted to hear, but from the tone of voice or some other indication, he knew that the message was intended to be ironic or sarcastic.
 - c. Ahab replied that he had told him many times to tell him only that which was true.
 2. Verses 17-18: "And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?"
 - a. Micaiah replied that he had seen in a vision, all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep which had no shepherd. The Lord had said in that vision, "These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace." "The purport of this was, that the army of Israel would be defeated and dispersed, that Ahab would fall in the battle, and the people return without either being pursued or destroyed by the enemy" (JFB, pp.366f).
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- b. Ahab still maintained that Micaiah was giving this negative message because of malice toward the king. Turning to Jehoshaphat, Ahab said, "Did I not tell you that he would not say anything good about my plan, but would speak evil!"
3. Verses 19-23: "And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade *him*, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee."
- a. Micaiah continued his discourse by describing an episode that took place in heaven. In a vision the prophet saw what he described. He beheld the Lord sitting on his throne, with the host of heaven standing about him. The Lord asked who would deceive Ahab into going up against Ramoth-gilead, where he would be slain. Various plans were suggested by the Lord's heavenly servants.
- b. Finally one of the Lord's servants said that he would go to persuade Ahab to go against the city; his plan was to be a lying spirit in the mouth of the king's prophets, and by their false counsel, to deceive Ahab into thinking he could conquer Ramoth-gilead without endangering himself.
- c. "This prophetic language must not be interpreted literally, and the command must be viewed as only a permission to the lying spirit (Rom. 11:34)....A spirit comes forward in order to *mislead* Ahab into a course of action contrary to the declared will of God" (JFB, p.367).
4. Verses 24-25: "But Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself."
- a. Zedekiah, the leader of the false prophets, was incensed over Micaiah's portrayal of his band. To preserve his standing before the king, he smote Micaiah on the cheek, accompanied by a slighting remark: "How did the spirit of the Lord get from me to you?"
- b. Zedekiah's "smart-mouthed" remark likely elicited a chuckle from the audience, but it contained no refutation of Micaiah's message. The proof of the true prophecy would be in the outcome of the proposed venture. Micaiah did not resort to any name-calling or railing response, but left the proof of his oracle to its fulfillment.
- c. The prophet told Zedekiah that he would fully comprehend the truth of the matter when "thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself." "This was probably fulfilled at the close of the war, when Jezebel or the friends of Ahab made the pseudo-prophets suffer for the calamitous result; although there is nothing said about this in our history, which confines itself to the main facts" (Keil, p.278).
5. Verses 26-27: "And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; And say, Thus saith the king, Put this *fellow* in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace."
- a. Ahab took charge of the situation at this point, giving order to his men to take Micaiah back to the ruler of the city, and to Joash the king's son, with instructions for them to imprison the man who had spoiled the glory of the occasion for Ahab.
- b. "The bread of affliction" and the "water of affliction" is a reference to the vilest of prison food. In this status Micaiah was to be kept until Ahab returned in peace. The king fully expected that his plan would succeed, at which time Micaiah, with his prophecy disproved by the capture of Ramoth-gilead, would be released.
6. Verse 28: "And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you."
- a. Being fully persuaded that his message had spoken the truth, Micaiah stated before the king and all the people, that if Ahab returned in peace, the Lord had not spoken by Micaiah.
- b. His statement was a reaffirmation that Ahab would not be victorious, but would meet with death in the
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forthcoming battle. This would prove that Zedekiah and his henchmen were false prophets, that Micaiah was a true prophet of God, and that God was opposed to Ahab.

