


## 2 KINGS

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### INTRODUCTION

*The second book appears to be over-laden with downgrade and a series of expressions concerning kings that “followed the ways of Jeroboam who promoted Israel’s sin” and “did evil in the sight of the LORD”. The writer-compiler appears at times to be a crisp recorder comparable to a registrar of marriages and deaths but it is far otherwise in truth. The histrionic moments are testimony to the dynamic of miracle and divinely authored events and the enthusiasm of the writer (possibly Jeremiah) is evident as he aims to show Yahweh in action to discipline His erring flock by captivity and set the scene for His coming as the Messianic King that Moses anciently prophesied.*

### CHAPTER 1

#### KING AHAZIAH FALLS & IS CONCERNED FOR HIS FUTURE 1-4

And Moab revolted against Israel after Ahab’s death. And Ahaziah fell down through the net window in the upper room in Samaria and was sick or weak and he sent messengers and said to them **“Go search for the Beelzebub God of Ekron if I will live after this wound or hurt”** [h/m]. But the messenger of the LORD spoke to Elijah the Tishbite [Possibly “one living outside the border” – perhaps a settler or one that kept out of the sphere of influence of Ahab] **“Arise and go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and say to them ‘Is there no god in Israel that you are going to search for Beelzebub god of Ekron? Now concerning this “fix” or “purpose of heart” thus says the LORD You will not come down from the bed you are gone up upon but will gradually die and Elijah left.”**

#### AHAZIAH’S MESSENGERS RETURN 5-12

Then the messengers returned and he said to them **“What is this – you are back?”** And they said **“A man came up to meet us and said to us ‘Go and return to the king’ that sent you and say to him “Thus says the LORD ‘Is there not God in Israel that you sent to seek Beelzebub god of Ekron? On this plan you went up to bed but you will not come down from there fore you will slowly die.”** Then he said to them **“What was the manner of the man that went up to meet you and spoke these words of the future to you?”** And they said to him **“He was a Baal-Shear [“a man covered with hair”] girded with a girdle of leather from the loins”** and he said **“He is Elijah the Tishbite.”**

Then he sent to him a captain of fifty and his fifty went up to him and behold he was sitting on the peak of a mountain and they commanded him **“Man of God the king has given you an order – you must come down.”** But Elijah answered and said to the captain of the fifty **“But if I am a man of God fire will come down from heaven and eat you up and your fifty.”** Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. But he revived or rebelled and sent another commander of fifty and he pleaded with or testified to him also giving the order to him **“Man of God thus says the king “You must come down off the mountain!”** But Elijah said to them **“If I am a man of God fire will come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.”** Then **fire of God** came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

## **THE KING'S THIRD REVIVAL RESISTANCE AND REBELLION 13-16**

But he (Ahaziah) rebelled a third time and sent a captain of fifty and his fifty went up and the captain of the third fifty fell upon his knees before Elijah and implored mercy [*Hithpael of mj*] of him and said to him **“Man of God please let my life and the life of your servants these fifty men be precious in your sight”**. Then the angel of the LORD commanded Elijah **“Go down with him, do not fear his face”** so Elijah arose and went down with him to the king.

*The approach of this third captain was one of humility and his prayer was answered. We have yet another OT example of God returning the words and actions of men on their own heads. The captains who came brazenly with an imperative to Elijah about “coming down” found fire “came down” on them. This captain who prayed found that the “angel of God” – an OT expression for THE LORD – had mercy on him and his servants. The interposition of “the angel” is an exact parallel to the mediation of Christ over against our repentance in respect of our rebellion as sinners.*

And he (Elijah) said to him **“Thus says the LORD ‘Is it on account of the fact that there is no God in Israel that you sent emissaries to search for Beelzebub god of Ekron for his word concerning this thing? You shall not come down from the bed you went up to lie upon for you will gradually die.’”** So he died according to the word of Elijah and Jehoram (*or Joram His brother*) became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah because he (*Ahaziah*) had no son. **And the remainder of the acts of Ahaziah that he did are they not written on the scroll of ‘The acts of the days of the kings of Israel’?**

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE PRAYER OF ELIJAH FOR WIDER MINISTRY 1-11**

*And it was real* within the arrangement [*literally “house of the LORD’S causing*] when the LORD was taking Elijah up to heaven by tempest or whirlwind Elijah and Elisha walked from Gilgal. And Elijah said to Elisha **“Please go back here for the LORD has sent me speedily to Bethel”** but Elisha said **“As the LORD lives and while I have breath I will not leave you”** so they went down to Bethel. And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him **“Do you know that the LORD will take your master from over your head today?”** And he said **“I also know – hush!”** *It appears that all the prophets had warning of this event. It was common knowledge at Bethel and Elisha had been made aware. Was it the Spirit of God that showed these things to the prophets or did Elijah tell them separately adding a proviso of secrecy? It appears it was the former. One has to imagine that these prophets are running and that as Elijah lingered momentarily at Bethel the conversation between the younger men took place but halted with the emergence of Elijah and Elisha’s “Hush!”*

Then Elijah said to him **“Turn back here please for the LORD has sent me at speed to Jericho”** but he said **“As the LORD lives and while I have breath I will not leave you”** so they went on to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were in Jericho approached Elisha and said to him **“Do you know that today the LORD is taking your master from over your head.”** And he said **“I also know – hush!”**

Then Elijah said to him **“Please turn back here for the LORD has sent me with haste to the Jordan”** but he said **“As the LORD lives and while I have breath I will not leave you”** so both of them walked onward. And fifty men from the sons of the prophets walked out and were standing opposite and aloof a long distance off as they were both standing at the Jordan. And Elijah took his cloak and wrapped it up

and struck the waters and they parted in two hither and thither and these two passed over on dry ground.

*And it was real* as they were to cross over or crossing just then Elijah said to Elisha **“Ask what I shall do for you before I shall be taken from fellowship with you?”** And Elisha said **“May I have a double breathing of your SPIRIT!”** *Elisha would be being filled with the Holy Spirit as was Elijah. But that is not the nature of his request. He is not asking to live twice as long or be twice the speaker Elijah was. The fact that Elijah spoke as the oracle of God and that his words were like a tempest blowing away the enemies of the LORD and depression and carrying life as the wind carries water appears to be how we are to understand this unusual request.* And he said **“You have caused difficulty for requesting”**. *Elijah is simply telling Elisha that he was going to seek God for some blessing for his faithful servant but this request was deeply challenging. After all how could mighty words become mightier? How could prophetic authority become more marked still? If you should see me after I have been taken [jq] – Pual “after I have been taken”] from being alongside you it will be appointed as yours but if not it will not be so. Elijah operates by sign which is a kind of ad hoc understanding on the God-ward side of the prayer. The vision of Elijah’s passage to glory had to relate to the “double blowing”. Humorously put Elisha was not being churlish or facetious and asking to be a “bigger blow”. His request was to extend the ministry – to reach regions beyond – hither and thither. The prayer was granted and the manner of Elijah’s uplift was in a wind blowing several ways – a wind that of itself was emblematic of a world-wide ministry – an authority reaching to nations without Israel’s borders. And it was real* as these two continued to walk and talk – behold a chariot of fire and drivers of fire put a division between them and it took Elijah up in a tempest or whirlwind toward heaven.

#### **ELISHA’S DREAM COMES TRUE 12-15**

And Elisha saw [him] and he cried out **“My father, my father the chariot of Israel fire and its drivers of fire”** but he did not see [him] further or still so he took hold of his cloak [djb] and tore it in two parts. And he caused the glorious mantle of Elijah to be raised up the magnificent mantle of Elijah [rd] that had fallen from upon him [Elijah] – from over him [Elisha] and returned and stood at the edge of Jordan. Then he took the noble mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him and struck the waters and they divided hither and thither and Elisha passed over. *Elisha called out to Elijah but got no reply but a glorious sign – the mantle of Elijah fell by his side and replaced his own plain cloak. The vision suggests that the chariot wheeled round once but not again and the obvious reason was to supply Elisha with the evidence of a greater ministry in continuity of leadership of the prophetic schools.*

Then the sons of the prophets who would be catching sight at Jericho from the opposite side said **“The Spirit of Elijah is caused to rest on upon Elisha”** and they went to meet him and bowed to the ground in reverence for him.

#### **THE UNBELIEF OF THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS 16-18**

And they said to him **“Please look – there are fifty strong men of your servants – please may they go and they will seek your Lord lest the wind or Spirit of the LORD has lifted him and cast him down on one of the mountains or in one of the valleys”** but he said **“You shall not send!”** But they pressed or were stubborn until he was embarrassed and said “send” and they sent the fifty men and they made a search for three days but they did not find him. So they returned to him and he was living in Jericho and he said to them “Did I not say to you “Do not go”? *The significance of*

*this episode is that these who urged that they realised Elijah would be taken away did not believe he would go to dwell with the LORD in another dimension of life in heaven but that he would simply land on another part of the land. The concept of “life beyond” was very rudimentary and Elisha had a vision of reality that would light up the valley of death as it remains in ancient testimony alongside the story of Enoch – part of the dual testimony to the interpenetration of two realms. Immanent imminent*

#### **THE MIRACULOUS HEALING OF JERICHO WATER 19-22**

Then the men of the city said to Elisha **“Behold please that the situation of the city is pleasant as my Lord sees but the water is noxious and the land is unfruitful”** [1Kc]. And he said **“Bring to me a new bowl and put salt in it”** and they brought it to him. And he went out to the water spring and he thrust the salt into the water and he said **“Thus says the LORD I have healed these waters. There will not any longer be death and unfruitfulness there.”** And the waters were healed to this day according to the word that Elisha spoke.

#### **THE BETHEL CHILDREN SLAIN BY A BEAR 23-24**

So he went up from there to Bethel and as he was going up on the road small children came out of the city and cursed him and said to him **“Present an offering you bald man, make an offering you bald man.”** Then he turned and saw them and diminished or shamed them **in the name of the LORD**. *The universal righteous judgment of God is in evidence – as they ridiculed and diminished him so he answered their call of ridicule against God by a statement which sought the honour of God’s name.*

Then two bears came out from the forest and tore forty two children. Then he went to Mount Carmel and from there returned to Samaria.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **JEHORAM’S LITTLE IMPROVED RULE 1-3**

Then Jehoram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the 18<sup>th</sup> year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah and he ruled for 12 years. But he did evil in the LORD’S sight but not in the manner of his father and mother for he removed the statue of Baal that his father made. Only he clung to the sins of Jereboam the son of Nebat – which he caused Israel to sin and did not turn from them [1RS]. *The Spirit of God commends the king’s move against Baalite idolatry but holds against the king his failure to wholeheartedly follow the LORD and marks the disobedience of his continued sin of using an alternative priesthood and shrines at Bethel and Dan which effectively divided the nation.*

#### **THE KING OF MOAB REBELS 4-5**

And Misha king of Moab was a sheep producer and he paid a tribute or appeasement to the king of Israel – a hundred thousand lambs and a hundred thousand rams unshorn or woolly.

*And it was real* about the time of the death of Ahab the king of Moab revolted against [literally “sinned” or failed to supply tribute to”] the king of Israel.

#### **THE ALLIANCE AGAINST MOAB & ENQUIRY FROM ELISHA 6-20**

But king Jehoram left Samaria that day and visited or numbered all Israel. He also went and sent to Jehoshaphat king of Judah saying **“The king of Moab has rebelled; will you march with me to war against Moab?”** And he said **“I will go up; I am as**

**you, my people are as your people and my horses are as yours.”** Then he said **“Which way shall we go up?”** And he said **“The desert approach road of Edom!”** So the king of Israel the king of Judah and the king of Moab marched and traversed the circuitous path over seven days and there was no water for the armed host and for their animals that were behind them. *After seven days they were probably on the narrow defiles along the king’s highway marching on a steeply ascending route that led to the tableland of Moab whilst many of the pack animals followed with weapons.* Then the king of Israel said **“O grief for the LORD has called to these three kings to hand them over to Moab”**. But Jehoshaphat said **“Is there no prophet of the LORD here and we will enquire of the LORD from him”** and one man from the servants of Israel answered and said **“Here is Elisha son of Shaphat that poured water on the hands of Elijah.”** And Jehoshaphat said **“The word of the LORD is firm and established [Cj] with him”** Then the king of Israel and the king of Judah and the king of Edom went down to him. *It appears by this stage the forces of the alliance were along the western borders of Moab on the high ground of Nebo from where they could descend easily to the Jordan valley and cross to Gilgal to make contact with Elisha.*

But Elisha said to the king of Israel **“What have we in common? Go to the prophets of your father and the prophets of your mother”** but the king of Israel said to him **“Not so because the LORD has called to oppose [arq] these three kings to give them to the hand of Moab.”** But Elisha said **“As the LORD of hosts lives before whose face I stand to minister if it did not involve the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah whom I esteem or help the question is would I trust you or regard you. But now, capture an instrumental singer for me”** and it *and it really was so* – as the singing musician kept playing the hand of the LORD was coming upon him. *Elisha did not prophecy in a vacuum. He sought the Lord’s presence with praise and emphasised the nature of worship before the kings of these nations. Elisha’s wider ministry was beginning as he instructed two kings.*

Then he said **“Thus says the LORD ‘Create at this valley cistern mounds upon mounds for thus says the LORD ‘You will not see wind and you will not see rain but the wadi or river valley itself will fill with water and you will drink – you and your cattle and animals. But this is a small thing in the eyes of the LORD – then He will give Moab into your hands. But you shall strike every fortified city and every chosen city and you shall bring down every fine tree and stop up the water wells and destroy [literally “pain” or “grieve”] all the prosperous portions of land with stones.**

*And it was real* in the morning at the offering up of the bloodless sacrifice behold also waters came from the Edom road and filled the land with water.

#### **THE DEFEAT OF MOAB 21-25**

And all Moab heard that the kings had come up to war against them and they called together all that could gird on armour and older ones and made a stand at the border. And they arose in the morning and **the sun arose upon the waters** and the Moabites over against *Israel* saw the waters red as blood. And they said **“This is blood of the sword; the kings have destroyed themselves each man has struck his neighbour and now you Moabites to the spoil.”** So they came to the camp of Israel and Israel arose and struck the Moabites and they fled before their face and *Israel* attacked [*went towards her*] smiting Moab. And (1) they destroy or broke down their cities and (2) on every good portion of land each man cast his stone and (3) they blocked full all the wells of water and (4) brought down all the good wood till the remnant of the stones

of the city of Harosheth but the slingers went round it and struck it. *Even the capitol city was virtually taken before the Moabite king adopted the offensive.*

#### **MOAB'S KING MAKES TWO ATTEMPTS TO HALT THE OFFENSIVE 26-7**

But the king of Moab saw that the battle was tough beyond his capability he took with him 700 skilled swordsmen to cut his way through to the king of Edom but he could not. Then he took his son – his firstborn who would be king after him and offered him as an offering upon the wall **and it was real** there was great wrath against Israel and they struck camp from it (Moab) and returned to the land of Israel. *It is ironic that what the Moabite king could not do with the sword or his best fighting men was done when he slew his son on the wall. It was by his son he saved his kingdom and his people. It was a vast sacrifice but it turned the hearts of his nation towards him. Such commitment to them gained their firm allegiance and their fury clearly became insufferable for the invaders. After misunderstanding the sun shining on the water and being discomfited before the Jewish-Edomite alliance the King sought to appease Chemosh or Molech in the hope of re-establishing his kingdom. Israel did not gain any revenues but Israel's enemy was left to lick its wounds and Jehoram was taught that the LORD could quickly reverse the circumstances of life. Prayer was shown to be effective and a great testimony was given to worship of God and prophecy was re-instated as vital to daily life and government.*

#### **CHAPTER 4**

Now there was one wife of the sons of the prophets that appealed to Elisha and said **“Your servant my husband is dead and you are well aware that your servant feared the LORD but the lender has come to take both sons of your servant as his own.”** Then Elisha said **“What shall I undertake for you?”** [*How can I help you?*] **Tell me! What have you remaining in the house?”** And she said **“Your maidservant has nothing in the house but an oil flask.”** So he said **“Go and ask for containers from all who live in the street around you-empty vessels-not little ones or a small number [f[m]...”**

*“...Then you shall come home and close the door behind you and your sons and you shall pour in above all these vessels and take away [ [S] as tent pegs pulled out] the full ones.”* So she went and shut her door behind herself and her sons – these that brought vessels for her and she made the outpouring. *There was both ingenuity and instant obedience on her part. She organised her sons to go out – they appealed for vessels and as they returned she shut the door behind them so that the matter remained private. Then at the big moment she tested her faith. It meant expending the only precious oil she had left. Now oil was used for baking, cooking, anointing, and lighting. Once the little she had was spent on one reckoning it might become an irrecoverable film on the surface of numerous vessels. But her faith was a faith which willingly surrendered all to keep the precious sons she loved. She was sister to the widow who spent her mites and the farmer that divided his very life and the woman who poured out the precious ointment.*

*I surrender all, I surrender all  
All to Christ my blessed master  
I surrender all.*

***And it was reality*** as the vessels were filled she then said to her son **“Bring me a remaining vessel”** and he said **“There are none remaining”** and the oil stopped. Then she went and told the man of God and he said **“Take of the vessels and sell the**

oil and recompense your lenders and there will then be *oil or wealth* for you and your sons.”

### THE SHUNAMITE 8-17

*And it was reality* on the day that Elisha crossed to Shunem where there was a great woman and she urged him to eat a meal *and it was reality* that at any time he passed that way he turned off the way to have a meal. Then she said to her husband **“Please note for I am very conscious that the consecrated man of God passes over us regularly. Please may we create a little upper room with a staircase and set a bed a table and a fine chair and a menorah or candlestick and so when he comes to us he will turn in there.”** *And it was reality* on the day he came and turned in to the upper chamber and lay down there – and said to Gehazi his young servant **“Call this Shunamite”** and he called her and she stood before him. And he said to him **“Please say to her ‘Behold you have been shown concern for us taking all this trouble. What shall be done for you? There is the matter or possibility for a word on your behalf to the king or to the captain of the host!’”** But she said **“I am living in the midst of my own people.”** *The prophet who knew the value of protection and might through high level contact be able to facilitate trade or advance the little Shunamite family by finding them a base nearer the capitol was re-assured that they wished to remain among the tribe and people they knew.*

But he said [to Gehazi] **“What shall be done for her?”** And he said **“She has truly no son and her husband is old.”** And he (Elisha) said **“Call her”** and he (Gehazi) called her and she stood at the door. *The lady afforded Elisha residence on many occasions and gave him entire privacy where he and his servant could reside overnight. She honoured his holy way of life and even now did not enter his apartment but stood by the door at the top of the stairway.* And he said **“At this national festival and family time in keeping with the time of life-giving you will enfold a son.”** But she said **“Oh no, my lord you are a man of God you would not continue to flatter me with hope or lie to your handmaid.”** But the woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son at the festival time in keeping with the time of life-giving according to the word of promise of Elisha to her.

### THE CHILD DIES SUDDENLY AND ELISHA’S HELP IS SOUGHT 18-31

Then the child grew up but *it was reality* there was a day when he went out to his father to the harvestmen. Then he said to his father **“My head, my head”** so he spoke to the lad and he had to carry him to his mother. And he carried him and brought him to his mother and she set him on her knees until the sun was high in the sky at midday then he died. Then she went up and laid him upon the bed of the man of God and shut the door after her and left. And she called her husband and said **“Please quickly get men one of the young servants and one of the asses and I will hasten to the man of God and come back.”** But he said **“Why will you go to him today? It is not new moon! It is not Sabbath!”** Then she said **“It is about Health and peace!”** She bound the saddle on the ass and said to her servant **“You drive and get going; do not restrain to ride fast unless I speak to you.”** So she left and came to the man of God to Mount Carmel *and it was reality* as the man of God saw her becoming apparent in the distance [dgm] he said to Gehazi his servant **“Look the Shunamite”**. Now please run to meet her and say to her **“The peace to you and your husband and the child”**. And she said **“Peace”**. But she came to the man of God – to the mountain – and held

on to his feet but Gehazi approached to push her off but the man of God said **“Stop or relax on her for her life is bitter for her and the LORD has hidden it from me and not explained it to me”**.

Then she said **“Did I ask a son from my Lord? Did I not say “Do not flatter me with a promise of happiness [h/v]?”** Then he said to Gehazi **“Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand and go but if you come upon a man do not greet and bless him and when a man greets and blesses you do not reply to him but place my staff on the face of the child.”** But the mother of the child said **“As the LORD lives and as thy soul lives I will not leave you [Elisha] behind.”** So He arose and went after her. *There are some matters of order to be sorted concerning the return journey. The Shunamite was insisting that Elisha come. Gehazi ran on ahead of the Shunamite and her servant. The staff went before conveyed by Gehazi. The Shunamite and her servant were going to go as reasonably fast as possible after Gehazi but she promised not to leave Elisha behind. Gehazi's name meant “Valley of vision” and it appears he was the young man whose eyes were being opened to the action and support of the unseen world – of the LORD'S hosts and angel helpers. This event was the OT equivalent to the resurrection of Lazarus although the decomposition of the body would in the second case would be considered irreversible and the miracle of a higher order since the functions of the soul could not be immediately activated by the return of the spirit only.*

But Gehazi passed them and placed the staff on the face of the child but there was no voice and no sharp response of the ear so he returned to meet up with him [Elijah] and told him saying **“The youth has not awakened”**

### **ELISHA AN INSTRUMENT OF RESURRECTION LIFE 32-37**

Then Elisha came to the house and behold the child lying on his [Elisha's bed] dead. And Elisha went and shut the door behind the two of them and he had continued praying again and again to Yahweh. *This “shutting of the door” was final. It shut out the world and ensured that just Elisha and the corpse were present but presumed on the omnipresent Spirit of God. This “shutting of the door” has to be compared with the miraculous coming of the Christ and of the Holy Ghost in the book of Acts. Elisha believed in intimacy of God and His presence with his servants.*

Then he rose to sit or rest on the bed and lay over the child and put his mouth upon his mouth and his eyes over his eyes and his hands over his hands and bent over him and the flesh of the child had warmed up. *The action is neither artificial resuscitation as we know it nor a covering pose like sexual connection on the other hand. It involved facial and upper body contact and the Hebrew is in part indicative of testing of the results of prayer which were seen in the return of body heat.*

Then he returned and went back to the house once here and once there and bent or bowed himself over him and the youth sneezed [ררז – a word which speaks of action of the nose and possibly action conveyed as far down as the loins – involving the diaphragm] seven times [as in a series of “seven hammer blows” or “footsteps”] Then he called Gehazi and said **“Call this Shunamite”** and he called her and she came to him and he said to her **“Lift up your son!”** But she went in and fell at his feet and bowed **to the ground** [this tells us the apartment was on the ground floor] and lifted up her son and went out. *There is deep thankfulness and reverence before this woman takes her son. She has enough evidence by now of his life – he is looking at her and she is looking at those young eyes open and perhaps being rubbed as he naturalises to the light. This grand miracle underscores the fact that Elisha is a forerunner of Christ in the OT. The whole manner of this miracle and the subsequent*



*call of parents are uncannily akin to that of Christ's raising of the daughter of the leader of the synagogue.*

#### **THE DANGEROUS POT OF FOOD NEUTRALISED BY MEAL 38-41**

So Elisha returned to Gilgal and there was a great famine in the land and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him and he said to his servant **“Put on the great boiled pot and continue to cook potted stew for the sons of the prophets.”** And one went out to the field to gather herbs [*tra*] and found wild vine of the field and gathered among it mushrooms [*qp*] of the field – the full of his cloak – and came and sliced them for the pot of stew for they were not familiar with it. Then they poured out for the men to eat **and it was reality** as they were eating the stew these men shouted out and said **“O man of God there is death in the pot so it is not able to be eaten.”** But he [*Elisha*] said **“Take ground flour and toss it into the pot.”** Then he said **“Pour out for them”** [*qx* – a word used of pouring out molten metal which hardens. There was no poison “in the pot” nor “in the soup” so that the grain was not used like potatoes] and they ate and there was no noxious thing in the pot. *This is a clear miracle since boiling would normally concentrate poison.*

#### **FEEDING 100 MEN 42-44**

Then a man from Baal-Shalisha came and brought the man of God bread from first fruits of – twenty loaves of barley and ears (of corn) in the husk and said **“Give it to them to eat.”** And the table attendant said **“What, shall I set this before 100 men?”** And he said **“Give it to them.”** And they ate for thus says the LORD **“They will eat and have over!”**

And he put it in front of them and they ate and there was food over according to the word of the LORD. *This is a feeding miracle of a kind with the two miracles Jesus did – one on either side of Galilee. The quantities in this case were at least 5 times short of providing a meagre sufficiency naturally for 100 men and yet all were satisfied and there was food remaining. The lesson in both testaments is the same – God's provisions are supplied daily as we have need and his provisions are sufficient. Jesus taught us to pray “Give us this day bread sufficient for the day.*

### **CHAPTER 5**

#### **THE HEBREW MAID'S TESTIMONY REACHES KINGS 1-7**

Then Naaman commander in chief of the military of the king of Aram was a great man in the presence of his master and his reputation was high because through him the LORD gave salvation to Aram and the man was a valiant warrior – who had been struck with leprosy [*rxm Pual passive participle*]. And Syria went out in raiding companies and they captured a little servant girl from the land of Israel and she became a servant to Naaman's wife. She then said to her mistress **“O that my lord was in the presence of the prophet that is in Samaria – then he would take away or draw out his leprosy.”** *The military annoyance being caused by Syria demonstrated her growing power after a few generations of growing power of the ruling family established by Hadad the Edomite [1Kings 11.14 &24]. The text highlights the good fortune and service of the young Hebrew maiden before Naaman's wife and sets it alongside the possibilities if similar good fortune and obedience were true in the case of Naaman and Elisha. The Hebrew verb for “curing” normally means “add to” but in this case it means “take to himself” and in this again the NT act of our LORD in atoning for our sin is brought to view. Just as Naaman's leprosy adhered to Gehazi and thus was taken in a sense to Elisha so*

*Christ as Isaiah states took upon Him our sins and for us became a “leper” – estranged from God in His suffering.*

And she [*the mistress*] caused to go and told her lord saying **“The maid that is from the land of Israel said this and this.”** Then the king of Syria said **“You must make the journey – You must go and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.”** So he went and took in his hand ten talents of silver and 6000 gold coins and ten different sets of clothes. So he brought the letter to the king of Israel and it said **“Along with the arrival of this letter behold I have sent to you Naaman my servant that you may take away his leprosy.”** *The expression in Aramaic – the current lingua franca – carried the exact words of the maiden – but of course the king though familiar with the prophet took exception to being used as a healer and imagined some manoeuvre was afoot.*

*And it was reality* as the king of Israel read the letter aloud he also tore his robe and said **“Am I, Elohim, to cause death and to give life for this man sends to me to take from a man his leprosy? For you must surely be aware and you should see that he is a man with a dispute with me!”** [*hmatm*] *Here is a poignant case of Benhadad’s simple but real belief that there was a man of God who healed in Israel as opposed to Jehoram’s culpable disconnect from the prophetic power sent by God to minister during his reign. The power of uncomplicated testimony is seen in the statement of the young Israelite servant. We should value and give testimony. God uses it to bring others into blessing.*

#### **THE HEALING OF NAAMAN 8-19**

*And it was reality* as Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robe he sent to the king saying **“Why should you tear your robe? Please bring him to me and he will become aware that there is a prophet in Israel.”** Then Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the gate of the house of Elisha. But Elisha sent a messenger to him saying **“Go and wash seven times in the Jordan and your flesh will come back to you and you will be clean.”** But Naaman was angry and went off and said **“Look, I said to myself he will eventually come out and stand and call on the name of Yahweh his God and lift or wave his hand to and fro over the place and heal the leprous! Are not Abana and Pharpar –rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel? Is it not the case that I may wash in them and be clean?”** Then he faced out and left in hot anger. But his servants came near and they debated with him and said **“My father had the prophet commanded a great act for you would you not have done it but even so when he said to you “Wash and be clean” would you not do it? And he went down and washed in Jordan seven times according to the word of the man of God and his skin came back as the skin of a young child and he was clean. Then he returned to the man of God – he and all his host and he came and stood before him and he said “Behold I am very sure that there is no God in all the earth unless in Israel and now please take a blessing from your servant.”**

But he said **“As the LORD lives before whom I stand I will not take it.”** But he [*Naaman*] pressed him to take it and he refused. Then Naaman said **“Should there not please have been given your servant as much fertile earth as two mules carry for your servant will not offer burnt or meat offering to other gods but only to the LORD.”**

*Naaman publicly states to Elisha that he wants to have about him a little of the land of Israel not to speak of the benefits of its water. His conviction was absolute – Yahweh was the only true God.*

**“...Concerning this matter may the LORD pardon your servant in bringing my lord to the house of Rimmon to worship there and he leans on my hand and I cause myself to bow in the house of Rimmon when I bow may the LORD pardon your servant in this matter.”** Then he said to him **“Go to belong to peace [“to be a peacemaker” and enjoy divine peace and prosperity] and he departed from him some distance”** [trbk]

#### **GEHAZI –THE WORLDLY SERVANT– PROFITS BY THE MIRACLE 20-27**

Then Gehazi servant of the man of God said **“Behold my master has delivered Naaman this Syrian from taking from his hand that he brought. But as the LORD lives I will run after him to get something or other.”** So Gehazi pursued after Naaman and Naaman caught sight of him running after him and came down from his chariot to meet him and said **“Peace”**. And he said **“Peace”** – my master sent me to say **“Look at this now – two young men have come to me from the sons of the prophets from Mount Ephraim – please give me a talent of silver and two lots of clothes.”** And Naaman said **“You must be willing to take two talents”** and he pressed him and he tied up two talents of silver in two purses and gave two lots of clothing to two of his young servants and they carried them before him [Gehazi]. But then he came to the mount [lp[] he took them from their hands and deposited them in his house and he sent the men away and they left. Then he came and stood to minister to his master and Elisha said to him **“Gehazi where have you been?”** And he said **“Your servant has not gone here or there.”**

But he said to him **“Did my heart not go away when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to take silver and to take garments and olive groves and vineyards and sheep and cattle and servants and handmaids? So the leprosy of Naaman will damask to you and to your seed for the duration”** and he went out from his presence a leper like snow. *Gehazi lost his ministry and lost his fellowship and lost his place in society through his desire for money. He became a stumbling block at the same time. Elisha’s heart in the relationship died a death and this notable OT casualty is a warning to all who like Demas will love this present evil world and invert the spiritual values that prophecy teaches – living light as to earthly possessions and putting the things of the kingdom of God first.*

### **CHAPTER 6**

#### **ELISHA BY WISDOM RESCUES THE AXE-HEAD 1-7**

Then the sons of the prophets said to Elisha **“Please inspect the place where we are living in your company – it is too small for us.”** *The Hebrew “from us” suggests that the Gilgal community had outgrown its premises. The prophetic school was advancing and that was encouraging.* **“May we please go to the Jordan valley and each man will take from there a beam and we will construct a dwelling place there”** and he said **“Go”**. Then one of the first leader said **“Will you please also go with your servants?”** and he said **“I will go”**. So he went with them and they came to the Jordan and they cut down trees. *And it was reality* that one was getting the tree felled when the iron *axe-head* fell into the water. Then he shouted and said **“Ah master for it was on loan.”** Then the man of God said **“Where did it fall?”** and he let him see the place. So he cut down a stake and cast it in there and the iron head was made to swim or float. *Whilst there is nothing miraculous about this the recovery of it was astute and so immediate upon inserting the stake in the iron head – clearly seen in the water which ran probably less than ten feet deep – nevertheless it was a wonderful solution and showed the value of having Elisha present with his practical*

wisdom. It appears the same man who invited Elisha now was helped by the one whom he graciously included in the expedition. And he said “Lift it up” and he stretched out his hand and got it.