C. 1 Kings 22:29-40: The Death of Ahab.

1. Verses 29-30: "So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramothgilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle."
 - a. "The king of Israel, hoping to evade the force of Micaiah's prophecy by a secret stratagem, used the greatest precaution against being discovered, by assuming the uniform of a subaltern, while he ungenerously advised Jehoshaphat to fight in his royal attire, and thus expose himself to the dangers which Ahab wished to avoid" (JFB, p.368).
 - b. It seems strange to us that Jehoshaphat would agree to such a plan. Perhaps he was willing to trust the Lord to protect him.
 - c. When Ahab arrayed himself against God, closing his eyes to the truth as given by Micaiah, his doom was sealed. All the efforts he could invent to protect himself would be fruitless. He would certainly reap what he had sown (Gal. 6:7-8).
 2. Verses 31-33: "But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it *is* the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it *was* not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him."
 - a. The king of Syria directed the thirty-two men in charge of his chariots to seek out Ahab during the battle, and kill him. Their primary objective was to destroy Ahab. On the one hand, the Syrians were bent on killing Ahab; on the other hand, God had decreed Ahab's death. But as will be borne out by the narrative, God did not need any help from the Syrians captains.
 - b. The Syrians who were searching for Ahab sighted Jehoshaphat, and thinking he was Ahab, they drew near to kill him. When they discovered that it was not the king of Israel, they continued their search. Jehoshaphat saw his danger, and cried out. "How far Jehoshaphat was saved by his crying out, is not precisely stated. He probably cried out to his followers to come to his aid, from which the Syrians discovered that he was not the king of Israel, who they were in search of" (Keil, p.280).
 3. Verses 34-36: "And a *certain* man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot. And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country."
 - a. Some unidentified man from among the Syrian host drew back his bow, and loosed an arrow, aimed at no particular target. The historian could know this information only by revelation. The arrow went toward Ahab; it struck him at one of the few vulnerable spots; the king was mortally wounded.
 - b. "The true coat of mail covered only the breast, to somewhere about the last rib; and below this it had an appendage (skirts) consisting of moveable joints. Between this appendage and the true coat of mail there was a groove through which the arrow passed, and, entering the abdomen, inflicted upon the king a mortal wound..." (Keil, p.280).
 - c. "'And the king was stationed (*i.e.* remained or kept himself in an upright posture) upon the chariot before the Syrians,' that he might not dishearten his soldiers, 'and died in the evening..." (Keil, p.280). The fact that Ahab stayed in his chariot, though mortally wounded, shows his courage, physical strength, and determination. A man can have these and still be displeasing to God.
 4. Verses 37-38: "So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And *one* washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of the LORD which he spake."
 - a. Ahab returned to Samaria as a dead man; he did not return in peace; the prophecy of Micaiah was
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shown to be true. The king died at evening; his body was taken back to Samaria, where it was buried.

- b. A servant took the chariot [and armor] to wash out the blood, which dogs licked up, in fulfillment of Elijah's prophecy. "And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine" (1 Kings 21:19).
 - c. Galatians 6:6-7: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." God did not need the thirty-two Syrian captains to enforce his penalty against Ahab; and there was nothing Ahab could do to evade the punishment. The entire affair could have been avoided if Ahab had repented.
5. Verses 39-40: "Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead."
- a. Reference is made to the construction projects of Ahab, with a special reference to the ivory house he built. "An inscription to Shalmaneser, 860-825 B.C. mentions Ahab: 'I destroyed...2,000 chariots and 10,000 men of Ahab king of Israel'....A Harvard University Expedition found, in Samaria, the ruins of this house [Ahab's ivory house]. Its walls had been faced with Ivory. There were thousands of pieces of the most exquisitely carved and inlaid panels, plaques, cabinets and couches. It was just above the ruins of Omri's palace" (Halley, p.19).
 - b. Ahab's ivory palace was apparently still standing in 755 B.C., when Amos came on the scene to denounce the wickedness of Israel. "And I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the LORD" (Amos 3:15).
 - c. The statement of the passage indicates that Ahab did some extensive building, but the inspired record is silent concerning the details.
 - d. After a reign of 22 years, Ahab died in the manner described in this chapter, and was replaced on the throne by his son Ahaziah.