### **OMNISCIENCE DEFEATS PRIVATE INTELLIGENCE 8-12**

Then the king of Syria was warring against Israel and took advice in the intimate company of his servants saying “**At such a good isolated place I will set up camp.**” Then the man of God sent to the king of Israel saying “**You must be careful about passing this place for there the Syrians are camped.**” So the king of Israel sent spies to the place that the man of God had seen in vision and took care not once or twice. The heart of the king of Syria was tossed as in a tempest agitated by this matter and he called his servants and said to them “**Will you not tell me which of us is for the king of Israel?**” Then one from his servants replied “**No-one, my lord O king, for Elisha the prophet that is in Israel informs the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom.**”

### **SYRIA PROSECUTES ELISHA UNSUCCESSFULLY 13-17**

Then he said “**Go and see where he is and I will send and capture him.**” So he was informed saying “**Behold he is at Dothan.**” Then he sent horses and chariots and a mighty military force and they came by night and they would roll round or surround the city. But the servant of the man of God [*trv – perhaps a servant that provided wood for cooking or was involved in morning ministry*] awoke early to arise and go out behold a military force of both horses and chariots surrounded the city. And his servant said to him “**O master what shall we do just by ourselves?**” And he said “**Do not fear for those that are with us are more than what is with them!**” But **Elisha kept praying** and said “**LORD please open his eyes then he will see.**” Then the LORD opened the young man’s eyes and he looked and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around about Elisha. *Immediately we recount the event by Jordan when Elijah went up in a chariot of fire. The world we do not see is one of glorious light and splendid lightning like vehicles and beings. This world is so fragile by comparison that it is passing strange many among our theologians and pastors imagine we shall live for ever here not greatly changed. The radiance of the angels of God shall hardly surpass the degree of glory of saints who shall be transformed to be like their master.* Then they came down to him (Elisha) and **Elisha kept praying** to the LORD and said “**Please strike this people with dazzling blindness**” and He struck them in accordance with the word of Elisha. *In both instances Elisha prayed and continued to pray just like his mentor Elijah did at Carmel. He held on to God and this truth is set forth twice in the space of the story. How needful to continue in our petitions. Jesus gave us a prayer to continue to use daily!*

### **IF YOU’RE ENEMY IS HUNGRY FEED HIM – ELISHA’S DOUBLE PORTION MINISTRY TO SYRIA (1) 19-23**

And Elisha said to them “**This is not the way and this is not the city – march after me and I will cause you to march to the city you are looking for**” and he marched them to Samaria. *And it was really so* when they came to Samaria Elisha said “**LORD open the eyes of these men**” and they looked and behold they were in the centre of Samaria. Then the king of Samaria said to Elisha when he saw them “My father shall I gradually smite them?” But he said “**You would not continually smite those you took prisoner with your sword and your bow causing wounds or slaughter – set**

**bread and water before their faces”** so they ate and drank and went to their master. *This was a quite stupendous act of clemency on the part of Elisha – so tellingly different also from the event at Carmel under the ministry of Elijah. Here two nations were disentangled from war by sheer kindness and the prophet Elisha became an international peacemaker according to the prerogative and mission of his ministry of the double portion.*

And he purchased a great feast for them and they ate and drank and he sent them off and they went to their master and the troops of Syria added not to come again to the land of Israel. *So at cost to himself the king of Israel humbly provided a feast for his enemies. He seemed to be a changed man – but the subsequent narrative testifies to the contrary. His faith was for good times only.*

### **BENHADAD ATTACKS A FAMINE STRICKEN SAMARIA 24-29**

*And it was reality* after this Benhadad king of Syria gathered all his military might and went up and shut up Samaria in a siege. *And the reality was* there was a great famine in Samaria and behold they were pressing the siege against it until an ass’s head was to be worth 80 shekels and the fourth of a cab of the dung of the dove worth five shekels. *And it was the reality* that the king of Israel was going along the wall when a woman cried out to him saying **“My Lord O King save me!”** But he said **“If the LORD does not save you none can cause you to be saved!”** Shall I be able to save you from the smooth threshing floor or from the *empty* wine trough?” Then the king said to her **“What is your circumstance?”** And she said **“This woman said to me ‘Give your son and we will eat him today and we will be eating my son tomorrow.’ Then we cooked my son and ate him and I said to her the following day ‘Provide your son and we shall eat him but she has hidden her son’”** *At this point it was but a day before the siege was lifted and bread was plentiful again. How sad the lady herself had not learned to persevere like Elijah and the elders gallantly did. Just one more day and she would have retained her lovely little boy. No sadder lady walked the streets of Samaria in those days! Her story is one side of the coin of patient perseverance and prayer.*

### **THE KING BLAMES ELISHA AND DETERMINES TO KILL HIM 30-33**

*And it was reality* as the king listened to the words of the woman he was tearing his robes and he was going along the wall and the people gazed and behold he had sackcloth upon his flesh underneath. *Even before this incident the king wore sackcloth in humble repentance and upon hearing this story the fact came to public notice. It would appear that he had been exercised to live humbly and penitently – but this story broke his spirit and hardened his heart.* Then he said **“Thus may God do to me and add more also if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains upon him today.”** But Elisha sat in his house and the elders were sitting with him and he (the king) sent a man from his presence – but when the messenger was not yet come to him he said to the elders **“Cause yourselves to see it for this son of a killer (Ahab) has sent to remove my head – look when the messenger arrives shut the door and you take hold of him at the door. Is not the sound of the feet of his master following him?”** And behold while he was still speaking with them behold the messenger came down to him and said **“Behold this calamity is from the LORD – Why should I hope or wait with expectation for the LORD any longer?”** *The case of Ahab’s son was one of impatience and failing belief. His heart was not right with God and so he could not believe for a change in circumstance in such straightened circumstances. But come*

*they would and within just one day. When the outlook is dismal and hope turns to despair and repentance seems unrewarded we should continue to pray. The life of Elisha bears testimony to waiting and patience. He had taught the elders to be patient and they were standing with him rather than the king. The monarch fades out of the picture –perhaps the elders dissuaded him of his scheme or told him that the prophet knew his heart. The mighty lesson is “patient perseverance in prayer” (Ephesians 6.18). The story of Elisha and the elders is the other side of the coin of patient perseverance and prayer.*

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **THE OFFICER WITH FAITH IN THE KING BUT NOT IN GOD 1-2**

Then Elisha spoke with revelation [*rma*] “Hear the word of the LORD – thus says the LORD ‘at a like time tomorrow it will be **a seah of wheat for a shekel and two seahs of barley for a shekel** at the gate of Samaria.” Then a high ranking officer [*v/v-third in command*] of the king who trusted in the king’s arm or power answered the man of God and said “Behold should the LORD be making windows in heaven could this thing **be reality** but he (Elisha) said “You will see it with your own eyes but you shall not eat from it!”

### **THE FOUR LEPERS ACT IN FAITH & FIND THE SPOIL 3-11**

And there were four men struck with leprosy at the open gate and (1) **they spoke with some sense** [*rma with light*] **each to his fellow “Why are we sitting here until we die?”** If we say **“We will go into the city”** **famine is in the city and we will die there and if we continue to sit here we will also die so let us now go and fall to the host of Syria; if they preserve us alive we will live – if they put us to death we will die.**” And they rose up at twilight and came to the army camp of Syria and they arrived at the limit or boundary of the camp of Syria and behold there was no man there. But the LORD had caused the army of Syria to hear a sound of chariots and a sound of horses – a sound of a great military force and (2) **they said** (*with illumination*) **each man to his neighbour “Behold the king of Israel has hired as mercenaries against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to come down upon us.”** So they rose up and fled in the dusk of twilight and left their tents and horses and asses – they left the camp as it had been and fled for their lives. So these lepers came to the outer limits of the camp and went to one tent and ate and drank and carried off from there silver and gold and clothing and went away and hid the treasure and returned and came to another tent and carried from there and went off and hid it also. (3) **Then each man said (with light) to his neighbour** “We should not be doing this; this day is a day of good news and we are silent; if we keep waiting [*Piel hkj*] till the light of morning evil will come upon us but now come on let us go and tell the house of the king. *The three conversations in this section intimate the wisdom of using natural common sense. The second conversation was based on fear – but the fear had a genuine base though it was miraculous – another of the LORD’S answers to His peoples’ prayers.* So they went and called out at the gate of the city and gave them the news saying “We went to the army camp of Syria and behold there was not a man there – not even the sound of mankind but only the horse tied up and the ass bound and the tents as they were.” And he (one man from the watch) called the gate-keepers and they got the news to the inner *chamber* of the king’s palace. *Clearly the king was still in bed when this report reached him.*

### **THE KING SUSPECTS A MANOUVRE – HE LACKS FAITH 12-16**

Then the king rose up at night and said to his servants **“I will explain to you now what the Syrians are doing to us. They are aware that we are starving and they have left their camp to hide them in the country saying ‘When they issue out of the city we will seize them alive and get in to the city.’”** But one of his servants replied **“Please let them take the remaining five horses that are left in it (Behold they are like the noisy mass of Israel that are left in it (the city) – behold they are like the noisy lot of Israel that are finished – let us send and see.”** But they took two chariot horses and the king sent them off at a gallop after the army of the Syrians saying **“Get going and reconnoitre”** And they pursued them to the Jordan and behold all the way was littered [*literally “full”*] with garments and pots that the Syrians had just thrown away in their alarm or haste so the messengers returned and informed the king. So the people went out and took spoil of the tents of Syria and *it was certainly reality* there was “a seah of wheat for a shekel” and “two seahs of barley for a shekel” according to the word of the LORD.

### **THE DEATH OF THE PROMOTED UNBELIEVING OFFICER 17-20**

And the king made the officer on whose power he depended to take charge of the gate but the people trod him under their feet at the gate and he died just as the man of God declared who made the statement when the king came down to him. *So it was utter reality* exactly as the man of God said to the king **“Two measures of barley for a shekel and a measure of wheat for a shekel will be the price this time tomorrow in the gate of Samaria.”** But the Officer answered the man of God and said **“Behold even if the LORD were making windows in heaven could this word happen?”** But he (Elisha) said **“Behold you will see it with your own eyes but you will not eat from it.”** *Then it happened to him* thus and the people trod upon him in the gate and he died.

*The three lessons readily recognised in this chapter are*

- 1. The need to avail us of the opportunity to escape (eternal) death.*
- 2. The need to flee from the wrath of God*
- 3. The need to share the gospel with others.*

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **THE OUTSTANDING “RESURRECTION” NARRATIVE 1-6**

Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son had been restored to life saying “Rise up and go – you and your house and dwell as a stranger at any place you may be able to sojourn for the LORD has called for a famine and it is going to come to the land over seven years. So the woman rose up and did as the man of God said and she and her house went and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. *And it was reality* at the end of seven years the woman returned from the land of the Philistines and sent to voice her appeal to the king for her house and her land. Then the king talked to Gehazi the servant of the man of God saying “Please reckon up for me all the great things that Elisha has done. *And in reality* he was recounting for the king of the dead who came to life when behold the woman whose son was raised to life cried out to the king for her house and her land and Gehazi said **“My lord O king this is the woman and this is her son whom Elisha brought back to life.”** Then the king himself enquired concerning the woman and she recounted for him and the king provided her one eunuch courtier saying **“Cause all that belongs to her to be returned – the entire property that attaches to her land from the day she departed the land till**

**now.”** *This gracious act of the king meant that all developments on her land would become hers automatically. The story of the “resurrection” was the highlight that Gehazi taught the king. It is remarkable that Gehazi was admitted to the king’s presence at all and even more significant that he spoke of the widow’s son much as Philip spoke of the risen Christ to the Ethiopian. We see latent here the high significance that will attach in God’s dealings to resurrection. All the other stories of Elisha fade into significance in its shadow. This return of the spirit is not to be compared to the resurrection of the body under the NT dispensation – it is akin to that of the widow of Nain’s son and the synagogue ruler’s child and Lazarus indeed but the body was not changed to abide eternally in heavenly places.*

### **ELISHA’S DOUBLE PORTION MINISTRY – SYRIA (PART 2)7-15**

Then Elisha went to Damascus and Benhadad the king of Syria was sick and he was given information saying **“The man of God has come here just in time”** [hnh d[]]. Then the king said to Hazael **“Bring in your hand a present and go call the man of God and inquire of the LORD through him “Shall I survive this illness?”** So Hazael went to meet him and took a gift in his hand of all the best of Damascus carried by forty camels and went and stood before him and said **“Your son Benhadad king of Syria sent me to you saying ‘Will I get better of this illness?’”** Then Elisha said to him **“Go say to him (Qere – the Kethibh is “No!”) ‘It may be you would or should live’ but the LORD has showed me he is dying”** [literally “dying he will die” – i.e. “he will definitely die”] *This statement includes his natural capacity to recover which is the message for Benhadad – but it also includes the full message of Hazael that his heart is known and the regicide he shall commit is known to God. In this case the prophetic reply to Benhadad was kind but only enough to reveal what might happen had not regicide been already contemplated by the king’s commander in chief.*

And he made his face do service and set it unmoved [literally “like an army in array] until he was embarrassed or shamed and the man of God wept. Then Hazael said **“May I know, my lord, why you are weeping?”** And he said **“Because I know what evil you will do to the sons of Israel – you will put their strongholds on fire and you will slaughter their young men with the sword and you will dash to pieces their infants and tear their pregnant women.”** The Hazael said **“But wherefore? Is your servant a dog that he would do this great thing?”** And Elisha said **“The LORD has shown me you will be king of Syria.”** *In 1 Kings 19.16 the LORD bade Elijah anoint Hazael king of Syria but war immediately broke out but Elisha was to be appointed simultaneously as Elijah’s successor and although there were 3 years of uneasy peace with Syria ere Elijah passed over to glory we do not read of the anointing – but now we read of Elisha giving testimony to how Benhadad would die. For the following reason I believe Elijah in the company of Elisha did anoint Hazael.*

*On that earlier occasion in 1 Kings 19 the LORD challenged Elijah to “get going” and “turn” or “return” to his “desert path” to Damascus to anoint Hazael so it is perfectly possible that he took a secluded road and executed this command though scripture does not say so – it simply tells us that Elijah was on his way and that he anointed Elisha en route – though this act involved delay and during that time Benhadad attacked Ahab in Samaria. But significantly another man of God acts in the interim in Israel suggesting that Elijah (and Elisha) is absent. Besides this other man of God informs Ahab he will suffer because he let Benhadad go free “whom he(the LORD) had appointed to utter destruction”. These prophets appear to be acting in*



*cohesion and Micaiah who appears in 1 Kings 22 also is active during the period. The schools of which we read in 2 Kings 2 appear to have been firmly established under Elijah.*

So he left Elisha and went to his master and he said to him **“What did Elisha say to you?”** And he said **“He said to me “To live – you should live!”** *But it was reality* by the time next day came he took a coarse cloth [rbk] and immersed it in water and spread it upon his face and he died and Hazael became king in his place.