D. 1 Kings 22:41-50: Death of Jehoshaphat.

1. Verses 41-42: "And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat *was* thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Azubah the daughter of Shilhi."
 - a. The inspired historian now switches from Israel to Judah, and reports on the reign of Jehoshaphat. We were told of his ascension to the throne in Judah in 1 Kings 15:24: "And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead."
 - b. Jehoshaphat became king in Judah during the fourth year of Ahab's reign in Israel. He was thirty-five years of age at the time, and reigned for twenty-five years. His mother's name is listed as Azubah, who was the daughter of Shilhi.
 2. Verses 43-44: "And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD: nevertheless the high places were not taken away; *for* the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places. And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel."
 - a. Asa is depicted as a righteous king, although he was not as godly as he could have been. "And Asa did *that which was* right in the eyes of the LORD, as *did* David his father. And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from *being* queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt *it* by the brook Kidron. But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days" (1 Kings 15:11-14).
 - b. Generally, sons are like their fathers. Asa's son [Jehoshaphat] was considered a more righteous man than his father. "Jehoshaphat instigated both political and religious reforms, removing evidences of evil, making both positive and negative efforts to bring the people more in harmony with the will of God. It is said in one place that he took away the high places and groves out of Judah (2 Chr. 17:6), but in another place that the high places were not taken away (2 Chr. 20:33). Possibly they were only partially
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- removed, or the process of removal covered a span of years” (James Boyd, ADL, p.129).
- c. “The account of this in the books before us is a very condensed one. Beside the two campaigns in which he joined with Ahab and Joram of Israel against the Syrians and Moabites, and which are described in the history of the kingdom of Israel (ch. 22:1-35 and 2 Kings 3), we have simply a short notice of his attempt to restore the trade with Ophir, and a general statement of the spirit of his reign; whereas we learn from the extract preserved in the Chronicles from the annals of the kings, that he also carried on a victorious war against the Edomites and Ammonites (2 Chron. 20), and did a great deal to promote the spread of the knowledge of the law among his people, and to carry out the restoration of a better administration of justice, and to improve the condition of the army (2 Chron. 17 and 19)” (Keil, pp.281f).
 - d. Jehoshaphat made peace with Ahab, the king of Israel. This may not be as wicked as it appears on the surface. We are told about this affinity after the episode of Naboth’s death, when Elijah rebuked Ahab. At this rebuke, Ahab “went softly,” with God announcing that the king had humbled himself before the Lord. Assuming that Jehoshaphat knew of Ahab’s repentance, Judah’s king would have good reason to think Ahab was reunited with God, and hence concluded the peace initiative between the nations of God’s people.
3. Verses 45-50: "Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he showed, and how he warred, *are* they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land. *There was* then no king in Edom: a deputy *was* king. Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Eziongeber. Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not. And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead."
 - a. We are told that Jehoshaphat removed the remnant of the remaining sodomites. Asa had been unable to remove all of them. In virtually every society, there have been groups of these perverts. In our own time and country, homosexuals (male and female) are openly boasting of their perverted life-style, and even our government supports their “rights.” Such a blight on society can only bring the wrath of God against our nation. Cf. Genesis 19; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Proverbs 14:34.
 - b. At the time this history was written, there was no king in Edom; that nation was ruled by a “deputy.” “It is plain that the compiler of this book lived after the days of Jehoshaphat, in whose time the Edomites revolted; see 2 Kings 8:22. David had conquered the Edomites, and they continued to be governed by *deputies* appointed by the kings of Judah, till they recovered their liberty, as above. This note is introduced by the writer to account for Jehoshaphat’s building ships at *Ezion-geber*, which was in the territory of the Edomites, and which showed them to be at that time under the Jewish yoke” (Clarke, p.476).
 - c. 2 Chronicles 20:36-37: "And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Eziongaber. Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish."
 - 1) Jehoshaphat wanted to revive the practice of Solomon, and send ships to Ophir for gold. The ships were “of Tarshish” since they were designed to travel long distances on the sea. Tarshish is said to have been situated in Spain, and represented the westernmost point of sea travel then.
 - 2) “The brief notice concerning Jehoshaphat’s attempt to build Tarshish ships...for the voyage to Ophir is expanded in 2 Chron. 20:36,37, where we learn that Jehoshaphat had allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for this purpose, and that the prophet Eliezer predicted the destruction of his ships on account of this alliance. When the ships had been broken in pieces in Eziongeber, no doubt by a storm, Ahaziah made this fresh proposal to him: ‘Let my people sail with thy people;’ but Jehoshaphat would not. Ahaziah evidently wanted to persuade Jehoshaphat to make another attempt, after the destruction of the ships which were first built; but Jehoshaphat did not agree to it any more, because it was impossible for him, after the fulfillment of Eliezer’s prediction, to