#### **JORAM SON OF JEHOSEPHAT KING OF JUDAH 16-19**

And in the fifth year of Joram, son of Ahab king of Israel Jehoshaphat was king of Judah – Joram son of Jehoshaphat reigned as king of Judah. *We are informed by scripture that there was a short condominium until the death of Jehoshaphat who, like David, accomplished an effective hand-over of power.* He became king at thirty two and reigned eight years in Jerusalem. But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel in keeping with what the house of Ahab did, for the daughter of Ahab became his wife, and he did evil in the LORD’S sight. Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah on account of David his servant according to that which he said concerning him to give him a candle light for his sons all their days.

#### **EDOM REVOLTS AGAINST JUDAH 20-24**

In his days Edom rebelled from under the hand or authority of Judah and they set a king over them. Then Joram crossed over to Zair with all his chariots and *it was reality* he rose at night and struck Edom that surrounded him; and the commanders of Edom’s chariots and the people fled to their tents. But Edom continued to revolt from submission to Judah *to this day*. At that time [za] Libnah revolted throughout that long season or period [t[b]. And the rest of the acts of Joram and all that he did are they not written in the book of the days or “Chronicles” of the kings of Judah. So Joram slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David and Ahaziah his son reigned in his place.

#### **THE REIGN OF AHAZIAH OF JUDAH 25-27**

In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab king of Israel Ahaziah son of Jehoram reigned as king of Judah. Ahaziah was twenty two years of age when he began to reign and he ruled one year in Jerusalem, and his mother’s name was Athaliah daughter of Omri king of Israel. *In a second intermarriage of the royal households Ahaziah like his father Jehoram chooses a bride and a princess from royals of Israel.* And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab and did evil in the sight of the LORD in keeping with the house of Ahab for he was son-in-law within the house of Ahab.

#### **AHAZIAH AND JORAM MAKE WAR WITH SYRIA 28-29**

Then Joram son of Ahab went to war with Hazael king of Syria at **Ramoth Gilead** and the Syrians struck Joram. Then King Joram returned to (or through) Jezreel to continue to have healing of the wounds that the Syrians inflicted on him in Ramah or the “high place”...*There need not be any verbal inaccuracy in this detail – the king could not get better in the cold and glaring heat of the high battle zone and so he retired to the valley of Jezreel...* at which place he fought with Hazael King of Syria. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel for he (Joram) was ill. *The two kings met at a valley retreat but shortly divine*

*events and the course of history was to move quickly against them both when Jehu emerges as the LORD'S anointed.*

## CHAPTER 9

### INSTRUCTION FOR THE ANOINTING OF JEHU 1-3

Then Elisha the prophet called for one from the sons of the prophets and said to him **“Gird up your loins and take this flask of oil in your hand and go to Ramoth Gilead. And when you arrive there look out there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi and go and cause him to rise from among his brothers and cause him to go adorned with honour into a chamber. Then take the flask of oil and pour on his head and say “Thus says the LORD ‘I have anointed you king over Israel’”** and open the door and shoot off and do not continue to wait.

*There are a number of apparent coincidences in the books of kings. They all show how intimately the LORD is involved in Israel's history and convening significant events. Here are a few I have observed:*

- 1 When Naaman contracted leprosy the Hebrew maid was at the ready to give advice*
- 2 When the women hid her son to save him the Syrians flee in the morning*
- 3 When Gehazi is relating about the rising of the child his mother & he arrive at the palace*
- 4 When Benhadad is sick Elisha is on hand*
- 5 When Samaria is besieged the heavenly chariots are there*
- 6 When the prophet reaches Ramoth Jehu is to be there.*

### THE YOUNG PROPHET EXECUTES HIS VITAL MISSION 4-10

*The unnamed prophet schooled under Elijah and Elisha [the prophets were named “sons of the prophets (**Elijah and Elisha**)”] spelt out the line the new king was to take spiritually in no uncertain terms. This would clearly be Elisha's view and God's will besides.*

*So the young man – the young prophet went to Ramoth Gilead. This had been a war zone of late and Jehu was clearly the army commander of Jehoram and must have achieved success against Syria for he was still in the field. He had done all and was standing as Paul tells us in Ephesians the victorious saint will do [Eph.6.13]*

*And when he came the captains of the army were sitting deliberating.*

*And he said “There is a matter for me to you, (plural) O commander!” And Jehu said “Unto whom from all of us?” The reason for this question appears to be that the captains to date were “brethren” as Elisha said and the young prophet made his call particular but added no name. He was looking for the LORD to prompt the one who would take the lead – and it was Jehu. The action was confirmation of the call of God – **the man himself was ready to take the lead.** It is even so with church leadership – those the LORD would have are those so often already doing the work and evidencing their capacity to lead. Then he [the prophet] said “To you (which transliterates ELECH “to you” and is singular) the commander!” (Namely the one who had just spoken). The Hebrew text in the form of address has the prophet uttering the same word which is singular in both cases in both Hebrew and our English translations.*

*Then he (Jehu) arose and went into the house and he (the prophet) poured the oil upon his head and said to him **“Thus says the LORD God of Israel ‘I have anointed you to rule as king over the people of the LORD – over Israel. And I will cause you to smite and vanquish the house of Ahab your master and I will continually myself avenge the blood of my servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of the LORD from the hand of Jezebel for the entire house of Ahab will perish and***

**I will cause him that lets out water against the wall to be cut off from Ahab and him that is ruling [rz[] and left in Israel. So I will hand out recompense to the house of Ahab as to the house of Jereboam the son of Nebat and as to Baasha son of Ahijah. And the dogs shall consume Jezebel in the portion of land at Jezreel and there will be no-one burying her.”** Then he opened the door and bolted off. *Jehu was left with most fragrant oil all over his head and some very revolutionary ideas to mull over and eventually effect. He must have been a rather dramatic entrance when he resumed the army command session – this time as Israel’s king. Scarcely ever was monarch appointed in a more clandestine manner.*

### **JEHU’S SHORT REGIME OF SUMMARY JUSTICE 11-26**

Then Jehu went out to the servants of his lord and they said to him **“Is it well with you? May we know why this impetuous maddened person [ [gvm] came to you?”** *This last word “to you” was used for the third time emphasising that there was a very ostensible message for Jehu.*

Then he said “You are well aware of the man and his purpose [jyv]. But they said **“It is in vain deceit or a violation of covenant”** *They were insisting that Jehu was being disloyal if he played at being king! “Please explain to us!”* Then he said “In this fashion and that **he spoke with revelation** to me saying **“Thus says the LORD ‘I have anointed you king over Israel.’”** Then hurried or acted with impetuous speed [rhm] and took each man his cloak and put it under him on the steps of the house and blew a blast on the shophar and said “Jehu is king!” *The moment of anointing was highly significant for the meeting then convened was clearly an army counsel and well capable of carrying off a national coup against the king. The haste with which they acted recognised the fact that Jehu did not stomach delay.*

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **JEHU MAKES AHAB’S FAMILY COWER AND SUBMIT 1-10**

So Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. *Scripture tells us that sons contest with the enemy at the gate so Ahab might have developed an awesome power base in Israel’s capitol provided his sons when grown did not quarrel or scheme but draconian measures were now being contemplated by Jehu which would wipe out this potential dynasty before it emerged.* Then Jehu wrote letters and sent to Samaria to the commanders of Jezreel... *The Jezreel valley was a field of waving crops and it was called “the sowing” or “cropping”. This went for Samaria itself which was surrounded by vegetable gardens and was a most productive area. The valley was also traversed by traffic and chariots and is ear-marked by scripture as the valley of the third world war – the Armageddon...* to the elders and those trusted by Ahab saying **“Even now as this letter arrives with you as you have with you your master’s sons and chariots and horses and a garrison city and the arsenal also look for the best one and the straightest one among the sons of your master and set him on the throne of his father and fight for the palace of your master!”** But they feared more and more and said **“Behold, two kings could not stand before him and how will we stand?”** They who were in charge of the palace and in charge of the city and the elders and the family carers & providers sent saying **“We are your servants and all that you say to us we will do. We will not make a king. Do what is best in your eyes.”** So he wrote a second letter to them saying **“If you are for me and obedient to my voice take the heads of the men –your master’s sons – and arrive with me at this time tomorrow at Jezreel.”** But the seventy men – sons of the king – were with the great men of the city that raised them. *And the reality was*

as the letter came to them they even took the sons of the king and slaughtered [fj v] seventy men and put their heads in *cauldrons or baskets*[*and the word speaks of "that in which things shake about" but it also speaks of "the disturbance of love"*]and sent them to Jezreel hastily.

### **JEHU PRONOUNCES GOD'S WORD ESTABLISHED 8-11**

So the messenger came and informed him saying "They have brought the heads of the sons of the king" and he said "Put them in two heaps by the city gate until the morning. *And the reality was* he went out and stood and said to all the people "**You are righteous – look it is I that created a conspiracy against my master and slew him but who struck down all these? Be certain now that nothing from the promised word of the LORD that the LORD spoke over the house of Ahab will fall to earth and the LORD will do that which he promised by the hand of His servant Elijah.**" Then Jehu struck all the remainder of the house of Ahab in Jezreel and all the great men and his (Ahab's) acquaintance and his priests until there was no remnant that escaped.

### **JEHU SLAYS AHAZIAH'S FAMILY TOO 12-14**

And He arose and went out and as he was going to Samaria he was at the house where the shepherds bring their sheep along the way. And he found the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah and said "**Who are you?**" and they said "**We are the brothers of Ahaziah and we are going down to greet the sons of the king and the sons of the queen.**" Then he said "**Seize them alive**" and they seized them alive and slaughtered them at the pit of the house of binding *of the sheep* –forty two men and not one man escaped.

*The royal children of both houses were building friendships. This fraternising would appear to Jehu to further promote the evil practices of Jezebel. Jehu's unwillingness to compromise with any idolatry or the merest hint of it led to mass killing. This wholesale slaughter is allied to the slaughter of sheep by the ironic connection with the house of binding sheep.*

### **JEHU MEETS JONADAB THE KENITE 15-17**

Then he left there and came upon Jonadab son of Rechab approaching him and he blessed or greeted him and said to him "**Is your heart right with me as my heart is with your heart?**" *The expression is more than "Are we still buddies?" It means something like "Do you consent to what I am doing and to my rise to power under God? And he (Jonadab) said "It (my heart) stands with you" [vj] "So it is – give me your hand!"(Jehu) And he gave his hand. And He (Jehu) drew him up into his chariot. Then he said "Come with me and see my zeal for the LORD through or fully expressed"* and he rode with him in his chariot. Then he came to Samaria and struck all that remained who belonged to Ahab in Samaria until he laid him in ruins according to the word that he (the LORD) spoke to Elijah.

### **JEHU DESTROYS ALL VESTIGE OF BAAL 18-28**

Then Jehu assembled all the people and said to them "**Ahab served Baal a little; Jehu will serve him to the greatest of his ability**" "**And now call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants and all his priests – not a man shall be missing – for I have a great sacrifice for Baal – any that is missing shall not live.**" But Jehu executed with insidious craft in order to destroy the servants of Baal. So Jehu said "**Sanctify a solemn gathering for Baal**" and they called it.

Then Jehu sent hastily throughout Israel and all the servants of Baal came and there was not a man missing that did not come and they came to the house of Baal and the house of Baal was full from one corner to the other. Then he said to the official that was in charge of the wardrobe [j t/] **“Bring out the robes for all the servants of Baal”** and he brought the vestment for them. Then Jehu and Jonadab the son of Rechab went into the house of Baal and said to the servants of Baal **“Investigate and see if there is not one or other of the servants of the LORD but if we have only the servants of Baal.”**

So they went in to offer bloodless offerings and burnt offerings and there were there in the courtyard 80 men and he said **“The man who allows men that I have brought within your power to slip away his life will be for his (that man’s) life.”**

*And it was a reality* as he finished offering the burnt offering Jehu said to the courtiers or smart workers and the ranking officers or charioteers **“Go, slay them and not one man shall get away and they smote with the edge of the sword”** and the swift runners and officers overthrew them – then they went to the city of Baal. Then they brought out the images of the house of Baal and burned them.

Then they broke down the image of Baal and the house of Baal and made it a house of dung to this day. So Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel.

#### **JEHU OF ISRAEL SUBSTITUTES THE GOLDEN CALF FOR BAAL 29-31**

Jehu certainly did not cease from following the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat that he caused Israel to sin – the calves of gold that were at Bethel and Dan. But the LORD said to Jehu **“Because you have done well to act straight or just in my eyes as to doing all that was in my heart to the house of Ahab. Your sons for four generations shall sit on the throne of Israel.”** But Jehu did not keep walking in the law of the LORD the God of Israel with all his heart... He did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam that he caused Israel to sin.