expect a more favourable result” (Keil, pp.282f).

- d. Verse fifty reports the death of Jehoshaphat, his burial in the city of David, and the succession of his son Jehoram to the throne.

E. 1 Kings 22:51-53: The Reign of Ahaziah.

1. Verse 51: "Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel."
 - a. The historian returns to the northern kingdom, for a brief report on the current situation. Ahab had been slain, and Ahaziah had become king. The death of Ahab and the appointment of Ahaziah took place during the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat.
 - b. Ahaziah's reign covered a scant two years.
 2. Verses 52-53: "And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done."
 - a. Although his reign was short, it was nevertheless filled with wickedness. He conducted himself in the same way his father and mother lived; he is further described as following the way of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin.
 - b. Ahaziah did evil in the sight of the Lord by serving and worshiping Baal. His conduct provoked the Lord to anger.
 3. With this sad passage, the book of 1 Kings comes to a conclusion. However, 2 Kings takes up the story at this point, reporting the details of Ahaziah's death.
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KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

ISRAEL				JUDAH			
KING	REIGNED	YEARS	KIND	KING	REIGNED	YEARS	KIND
Jeroboam	22 years	933-911	Bad	Rehoboam	17 years	933-916	Not Good
Nadab	2 years	911-910	Bad	Abijah	3 years	915-913	Not Good
Baasha	24 years	910-887	Bad	Asa	41 years	912-872	Good
Elah	2 years	887-886	Bad	Jehoshaphat	25 years	874-850	Good
Zimri	7 days	886	Bad	Jehoram	8 years	850-843	Bad
Omri	12 years	886-875	Very Bad	Ahaziah	1 year	843	Bad
Ahab	22 years	875-854	Very Bad	Athaliah	6 years	843-837	Wicked
Ahaziah	2 years	855-854	Bad	Joash	40 years	843-803	Not Bad
Joram	12 years	854-843	Bad	Amaziah	19 years	803-775	Not Bad
Jehu	28 years	843-816	Not Good	Uzziah	52 years	787-735	Good
Jehoahaz	17 years	820-804	Bad	Jotham	16 years	749-734	Good
Joash	16 years	806-790	Bad	Ahaz	16 years	741-726	Bad
Jeroboam	41 years	790-748	Bad	Hezekiah	29 years	726-697	Good
Zechariah	6 months	748	Bad	Manasseh	55 years	697-642	Bad
Shallum	1 month	748	Bad	Amon	2 years	641-640	Bad
Menahem	10 years	748-738	Bad	Josiah	31 years	639-608	Good
Pekahiah	2 years	738-736	Bad	Jehoahaz	3 months	608	Bad
Pekah	20 years	748-730	Bad	Jehoiakim	11 years	608-597	Bad
Hoshea	9 years	730-721	Bad	Jehoiachin	3 months	597	Bad
				Zedekiah	11 years	597-586	Bad

* The names, dates, and years in the table were taken from *Halley's Bible Handbook*, pp.194-195

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