#### **THE LORD GAVE ISRAEL FOUR MORE KINGS OUT OF HIS LONGSUFFERING 32-36**

In those days the LORD delayed or writhed [l wj] to bring Israel to an end [hxq] and Hazael struck throughout all Israel’s borders from the Jordan and from the sunrise – the whole land of Gilead, the Gadites and Reubenites and the people Manasseh from Aroer that is by the River Arnon – both Gilead and Bashan. And the remainder of the deeds of Jehu and all that he undertook and all his valiant prowess are these not written in the book of the Acts of the days of the Kings of Israel? So Jehu slept with his fathers and he was buried in Samaria and Jehoahaz his son ruled in his place. And the days that Jehu was king over Israel in Samaria were twenty eight years. *Before Menahem who came under Pul’s Assyrian taxation there was just one month of Shallum’s rule in the north. The LORD essentially allowed only 4 further strong kings to rule in the north. By 748 and the end of Zechariah’s rule Israel’s resistance to foreign powers was at an end. The final 31 years of her history were years of subjugation and spiritual disaffection from the faith of her forefathers.*

### **CHAPTER 11**

#### **JOASH LIVES IN THE TEMPLE PRECINCTS 1-3**

But Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah when she saw that her son was dead arose and destroyed all the seed of the kingdom. But Jehosheba, daughter of King Joram sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah and carried him away *as a thief would do* from among the sons of the king that had been killed and they hid him with his nurse that

fed him in a chamber of the dead bodies or biers from the face of Athaliah but he was not killed or dead. *And it was reality* he was with her **in the house of the LORD** concealed *as if dead [abj tm]* for six years when Athaliah was ruling over the land. *The priesthood at this point acted with Jehosheba to preserve the royal line and thus was fulfilled the word of the LORD to Jehu.*

#### **JOASH IS PRESERVED AND CROWNED OVER ISRAEL 4-12**

Then on the seventh year Jehoiada sent and took the captains of hundreds belonging to the bodyguard [r#wk] and the runners or footmen and brought them to him to the house of the LORD and showed them the king's son. And he (the priest) commanded them saying **“This is the action you shall take – a third of you will come on the Sabbath and watch the gate of the king. Then the third will be at the gate of Sur or “approach” and a third at the gate behind the horsemen-messengers also keeping watch of the house of the relieving or changing of the guard.”** *Jehoiada was making sure that there was an around-the-clock guard on the young monarch. He ensured double vigilance at the change of guard. “So two companies from you all shall go out on the Sabbath and continually watch the house of the LORD on account of the king. And you shall cause a regular drill around the king each man with his weapon in hand and he who comes to the suite of chambers or the row of soldiers shall die and you will be by the king when he goes out and comes in.”* So the captains of hundreds met with all the orders of Jehoiada the high-priest and each man took his soldiers due to come on the Sabbath with those who went off *guard on the Sabbath* and came to Jehoiada the high-priest. And the high-priest gave the captains of hundreds the spears and shields of David that were in the house of the LORD. And the guards stood on duty each man with his weapon in his hand from the right wing of the house of the LORD to the left wing by the altar of the house around the king. *The description shows that the king was dwelling in the courtyard in the perfectly suitable accommodation that lay around the court of the priests. Thus Joash over six whole years obtained a devout impression of the religion of Israel. He dwelt even more regularly than David at the temple and his experience to a degree paralleled that of Samuel. Surely with the guidance of this great high priest and this personal experience something special might be expected during the reign of this young monarch.*

Then he(Jehoiada) brought the king's son out and provided upon him the crown or diadem and provided the witness or testimonies [twd[ – *the will of God written in the law which was given to each successive king in the theocracy*] so they made him ruler and anointed him and clapped and said **“He will be the king”**.

#### **THE DEATH OF ATHALIAH 13-16**

But Athaliah heard the voice of the guards of the people and she came to the people at the house of the LORD. And she looked and behold the king was standing at the pillar as met with the usage and the commanders and the trumpeters beside the king and all the people of the land rejoiced and the trumpeters sounded but Athaliah shred her robe and called out **“Conspiracy, conspiracy”** Then Jehoiada the high-priest gave command to the captains of hundreds the chief officers of the military and said to them **“Cause her to be taken out of the house to the arrayed guard and he that goes after her kill with the sword”** for the high-priest said **“She is not to be killed in the house of the living LORD”** *By definition God is the “living one” and His courts signify life-giving not death dealing for man – through the sacrifice and offering that mirrors the atonement of Christ. The high-priest would not suffer death*

*within these courts. So they laid hands on her and brought her by way of the horse gate of the house of the king and killed her there.*

### **JOASH INSTALLED IN THE PALACE AT SEVEN YEARS OF AGE 17-21**

Then Jehoiada cut a covenant agreement between the LORD and the people to be a people for the LORD and also between the king and the people. Then all the common people went into the house of Baal and tore it down [ztn] they broke in bits his altars and his shadowy images right well or *to God's pleasure [bfy]*. They slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars and the high priest set officers over the house of the LORD. Then he took the captains of hundreds, the commanders, the guards and all the common people of the land and brought down the king from the house of the LORD and they came by way of the gate of the guards of the house of the king and he (Joash) sat on the throne of kings. Then all the people of the land were radiant with joy and the city was undisturbed and free and they put Athaliah to death with the sword at the house of the king. *The king was finally installed in his palace where he was to reign for forty years and supervise a significant turning to God in the nation. Unlike Eli Jehoiada proved a worthy leader and his protégé Joash like Samuel was raised up to be a blessing to the nation. Like the British queen Victoria who came early to the throne he had a sound faith in God and was set to establish righteous rule.*

## **CHAPTER 12**

### **JEHOASH OF JUDAH DIRECTED BY TORAH 1-4**

At his kingship Jehoash was a boy of **seven** years of age. In year **seven** of Jehu Jehoash reigned and he ruled forty years in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Zibiah from Beersheba (the well of “**seven**”). *The triple seven reference in these verses acts like a prophecy or omen of good. This reign will make good reading. With approval of the Jeremaic hand in this book goes the strong rating that must attach to the young man trained by a priest and accustomed to Torah.*

And Jehoash did right or straight in the eyes of the LORD all the days that Jehoiada the high priest caused him **to be directed** by Torah. *Torah is dynamic – it was given so that the nation and its people could face the future with God.* Except the high places were not removed [r#S removed as a “ring taken from the finger” i.e. ending the covenant with evil]. The people were still offering sacrifice and incense at the high places.

### **TEMPLE REPAIRS BEGIN 5-12**

Then Jehoash said to the priests “**All the consecrated silver or money that has been brought to the house of the LORD – the money of each man that passes (the treasury or box at the entrance of the temple) – the money estimated [jr[ “determined “ and heaped up over time ] given by living souls (i.e. the temple tax) – all the money that mounts up as an offering in the heart of each man to bring to the house of the LORD – let the priests each take from his brothers or near acquaintance and let them strengthen the cracks in the house in every place they find a crack” [i.e. “as repair is needed”].** *But it was reality* in the twenty third year of king Jehoash the priests had not strengthened the broken and cracked parts of the house. *The king had been on the throne 23 or as some estimate 16 years [including the years of his infancy] but nothing had been attempted. Serious turpitude had prevailed. The inactivity was quite a concern. Jehoiada was indeed waxing old but let us ever respect him—it was so unlike him! He is known to have lived to 130 and been buried among the kings as a tribute to his leadership.* So king Jehoash called Jehoiada

the high priest and the priests and said to them **“Why are you not repairing the broken parts of the house? Now you shall not receive money from your near acquaintance but hand it over for the damage to the house.”** So the priests said they would not take money from the people but neither would they repair the damage to the house. Then Jehoiada the high priest got a single chest and marked out and bored a hole in it’s panel or door and placed it near the altar on the right side when men come to the house of the LORD and the priests that watched over the door admissions or the laver [ps] put all the money that was brought to the house of the LORD in there. *This was the first offering box and the practice of freewill offering of this sort persisted until the time of Christ. It is thought in NT times that the box had a curled trumpet like funnel extending upwards along which large givings rattled to the intense pleasure of “big givers”.*

***And it was the reality that*** as they saw that there was a large amount of money in the chest the scribe of the king and **the high priest** went up and bound or bagged and weighed the money that was found in the house of the LORD. *This noteworthy reference to the “High Priest” is rare in early Hebrew literature – but since this term is used in Leviticus there is no reason why it could not be used at any time.* Then they gave the money that was weighed or counted to the hands of those that undertook the work-surveyors or **visiting reviewers** of the house of the LORD and they paid it to the carpenters and builders that worked in the house of the LORD. They also paid the wall builders [rdg literally “wallers” or “fence builders” from the idea of building a “sheepfold” – the so-called “masons” of the English text] and “stone hewers” to buy timber and hewed or dressed stone to strengthen or repair the broken areas of the house of the LORD and for all the out-goings toward repair of the house.

### **SLIPSHOD METHODS AND PROVISIONING 13-16**

Only there were no dishes of silver, snuffers or sprinkling basins or trumpets or any vessels of silver or gold made from all the money that was brought to the house of the LORD. But they gave it to see who undertook the work and with it strengthened and repaired the house of the LORD. *This express regret suggests that the construction workers were far overpaid and no provision was made for the replacement of vessels given by Solomon which were now 200 years old.* Besides they did not think about the men to whose hands they gave the money to pay those who did the work for they (the clerical officials) worked faithfully *unpaid*. The trespass money and money for sin against the law was not coming into the house of the LORD – it became priestly stipend.

### **JEHOASH OF JUDAH PAYS OFF HAZAEL 17-18**

Then Hazael king of Syria went to war against Gath and captured it and Hazael set his face to go up against Jerusalem. But Jehoash king of Judah took all the consecrated things that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah had set apart besides his own consecrated things and all the gold found among the treasures of the house of the LORD and the house of the king and sent them forthwith to Hazael king of Syria and he went up from against Jerusalem.

### **JEHOASH IS MURDERED 19-21**

And the remainder of the actions of Jehoash and everything he undertook are these not written in the book of the Acts of the days of the kings of Judah? But his servants arose and promoted a conspiracy and slew Jehoash at the house of Millo as he was going down [“in the going down”] to Sila. *It appears the king was proceeding along*



*the way on the route to Siloam when he was killed at the Akra or munitions tower. Then his servants Jozachar son of Shimeah and Jehozabad son of Shemer struck him and he died and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David and Amaziah his son became king in his place. We find the king going towards the hospital-cum-spa of Siloam in his last day – for in Chronicles he is said to have been slain “on his bed”. His cruel act of slaying the son of Jehoiada crowned his defection from the principles that guided his youthful reign. He must have cast off the restraint of the high priest and the priest for their part cared little for him. Zechariah died calling for the requital of his blood which recompense issued in the death of the King. This unsavoury story is written in 2Chronicles 24 15-22. Jehoash became an uncaring forgetful and thankless monarch and in his latter day was afflicted with a malady in his feet. (a)The prophet Jehoash killed and (b) the prophet of Zechariah 1 who is the son of Iddo and (c) Zechariah the son of Berechiah of NT fame who died in the Temple of the LORD – these three pose one of the questions people ask about the OT. To compare Zechariah 1.1 with 2Chronicles 24.21 with Matthew 23.35 and Luke 11.51 is to see the spectre of as many as three prophets in the same case. Some, on the basis of the data—two men of the same name – both were prophets – both were murdered in the temple—understandably give it as their view that copyists of the NT texts which refer to the murder of Zechariah got it wrong and argue that the received text confuses the two men. It would be truly curious if Matthew himself were to make such a basic error. I think, myself, that **if the two are one** the linguistics offer a better explanation – that Zechariah is called the “blessed one” or “son of blessing” which latter expression may have passed for a surname – and it may well be that the family name derives from Iddo the seer and writer 2Chronicles 12.15 & 13.22*

## **CHAPTER 13**

### **THE DOUBLE FAILURE OF JEHOAHAZ OF ISRAEL 1-2**

In year twenty three of Joash son of Ahaziah king of Judah Jehoahaz son of Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria; *he reigned* seven years. But he did evil in the eyes of the LORD and walked after the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat that plunged Israel into sin [hv[ literally “undertook” or “offered to”]. But He (Jehoahaz) did not depart from that. *The LORD’S judgment has respect to our spiritual decisions. Like Jehoahaz we may stay with the moral evil of past days and fall under judgment or we may compound this sin when we are shown the way of righteousness and fail to take a decision to repent and amend our ways.*

### **ONE BRIGHT MOMENT IN JEHOAHAZ REIGN 3-7**

So the anger of the LORD became hot against Israel and he gave them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria and into the hand of Hadad son of Hazael all their days. But Jehoahaz continually supplicated or exhausted [hlj literally “made the LORD sick” with asking] the face of LORD and the LORD heard him because he saw the pressure on Israel for the king of Syria did distress them. Then the LORD gave to Israel a “saviour” [We are reminded of the LORD’S dealing in the days of the judges when He promoted an “anointed” [yvmm] warrior whose valiant acts brought the nation out from under a foreign yoke.] and the sons of Israel went out from under the Syrian power and could live in tents as in bygone days. But they did not truly depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam that made Israel sin and he also walked in it and in addition the Asherah groves remained in service [dm[ “stood to minister”] in Samaria. For this reason He did not leave a remnant of the people of Judah but merely

fifty horsemen and ten chariots and 10,000 foot-soldiers for the king of Syria laid them waste and made them as the dust of threshing.

#### **FOR REFERENCE ON JEHOAHAZ 8-9**

The remaining acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did and his way as a warrior are they not written in the book of the acts of the days of the kings (Chronicles) of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers and they buried him in Samaria and his son Joash ruled in his place.

#### **JOASH OF JUDAH 10-13**

In year thirty seven of the reign of Joash king of Judah Jehoash king of Israel son of Jehoahaz reigned over Israel in Samaria: he reigned sixteen years. But he did evil in the sight of the LORD and did not leave off the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat that plunged Israel into sin: he walked in that way. And the remainder of the actions of Joash and all that he did and his warrior prowess with which he fought with Amaziah king of Judah are these not written in the book of the acts of the kings of Israel. And Joash slept with his fathers and Jeroboam sat on his throne and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

#### **ELISHA AND JOASH OF ISRAEL 14-19**

And Elisha was weak pained or grieved by his illness of which he died. And Joash king of Israel went down to him and wept upon his face and said **“My father, my father the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!”** But Elisha said to him **“Take a bow and take arrows with it”** and he got a bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel **“Bend and stretch your arm on the bow”** and he bent his arm. Then Elisha positioned his hand upon the arm of the king. And he said **“Open the window to the east”** and he opened it. And Elisha said **“Shoot”** and he shot. And Elisha said **“The arrow of the LORD’S salvation – the arrow of salvation from Syria for he shall strike Syria at Aphek till it is exhausted.”** Then he said **“Take arrows”** and the king of Israel took them. And he said to the king of Israel **“Cause a smiting on the land”** and he struck three times and stopped still. Then the man of God was provoked to anger with him and said **“To smite him five or six times then you would have smote Syria until it was finished off but now you will strike Aram but three times.”**

#### **THE MIRACLE OF REVIVAL 20-21**

*The subsequent unique miracle of revival of life by contact with Elisha is of itself factual but it is also prophetic of the ministry of Christ and the New Testament under which the doctrine of the resurrection from among the dead becomes a cardinal doctrine and a crux of the message of life in Jesus.*

Then Elisha died and they buried him. And troops of Moabites entered the land as the year began. *And it was a reality* that these were burying a man and behold they saw the band of men and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha and the man would go or walk and strike the bones of Elisha [ [gn] *and it was reality* he rose upon his feet. *We are not told more of this man but we are to understand from the writer that the sort of life that Abraham believed in and that Ezekiel wrote about and Daniel contemplated are signalled in this event that stands alongside the revelation of God to Elijah at Horeb. Thus the prophets Moses, Elijah, Elisha and Jeremiah (who is credited with writing Kings) were convinced of the vital nature of resurrection.*

## **JEHOAHAZ DEFEATS HAZAEL ACCORDING TO PROPHECY 22-25**

Then Hazael king of Syria afflicted Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. But the LORD showed grace to them and Had mercy on them and turned his face upon them because of the covenant with Abraham Isaac and Jacob and He was not willing or desirous [*hba*] to destroy them **and he would not cause them to be sent from His face until now or hitherto** [*ht*] [*hd*] & [*d*] *share significations ranging from “still” or “meantime” to “now” or “for perpetuity” though by far and away its most frequent meaning is “now”- so the desire of the LORD was to keep them safe as long as ever possible but the mighty “now” here spells the fulfilling of prophecy on Jehu’s house and also the margins of captivity and the era of Jeremiah!]* Then Hazael king of Syria died and Ben-Hadad his son became king in his place. And Joash son of Jehoahaz recovered the cities which Hazael had captured from the hand of his father Jehoahaz his father through war. Three times Joash struck him and recaptured Israel’s cities.

## **CHAPTER 14**

### **AMAZIAH OF JUDAH NOT UNCA-GOOD 1-4**

In year two of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah took that rule as king. He was twenty five years of age when he became king and ruled twenty nine years in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem. And he did the right in the LORD’S eyes save that it was not as David his forefather did – it was like Joash his father did. The exception was the high places were not removed – the people were still continuing to offer sacrifice and incense at the high places. *The example of Joash was embedded in his son – and as to what role his mother played in his upbringing and by way of influence we know little – except that she was a local Jewess brought up in the faith. Her name “The LORD’S delight” suggests she was from a good family.*

### **AMAZIAH FOLLOWED THE TORAH AND SUBDUED EDOM 5-7**

*And the reality was* according to the strengthening of the kingdom in his hand he struck the servants that killed his father the king. But he did not put to death the sons of the murderers as it is written in the book of the torah of Moses where the LORD gives commandment saying **“The fathers shall not die for the sons or the sons for the fathers – a man shall die alone for his sins.”** He struck ten thousand men of Edom in the valley of Salt and captured Sela in battle and called it by the name Jakteel [*“captured by God”*] *until this day*. *The two noteworthy things about this king were his giving place to the Word of God and his concern for the glory of the LORD.*

### **AMAZIAH CALLS ISRAEL TO WAR 8-14**

*The act of promoting internecine war was denounced by earlier prophets. The nations should not pick quarrels with itself as a people under God – even when divided. Amaziah violated this principle.*

Then Amaziah posted messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu king of Israel saying **“Come and let us have a face-up.”** And Jehoash king of Israel posted Amaziah the king of Judah saying **“The thorn that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon saying ‘Give your daughter to my son as a wife – but a beast of the field that lives in Lebanon passed and trampled down the thistle. You have eventually struck Edom and your heart is lifted up in pride. Be respected or honoured and return to your palace and why should you have been**

**getting excited or contending for a calamity so that you should fall and Judah with you?”** But Amaziah would not listen so Jehoash the king of Israel went up and Amaziah and he (*Jehoash*) looked Amaziah king of Judah in the face at Bethshemesh that belongs to Judah. But Judah was driven back and distressed before the face of Israel and fled every man to his tent. And Jehoash king of Israel captured Amaziah son of Jehoash son of Ahaziah king of Judah at Bethshemesh and proceeded to Jerusalem and thoroughly broke down the walls of Jerusalem from the Ephraim gate to the Corner gate – 400 cubits. And he laid hands on all the gold and silver and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD and the treasure stores of the palace of the king; then he took hostages and returned to Samaria.

### **JEHOASH OF ISRAEL DIES 15-16**

And the remainder of the acts of Jehoash that he did and his prowess and how he warred with Amaziah king of Judah are these not written in the book of the Acts of the days of the kings of Israel? So Jehoash lay down with his fathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel and Jeroboam his son ruled in his place.

### **AMAZIAH OF JUDAH 17-20**

*And it was reality* Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah lived 15 years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel. And the remainder of the acts of Amaziah are these not written in the book of the Acts of the days of the kings of Judah? Though they conspired against him in Jerusalem but he fled to Lachish: then they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. Then they carried him back on horses and buried him with his fathers in the city of David.

### **AZARIAH THE 16 YEAR OLD KING OF JUDAH 21-22**

Then all the people of Judah took Azariah and he was 16 years of age and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. He built Elath (Eilat) and restored it to Judah after the laying to rest of the king with his fathers.

### **THE REIGN OF JEROBOAM THE SECOND OF ISRAEL 23-29**

And in year fifteen of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah king Jeroboam son of Joash became king of Israel for forty one years. But he did evil in the sight of the LORD and did not turn from all the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat that he caused Israel to sin. He restored the border of Israel from the entering in of Hamath to the sea of the Arabah according to the word of the LORD God of Israel that He spoke by the hand of his servant Jonah son of Amittai – the prophet that was from Gath Hopher [*“the winepress by the well”*]. *The honourable mention of Jonah – the famous prophet of Nineveh ensures his right to prophetic status by issuing the word of the LORD in Israel itself.* For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel was very bitter – the extremity of restraint and vexation and the extremity of desertion and there was none to help Israel. But the LORD did not say He would wipe out or destroy the name of Israel from under heaven but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Joash. And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam and all that he did and his prowess with which he made war and how he took back Damascus and Hamath that was Judah’s for Israel are they not written in the book of the acts of the days of the kings of Israel. So Jeroboam slept with his fathers – with the kings of Israel and Zechariah his son ruled in his place.

## CHAPTER 15

### AMAZIAH OF JUDAH THE LONG LIVED LEPROUS KING 1-7

In the year twenty seven of Jeroboam king of Israel, king Azariah son of Amaziah began to rule Judah. He was sixteen years of age with his kingship and ruled for **fifty two years** in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Jeholiah [*“one to whom the LORD has shown his might”*] from Jerusalem. **And he did the right in the eyes of the LORD in keeping with all that Amaziah his father did.** The exception was the high places – they were not removed – the people still sacrificed and offered incense at the high places. **Then the LORD struck the king and *he really lived as a scabby leper until the day he died so he lived in a secret house*** [*literally “one that had to be sought”*] and Joram the king’s son was in charge of the house delivering justice for the people of the land. And the remaining acts of Azariah and all that he undertook are these not written in the book of the Acts of the days of the kings of Judah? So Azariah slept with his fathers and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David and Jotham his son reigned in his place. *We are not given a reason why this good king was struck with leprosy and had to live apart from his people. There are some things in life we will find unfathomable until the whole canvas of life is revealed by the LORD.*

### ZACHARIAH OF JUDAH WHO WAS KILLED BY CONSPIRACY 8-12

In year thirty eight of Azariah King of Judah, Zachariah son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in Samaria *reigning* six months. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD in keeping with what his fathers did – he did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat who promoted sin in Israel. Then Shallum son of Jabesh raised a conspiracy against him in front of the people and put him to death and reigned in his place. And the remaining acts of Zachariah, **behold they are written** in the book of the Acts of the days of the kings of Israel. This is the word of the LORD enacted [*rbd*] that He spoke to Jehu saying **“Four of your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel.”** So *it became a reality.*

### SHALLUM OF ISRAEL DIES IN AN ASSAULT AFTER ONE MONTH 13-15

Shallum the son of Jabesh began to rule in year thirty nine of Zachariah king of Judah and he reigned a full month in Samaria. Then Menahem the son of Gadi went up from Tirzah and arrived in Samaria and struck Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him and ruled in his place. And the remaining acts of Shallum and his conspiracy that he mounted, **behold they are written** in the book of the days of the kings of Israel [*Chronicles*]! *The idiom “Are they not written” is forsaken in respect of the last two reigns in favour of “Behold they are written” so that we may rightly view the evil and poverty of the leadership of these monarchs. In the divine judgment the works of evil men are truly written and will come forth as the base of their condemnation at the Great White Throne of the lamb.*

### THE STORY OF MENAHEM OF ISRAEL 16-20

Then Menahem struck Tipsah [*The city lay on the northern slopes of the tributary source of the Euphrates just 70 miles south of Harran and within the realm of influence of Assyria – he was twisting the lion’s tail*] and all within it and its borders from Tirzah because they did not open *their gates* to him and laid open all the pregnant women. In year thirty nine of Azariah King of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi commenced his reign over Israel, and ruled ten years in Samaria. But he did evil in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat who

promoted sin in Israel **all his days**. *This little phrase is missing from the A.V.* And Pul king of Assyria came upon the land but he gave a gift to Pul of **1000 cor of silver** [*just under 70 ton of silver*] in order that his arm might be associated with him to strengthen his kingdom by his power. And Menahem caused the silver or money over all Israel to be exacted from all the very wealthy men to be given to the king of Assyria – fifty shekels from each single man [*550 grams worth*] – and the king of Assyria returned and did not remain there in the land.

#### **FOR FURTHER REFERENCE ON MENAHEM 21-22**

And the rest of the acts of Menahem and the entirety of his doings are these not written in the book of the Acts of the days of the kings of Israel? And Menahem rested with his fathers and Pekahiah his son became king in his place. *The emergence of the threat from Assyria is staved off by Menahem with money. He weakens his wealthy men and pays off the encroaching Assyrians.*

#### **THE STORY OF PEKAHIAH OF SAMARIA 23-26**

In year fifty of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah son of Menahem reigned over Israel in Samaria two years. And he did evil in the eyes of the LORD for he did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat who promoted sin in Israel. Then Pekah the son of Remaliah – a group-captain of his conspired against him and struck him in Samaria in the citadel of the palace [*mmra*] of the king with Argob and Arieah and fifty men of the sons of Gilead and he killed him and became king in his place. And the remaining deeds of Pekahiah and all that he did, behold they are written in the book of the days of the kings of Israel.

#### **PEKAH'S RULE IN SAMARIA 27-30**

In year fifty two of Azariah King of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah became king of Israel in Samaria for ten years. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD and did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat who promoted sin in Israel. In the days of Pekah king of Israel Tiglath Pileser came and captured Ijon and Abel Beth Maachah and Janoah and Kedesh and Hazor and Gilead and Galilee – all the land of Naphtali and carried captives to Assyria. But Hoshea son of Elah revolted against Pekah son of Remaliah and struck him and killed him and became king in his place in year twenty of Jotham son of Uzziah.

#### **PEKAH'S CHRONICLE 31**

And the remainder of the acts of Pekah and all that he did, behold they are written in the book of The Acts of the days of the kings of Israel.

#### **JOTHAM OF JUDAH 32-34**

In year two of Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel Jotham son of Uzziah became king of Judah. He was a man of twenty five years when he became ruler and he was king for sixteen years in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Jerusha daughter of Zadok. And he did right in the eyes of the LORD in concert with all that Azariah his father did.

#### **THE HIGH PLACES STILL RESIST REFORM 35**

The exception was that the high places were not taken away – the people still sacrificed and offered incense at the high places. He built the **loftiest gate** of the house of the LORD.

*Jotham erected a gate of greater dimension – a sign of his attention to the temple and desire that his people should worship God. Jotham was co-regent with Uzziah and began to reign circa 750BC when his father became a leper. His zeal for God was unabated despite the breach upon his father on account of his impertinence to act as a priest whilst reigning as king. The book of Chronicles tells of his subduing of the Ammonites.*

### **JOTHAM'S CHRONICLE 36-38**

And the rest of the acts of Jotham that he did are these not written in the book of the Acts of the days of the kings of Judah? In those days the LORD began to send Rezin king of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah into Judah. So Jotham lay down to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father. And Ahaz his son reigned in his place.

### **GENERAL NOTE**

*The citations concerning the monarchs of Judah and Israel are clipped and of a highly standardised sort. Information is limited and reference is made in each instance to the book of Chronicles. The persistent problem of idolatry runs on without hindrance fostered by the worship of the high places which must have diverted huge numbers of the people to obtain such profile. Idolatry and the predominance of the Jeroboam lifestyle was increasingly falling under divine corrective judgment and the more serious retributive judgment of the captivity was drawing evidently closer as Assyrian begins to encroach and is paid of in goods and currency by both Judah and Israel.*

### **CHAPTER 16**

#### **AHAZ OF JUDAH DOES EVIL 1-4**

In year seventeen of Pekah son of Remaliah Ahaz son of Jotham became king of Judah. Ahaz was a man of twenty at coming to rule and he ruled for sixteen years in Jerusalem but he did not do the right in the eyes of the LORD his God as David his fore-father. But he walked in the way of the king of Israel and also caused his sons to pass through fire in line with the abominable practice of the nations which the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel. And he offered sacrifice and incense on the high places and upon the hills and under every flourishing tree [*mhr* – perhaps “oil tree” or in the groves – the practice being widespread and national]

#### **AHAZ PAYS OFF TIGLATH PILESER 5-9**

At that time Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to fight against it and they shut up the city but were unable to bring the war to a victorious outcome [*mhl*]. At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath [*Eilat*] for Syria and drove out the Jews from Elath and the Syrians lived there until this day. This far-flung colony of Syria gave that nation a trade route to Africa and India and established an area of greater influence from the time of Rezin until Jeremiah's day [[735-586-all of 150 years]. Then Ahaz sent envoys to Tiglath Pileser king of Assyria saying “**I am your servant and your son: come up and save me from the paw of the king of Syria and from the paw of the king of Israel who have risen up against me.**” Ahaz paints a picture of these kings as tearing at him with their paw or demanding money with their open hand – with emphasis on the “paw”. And Ahaz took silver and gold that he discovered in the house of the LORD and in the treasury of the house of the king and posted it for a gift to the king of Assyria. Then the king

of Assyria listened to him and the king of Assyria went up to Damascus and seized and administered it [vpt] and caused a captivity or exile to Kir and killed Rezin. *The location is not identified but a city called Gutium in the Kurdish hills of Iraq has been suggested. In Amos 9.7 that prophet who flourished circa 761BC spoke of the Syrians as originating in Kurdistan if the attempted location referred to above is correct. Thus the Syrians moved to control Aram long after the time of Abraham Isaac and Joseph.*

#### **AHAZ SET US A SYRIAN STYLE ALTAR 10-16**

Then king Ahaz went to meet Tiglath Pileser king of Assyria at Damascus and he saw the altar that was at Damascus and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the likeness of the altar and how it was built according to its creation. Then Urijah the priest built the altar to the exact detail that king Ahaz posted from Damascus – thus Urijah the priest worked *on it* until the arrival of king Ahaz from Damascus. When the king came from Damascus the king saw the altar and approached the altar and offered upon it. Then he burned **his** burnt offering and **his** meal offering and poured out **his** libation and sprinkled the blood of **his** peace-offerings that were for **him** upon the altar. *This innovation which was probably located in the temple area took over from the altar Solomon constructed after the pattern of the heavenly. Thus all the offerings of the King became null and void. And the brazen altar that was before the face of the LORD he brought from in front of the house from between the new altar [that was constructed by Urijah] and the house of the LORD and placed it at the north side of the altar innovation. Now Ahaz set the brazen altar of approach to the north “out of the way” so to speak and substituted the new altar as the means of approach. He had made another way to God but essentially taken away the former.*

Then king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest saying “**Burn the morning burnt offering** on the new “great” altar and **the evening meal offering and the burnt offering of the king and his meal offering** and the burnt offering of **all the people** of the land and their meal and drink offerings and sprinkle all the blood of the burnt offering [hl []] and all the blood of the peace offering [hbz] upon it and the brazen altar shall be for me to take care of or look at or inquire about. *As to whether Ahaz intended to use the former altar for his own use when he was minded or whether he was saying he would think about what to do with it as if it were now rendered of secondary importance is not entirely clear though the use. The “peace offering” of the king noted above was excepted so he may have kept the former altar in case of necessity should it later appear he would have to reconcile to God. He appears to have been preserving the old altar as a safeguard to his peace with God.*

And Urijah the priest acted in line with everything that king Ahaz commanded. *The high priest took no stand for what he well knew was the prescribed means of approach to the LORD or living God in his holiness. He sold the pass!*

#### **AHAZ FURTHER CORRUPTS THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL 17-18**

Then king Ahaz cut in pieces the borders that went around the bases and took from above them the laver and he caused the sea to be brought down from the brass oxen that were under it and he placed it on a tassellated or checkered pavement of stones. *The whole concept of cleansing of the priests for ministry was scrapped. The bases which were wheeled toward the house appear to have fallen into disuse and the brass oxen may even have been melted down. Certainly the king had neither care nor interest that they represented the LORD’S part in man’s cleansing as like the ox he would suffer for us. Scripture does not say that after 250 years the sea was beginning*



*to sag or become positively dangerous – which might have supplied reason for building a better base for it.*

And the covering used during the Sabbath which they had built at the house, and the approach of the king outside he caused to be changed or turned around [bbs] for the presence of the king of Assyria. *Ahaz seems to have broken the connection between the palace and the temple for the pleasure of the Assyrian king. As to whether Tiglath Pileser visited or just suggested the change we do not know. There also appears to have been a covered area forming a great court of the people which was used on the Sabbath. The absence of this clearly would restrict the time people could spend in the burning sun in the temple area. This was a decided act against the intimacy and lingering of the nation in God's presence and in fellowship with each other.*

#### **THE OBITUARY OF AHAZ 19-20**

And the remainder of the actions of Ahaz that he undertook are they not written in the book of the acts of the days of the kings of Judah. And Ahaz rested with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David and his son Hezekiah ruled in his place. *At length a king of noteworthy faith and genuine worth appears in the annals of this book and after the story of the northern captivity his famous reign runs for the three succeeding chapters*

### **CHAPTER 17**

#### **HOSHEA'S NINE YEAR RULE 1-2**

In year twelve of Ahaz King of Judah Hoshea son of Elah began to rule over Israel in Samaria for nine years. But he did evil in the sight of the LORD **only not as** the kings of Israel that lived before his presence *on the throne. The rider on wrong exculpates Hoshea somewhat.*

#### **HOSHEA'S HOUSE ARREST 3-4**

Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him but Hoshea became servant to him and returned tribute to him. But Shalmaneser king of Assyria discovered a conspiracy in Hoshea for he had sent envoys to So King of Egypt and had not caused the tribute to be carried up to the King of Assyria *as he had done year on year.* So the King of Assyria restrained or shut him up and made him a prisoner of house arrest [a/k tyb].

#### **THE CAPTIVITY OF THE NORTHERN STATE 731BC 5-23**

*In Hoshea's third year Assyrian records show that 27,290 exiles were led away and Samaria became a province of Assyria.*

Then the king of Assyria came up through the entire land and went up to Samaria and shut it up in a siege of three years duration. In year nine of Hoshea the King of Assyria took Samaria and led Israel captive to Assyria and caused them to settle in Helam and Habor at the river Gozan and the cities of the Medes. *Gozan was 100 miles North West of Tiphseh which Israel rather belligerently captured in the time of Jeroboam the Second. The river was a northern tributary of the Euphrates and the locations were 400 miles distant from Samaria. The captives walked a very long way.*

***And it was reality*** that the sons of Israel sinned against the LORD their God that brought them up out of the land of Egypt from beneath the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt and *now* they revered other gods and **they walked in the ordinances of the nations** that the LORD dispossessed before the presence of the sons of Israel **and of what the kings of Israel did.** And the children of Israel enacted clandestinely those things that were not appointed under the LORD their God and built them high places

throughout all their cities from the fortress of those who kept watch *on the borders* to Bezer the inaccessible stronghold. And they established idol statues and groves over all the high hill country and under every flourishing green tree. And they offered incense there at all the appointed high places as did the Gentiles that the LORD sent away as captives before their faces and they did evil acts to cause the LORD to be provoked. They also served idols of which the LORD told them **“You shall not do this thing!”** **So the LORD appointed or approved all this throughout Israel and Judah by the power or hand of all the prophets and all the seers** saying **“You must turn from your evil ways and keep my commands and ordinances in line with the entire Torah that I commanded your fathers and that I sent to you by the hand of my servants the prophets.”** But they would not listen and made their neck stiff or obstinate like the neck of their fathers who did not trust in the LORD their God. And they rejected the ordinances and covenant that he made with their fore-fathers and the testimonies that he testified against them and walked after empty vanity and became empty & vain and after the Gentile nations that were around them though the LORD commanded them not to do as these nations. So they forsook all the commandments of the LORD their God and created images poured out of moulds for them – they made two calves and an Asherah grove and worshipped the entire host of heaven and served Baal. *This indictment is complete and it is accompanied by the important earlier indictment of the prophets through whom the LORD was heralding the downfall of this corrupt Theocracy.*

And they made their sons and daughters to pass through the fire and divining false prophets divined and they used snake charmers and sold themselves to enact evil in the eyes of the LORD their God to provoke him. And the LORD had become very wroth with Israel and drove them from his presence and there was no remnant except the tribe of Judah only. Even Judah did not keep the commands of the LORD their God but walked in the statutes of Israel that they created. So the LORD rejected the entire seed of Israel and humbled them and gave them into the power of those who take spoil or booty [*mysv*] until He had caused them to be cast away from His presence. For he tore off Israel from the house of David and they caused Jeroboam son of Nebat to be king and Jeroboam separated [*adh*] Israel from following the LORD and caused them to sin the great sin. *We have “apostasy” set out as the great sin of the OT alongside the statement of Christ that “there is a sin that has not forgiveness in this or the future life” – the rejection of the conviction and auspice of the Holy Spirit.* And the sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam that he did – they did not turn from them. **Until the LORD removed Israel from His sight in keeping with what He spoke by the hand of all his servants the prophets** and Israel was carried away from her land to Assyria *until this day*. For a second time we are reminded of the indictment of the prophets for the books of Kings are recorded by Jewish rabbis as having been compiled by Jeremiah. *The reference to “this day” is again a typical Jeremiah style comment and although he was told the later or Judah’s captivity would be 70 years that prophecy came in year 4 of Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 25.11) which was in 605BC whereas this removal of Israel occurred in 721BC – 116 years prior*

#### **THE HISTORY OF THE BEGINNING OF THE SAMARITAN STATE 24-37**

And the king of Assyria brought *immigrants* from Babylon and from Cuthah and Ava and from Hamath and Sepharvaim and they settled in the cities of Samaria in place of

the sons of Israel and they took possession of Samaria and lived in its cities. *And it was reality* at the beginning of their stay there they did not fear the LORD but the LORD sent lions among them and there was mauling or slaughtering in their midst. But they spoke to the king of Assyria saying “**The nations that you caused to go captive and dwell in the cities of Samaria do not know the judgments of the God of the land and He has sent among them lions and behold they are killing them because they have no knowledge of the judgments of the Gods of the land.**” Then the King of Assyria commanded saying “Cause one of the priests of the captives from there to be taken and they shall take him and caused him to settle *back* there and he shall teach them the judgments of the God of the land. So they brought one of the priests that went captive from Samaria and he lived in Bethel and was teaching them how they should reverence the LORD. *But it was reality* that nation by nation they were making gods and causing them to rest in the temples of the high places that they made in Samaria – nation by nation in their cities where they were living.

So the men of Babylon created Succoth Benoth:

And the men of Cuth created Nergal;

And the men of Hamath created Ashima;

And the Arvites created Nibhaz; *The Qere has “brightness of myriads” or “chief brightness” – the Sabaeans speak of NIBHAZ “the Lord of Darkness” an exceeding evil demon. Some interpret this idol as dog-like from NABAH.*

The Arvites also created Tartak (Hero of) “profound darkness”;

The Sepharvites burned their sons in fire to Adermelech “magnificent king” and Anamelech “flock of stars” – gods of the “blazing burners”.

So they became “fearers” of the LORD and make them priests of the high places of the off-scraping [*hxq*] of the people and they were making offerings for them at the houses of the high places.

They were fearing the LORD and serving their gods according to the judgments of the nations that carried them away to that place (Samaria). Until this day they do according to their former custom and judgments but they do not fear the LORD and they do not do according to the ordinance and judgments and law and commandments which the LORD commanded the sons of Jacob on whom he placed the name Israel. And the LORD made a covenant with them and commanded them saying “**You shall not fear other gods and you shall not worship them and serve them and sacrifice to them but only the LORD for He brought you up from the land of Egypt with great strength and with his outstretched right arm: Him you shall fear; Him you shall worship; to Him you shall sacrifice.**” And the ordinances and the judgments and the law and commandments which He wrote out for you, you shall be carefully observant to fulfil all the days and you shall fear no other gods. And the covenant that I cut with you, you shall not forget and you shall not fear different gods. But you shall fear the LORD your God alone and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies! But they did not listen but did according to their former customs or tradition (of sin and idolatry). *So it was reality* these nations were afraid of the LORD and they were serving their images and their children and their grandchildren as their fathers did so they do *until this day*. *This time frame suits the period subsequent to the northern exile and the early days of Jeremiah.*

## CHAPTER 18

### HEZEKIAH THE WISE & FAITHFUL 1-8

*Then reality was* in year three of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel Hezekiah son of Ahaz became king of Judah. He was a man of twenty five years as he ruled in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Abi [*“Abijah” 2 Chronicles 29.1- suggesting an abbreviated name of a woman that was known to Isaiah and Micah*] daughter of Zechariah. And he did right in the eyes of the LORD similar to all that David his father did. **He took away the high places** and broke the images and cut down the Asherah and cut to fragments the brass serpent that Moses made for until these days the sons of Israel were burning incense to it but he called it Nehushtan [*“A piece or bit of brass”*]. He trusted in the LORD God of Israel and after him there was not his like among all the kings of Judah and among those before him. *This is a tremendous accolade. Hezekiah was a man of absolutely undoubted faith. Faith pleases God and it pleased the prophetic writer who served some good kings but none with as great faith.* So he was damasked or welded to the LORD and did not depart from following Him and kept his commandments that the LORD commanded Moses. *And the Lord was really* with him and everywhere he went he was prudent or prospered and he revolted against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. *In these days “prosperity” gets a bad name but God was pleased to make prudent and prosperous a man that lived by faith and was steadfast and obedient to him. You will notice also that wisdom (laced to intelligence) and success [1kv] go together. It is rare to find a wise man cast in the depths of poverty. I see no reason to believe that the principles by which Hezekiah lived will not grant success today. I refuse to downgrade such godly success as I refuse to diminish the value of wisdom that is still justified in those who follow and keep close to her.*

### HOSHEA AND THE NORTH IN CONTRAST ARE CAPTIVE 9-12

*And it was reality* in year four of King Hezekiah which was year seven of Hoshea son of Elah King of Israel Shalmaneser King of Assyria went up against Samaria and laid a siege against it. And they captured it at the end of three years in year six of Hezekiah – that was year nine of Hosea King of Israel when Samaria itself was taken. So the King of Assyria took Israel captive to Assyria and caused them to be led back to Halam and Habor river cities of the Medes at Gozen. *This* because they did not obey the voice of the LORD their God but by-passed His covenant and all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded they did not obey or do.

### HEZEKIAH PAYS OFF SENNACHERIB 13-16

Then in year fourteen of Hezekiah Sennacherib King of Assyria came up against all the fortress cities of Judah and would have laid them spread out in ruin. But Hezekiah King of Judah sent to the King of Assyria to Lachish saying **“I have erred – turn from upon me and what tax you lay upon me I will bear.”** And the King of Assyria taxed Hezekiah King of Judah with six hundred cor of silver and three hundred cor of gold. *By my own rough and ready calculation a cor of a “donkey’s burden” was 3.72 cwt. I have seen a donkey on Mt. Olives carry a man and woman and child – roughly that weight! Thus the weight of silver was 112 tonnes of silver and 56 tonnes of gold These were fabulous sums at which to buy freedom – and this tax was unsustainable.* So Hezekiah gave away all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasure stores of the palace of the king. At that time Hezekiah cut the *overlay* of the doors of the temple of the LORD and the pillars that Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid and gave them to the king of Assyria.

## **RABSHAKEH TREATS WITH HEZEKIAH BUT SCORNS HIS FAITH AND THEN TURNS TO HARANGUE THE SOLDIERS ON THE WALL 17-18**

But the King of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a heavily armed or glorious host to Jerusalem and they came up and arrived at Jerusalem. And when they came up and arrived they took up position at the channel of the upper pool at the highway of the land of the fuller. Then they called for the King and Eliakim son of Hilkiyah who was over the household and Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph the historical recorder went out to them. *This aside virtually fills in for us the names of two men who were most likely Chroniclers of the period – Joah and his scribe Shebna who are strong candidates in my mind as compilers of the records of the days of the kings to this point.*

### **(1) RABSHAKEH'S FIRST SMEAR 19**

And Rabshakeh said to them **“Would you please tell Hezekiah ‘THUS SAYS the great king – the king of Assyria ‘What is this small or delightful confidence which you trust?’”** *It is a considerable commendation that this first military leader of Assyria noted the signal faith of Hezekiah and recognised it as the reason why he withstood the might of Assyria.*

### **(2) RABSHAKEH'S SECOND SMEAR 20**

**“You talk of (Definitely loquacious words or “words of the lips”) the counsel and valour belonging to war – now on whom are you relying or trusting because you are rebelling against me?**

### **(3) RABSHAKEH'S THIRD JIBE-EGYPT IS USELESS 21**

**Now behold you are trusting yourself to the staff or support of this struggling crushed [xxr] reed – upon Egypt – which if a man puts weight on it will go into the palm of his hand and pierce it – that basically is Pharaoh king of Egypt for all that put confidence in him.**

### **(4) RABSHAKEH'S FOURTH SMEAR 22**

**But if you are saying to me ‘Upon the LORD our God we are trusting’ is not he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed when he said to Judah and Jerusalem “You shall worship at Jerusalem before this altar! ”**

### **(5) RABSHAKEH'S CARROT-A FALSE BRIBE 23-24**

**So now cause surety to be given please to my lord the King of Assyria then I will give you 1000 horses if you are able to provide on your part riders for them. But how or why will you turn back the faces of one governor [hjp] of the least servants of my lord and put your trust in Egypt for horses and charioteers?**

### **(6) RABSHAKEH'S ASSERTION OF HEARING FROM THE LORD 25**

**Now I am coming up to war constantly without the LORD against this place to lay it in ruins. THE LORD SAYS TO ME “Go up against this land to destroy it.”**

### **PRIVATE NEGOTIATIONS REQUESTED BY THE ENVOYS 26-27**

**Then Eliakim son of Hilkiyah and Shebna and Joah said to Rabshakeh “Please speak to your servants in Aramaic for we understand you or will listen so you do not need to speak Hebrew to us *loud enough* for the people that are on the wall.**

**(7) RABSHAKEH'S VILE THREAT AND DISMISSAL OF THE ENVOYS 27**

**But Rabshakeh said to them “Must my Master send on account of your master and of you to make these promises or speak these words? Has he not sent me to the men that are abiding on the walls to eat their excrement and drink their urine with you? Rabshakeh proves to be wily and also grossly rude and shows that he is not a negotiator but simply a fiend with scurrilous expletives to hurl at his foes the Jews.**

**(8) RABSHAKEH TAUNTS THE HUNGRY PEOPLE AND PROMISES A FAR AWAY HOMELAND 28-32**

Then Rabshakeh stood and proclaimed in a great voice and spoke in Hebrew saying **“Hear the word of the great king the King of Assyria ‘THUS SAYS the King ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you for he is not able to deliver you from his hand’’. And do not cause Hezekiah to have you trust you to the LORD saying ‘The LORD will gradually deliver us and not give this city into the hand of the King of Assyria.’ Do not listen to Hezekiah for thus says the King of Assyria ‘Make a treaty with me and come out to me and you will eat every man from his vine and every man from his fig and drink every man from his own well till I come and take you to a land like your land – a land of corn and wine – a land of bread and vineyards – a land of olive oil and honey and you will live and not die and do not listen to Hezekiah for he will induce or persuade you saying ‘The LORD will deliver us’”** *In three expressions within his diatribe Rabshakeh has acted as if he were a prophet and his master were God. This proud pose undermined his credibility with the Jews and placed him in jeopardy before the living God.*

**(9) RABSHAKEH DENIGRADES YAHWEH AS IMPOTENT 33-37**

**“Have the gods of the nations made progress to deliver man and his nation from the hand of the King of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivah? Nay but why didn't they deliver Samaria from my hand? Who among all the gods of the lands are they that have delivered their land from my hand? Yet will the LORD deliver Jerusalem from my hand?”** But the people maintained silence and did not answer him a word for the commandment of the king was to say **“Do not reply to him!”**

Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah who was over the household and Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph the recorder came to Hezekiah – having torn their garments and reported to him the words of Rabshakeh. *The envoys return empty-handed with their garments rent as a sign of their anger and displeasure at the blasphemy against the LORD their God. The Assyrian words amounted to a spiritual attack on the centrepiece of Israel's strength – the altar of God – and on the LORD'S name and honour. Hezekiah as a man of faith as we shall see takes exactly the right steps to escape this dilemma and spring the trap of Assyrian creation. Hezekiah proves as we must do in similar circumstances of impasse that prayer works and the LORD will not allow us to suffer under a burden we cannot bear without giving us a way of escape that we might be able to bear it. It is most gratifying to have from this prophetic and false prophetic challenging setting of the OT a scene that glorifies God and validates the exercise of simple faith in the LORD of Israel and the church.*

## CHAPTER 19

### HEZEKIAH SEEKS THE PRAYERS OF ISAIAH THE PROPHET 1-5

*And it was reality* as King Hezekiah heard he also tore his robes and covered him with sackcloth and went to the house of the LORD. And forthwith he sent Eliakim who was over the house and Shebna the scribe and the elders of the priests in sackcloth to Isaiah the son of Amoz the prophet. And they said to him “Thus says Hezekiah **“This day is a day of adversity and reproach and insult or occasion of blasphemy [xai] for the children are come to break from the womb and there is no ability to give birth. Peradventure the LORD your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh whom his master the King of Assyria has sent to scorn or reproach the living God and will correct or arbitrate and admonish for the words that the LORD your God has heard so lift up your prayer for the remnant that are still found.”** Then the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

### ISAIAH’S REPLY 6-7

Then Isaiah said to them “Thus shall you say to your master ‘Thus says the LORD *Do not fear the appearance of the words you are hearing with which the young servants of the King of Assyria have continually blasphemed me [Piel of pdq]. Behold I will give him a breath or blow on him and he will hear a rumour and return to his own land and I will cause him to fall through the sword in his land.*”

### RABSHAKEH SENDS A THREATENING LETTER 8-13

So Rabshakeh returned and discovered the King of Assyria at war with Libnah for he heard that he had moved camp from Lachish. Then he heard it said “Behold Tirhakah King of Ethiopia is coming up to fight with you” so he turned and posted envoys to Hezekiah saying **“Thus you shall speak to Hezekiah King of Judah saying ‘Let not your God whom you trust lead you astray saying *Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the King of Assyria.* Behold you have heard what the Kings of Assyria have done to all lands laying them desolate and will you be delivered?’ Have the gods of the nations caused them that my fathers laid in ruins to be delivered – Gozan – Haran and Rezep and the sons of Eden that were in Thelasar? Where are the King of Hamath and the King of Arpad and the King of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivah?**

### HEZEKIAH’S PRAYERFUL RESPONSE TO THE WRITTEN THREAT 14-19

So Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the envoys and recited it aloud and went up to the house of the LORD and Hezekiah spread it before the face of the LORD. *It is to be carefully noted that the king read it aloud not just to embarrass the sending party but for the attention of the LORD. He was not careful to give any reply. He turned from the envoys to the LORD and went straight for the temple. The envoys well understood his mighty faith.*

And Hezekiah prayed before the face of the LORD and said **“O LORD God of Israel that dwells with the Cherubim –You alone are God belonging to all the kingdoms of the earth.”** *Hezekiah rated no nation free from the sovereignty of the LORD God. You made the heavens and the earth. The severe logic is “The LORD made it all and owns it all and it is all subject to Him.”* Lord, incline your ear and hear; open your eyes O LORD and see and hear as well the words that Sennacherib sent to reproach the living God. Truth, LORD – the Kings of Assyria have made desolate and laid waste the nations and the earth to. They have also thrown their gods into the fire because these were no gods but made by the hands of man – wood and stone – so they

destroyed them. But Now O LORD our God please cause us to be saved from his hand so that all kingdoms of the earth may realise that you alone are the LORD God.

### **ISAIAH IMMEDIATELY BRINGS THE LORD'S RESPONSE 20**

Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent post-haste to Hezekiah saying **“Thus says the LORD God of Israel ‘What you have been praying to me against Sennacherib King of Assyria I have heard’”**

### **ISAIAH'S FULL TEXT OF THE LORD'S REPLY 21-26**

This is the word that the LORD spoke about him **“The virgin daughter of Israel has held you in contempt to scorn you with jest; the daughter of Jerusalem has shaken her head after you are gone. Who have you reproached and blasphemed? And against whom have you lifted up your voice and lifted up your eyes more that high? – against the Holy One of Israel. By the hand of your envoys you have reproached the LORD saying ‘with a great number of chariots I have reached the heights of the mountains – the sides of Lebanon and I will cut down its rising cedars and its select pines and I will enter the lodges of the border or limits of the forest of Carmel. I have chanced upon and drunk strange waters and with the soles of my paces I have dried up all the streams of the fortified border of Egypt.’** [*rxm* – the word “fortress” has a similar root to the word “Egypt”] **Have you not heard it from long in the past – what I did in earlier days – that I formed it and now I have caused it to come about that you should be one to lay fortress cities in conquered stone heaps? So those that lived in them were little in power – they were ashamed and they were as the green grass or vegetables of the field – as sprouting herbs of the enclosed village roof-tops – as blighted corn [hpdv] before it rises up...”** *Isaiah is deflating the Assyrians reminding them of what the LORD did in Egypt – reminding them that they like the Egyptians are but tools in the hand of the LORD. He shows that it is no great achievement to conquer weak nations. It is as nothing – like cutting vegetables in the field – like pulling out a few weeds on the rooftop – like burning small corn.*

**“...But your resting and your going out and your coming in, I know well and that you will have been furious or will have raved against me...”** *As frequently He does, the LORD reveals His awareness of future evil of His people alongside His awareness of their past.* **“...Because your having been in a rage over me and your living in easy pride has come up into my ears I also will put hooks in your nose and my bridle [qtm] on your lips and I will turn you back the way you went. And this shall be the sign – you will eat this year the self-grown grain [jps] and on the second year the “sweeping” or what is left and the third year you must sow and harvest and plant vineyards and eat the fruit...”**

### **THE CHURCH 30-31**

**“...And the remaining fugitive that escapes of the house of Judah will spread [jps “join up” with others] a root downwards and create fruit upwards for from Jerusalem a remnant will go and those that escape or are saved from Mount Zion – the zeal of the LORD.....will accomplish this.”** *Do we here have one of those subtle prophecies of the work of the coming age among the Gentiles and a prediction of the beginning of the church? Ultimately this prophecy has no better fulfilment than in the church which spread from Jerusalem as a mere remnant of Jewish Christians and rooted everywhere as it carried the faith and brought forth fruit for heaven! Only the “zeal of the LORD could do this – the provoking jealousy of*



*the LORD [hmq] that lies behind the work of the Church to draw Israel back centre stage in the end-times would appear to be strongly stated by God Himself. There is a rare gap in the text at this point with only vocalisation left to go by from the later period. The Qere or oral text supplies “Sabaoth” which accords with the “shewa” and “qames” placed in the space.*

For this fundamental reason thus says the LORD **“The King of Assyria shall not come to this city and he will not shoot one arrow and he will not come to its east with a shield and he will not throw up a raised mound or rampart against it. In the way he came he will go back and he will not come into this city whispers the LORD in stirred anger. For I will defend or protect this city as a gardener a garden [mq] to save it for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”**

### **THE ANGEL OF THE LORD SMITES SENNACHERIB 35-37**

*And it was real* in that night the “Angel of the LORD” went out and struck throughout the army of Assyria 185,000 and in the morning behold they were all dead corpses. And Sennacherib King of Assyria would pluck up tent or move like an arrow... [Stl “the base word for our NASA] *This sudden discomfiture is prophetic of what happens when a latter day Gog once more challenges the Lord of Sabaoth and is similarly and comprehensively defeated... and go and return and dwell in Nineveh. This also is ironic for that city was host to Jonah who predicted a judgment that the city was initially spared through repentance. Sennacherib was a chastened spirit.*

*And it was real* – he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god that Adramelech and Sharezer his sons struck him with a sword and they made their escape into the land of Ararat [modern Armenia] and Esarhaddon his son ruled in his place. *The patricidal death of Sennacherib brought this proud enemy of the LORD and His people – made famous in the “Destruction of Sennacherib” by Byron – to his end.*

*For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast...  
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,  
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the LORD!”*

*(Ib. by Byron)*

## **CHAPTER 20**

### **HEZEKIAH’S SICKNESS & PRAYER 1-7**

In those days Hezekiah was sick and weakening toward death and Isaiah the son of Amoz the prophet came to him and said to him **“Thus says the LORD ‘give direction to your household for you will die and not survive.’”** Then he turned his face toward the wall and kept praying **steadfastly** [Hithpael of llp] to the LORD of life saying “I appeal to you or entreat you, O LORD, please remember how I have **steadfastly** walked [Hithpael of Jlh] before your face in truth and with a peaceful submissive heart [ml v bbl “a heart entire” or “restored & good” or “disposed & enquiring” of you or “answering God’s terms and recompensing his love” – the term has all the abundance of life’s tapestry as it encompasses “entirety” and “soundness”. Hezekiah is urging that his life has been “sound” and on that basis seeking “soundness” of health from the One who gave him life and his peace] and I have done that which is best or good and prosperous in your eyes and Hezekiah wailed in his great weeping!” Hezekiah was weeping with genuine tears as a man attending a funeral – he appears to be weeping over the prophetic fact of his own demise. Contrary to the humorous idiom we quote it seemed “Reports of his death were not greatly exaggerated” – his death seemed inevitable and pronounced from

heaven. But the LORD answers prayer! The LORD is the life-giver! “Nothing is too hard for the LORD!”

**Then it was real**, Isaiah the prophet had not gone from the exit... [*hmkth the AV has “escaping of” –our language in its development since the AV produced the word “exit” which is exactly what the original text says. No such word was available to early English scholars*] ...of the central enclosure the word of promise of the LORD came to him saying **“Return and speak to Hezekiah leader or commander of my people ‘Thus says the LORD God of David your father I have heard your prayer and seen every one of your tears [Jeremiah – the assumed writer and compiler in Lamentations 2.11 says “My eye runs down with tears.” In the extremity of Judah’s tragic end Jeremiah also “tried tears” but judgment was determined. As to Hezekiah the secret was unfolded by the LORD – Hezekiah was not just weeping for himself – he was weeping as a leader at a time of great international danger and desired to continue a good lead over his people – that is the tenor of his prayer and the significance of the LORD’S reply “He is my people’s leader – that is, he is and is going to be still!” ...behold I am healing you – on the third day you will go up to the house of the LORD...”** It has to be noticed that the prophet did not exercise a miracle at the LORD’S bidding. This was a process the LORD had begun in Hezekiah. The third day or probably second morning afterward was probably Sabbath so it would be two days until Hezekiah felt fully recovered. His **Black Thursday** visit from Isaiah turned into a glorious **Thursday of Hope** for the king. **“...And I will cause fifteen years to be added to the days of your life and I will deliver this city from the palm of the King of Assyria and I will be a protection over this city for my own sake and that of David my servant.”** It is very humbling to note that the LORD though he respected Hezekiah’s leadership at this point spared the city for His own glory and the promises he made to David. Then Isaiah said **“Take a cake of figs”** and they took it and placed it on the inflamed ulcer and he lived!

### **HEZEKIAH SEEKS A SIGN OF RECOVERY 8-12**

Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah “What is the sign that the LORD will heal me and I shall live and go up to the house of the LORD on the third day?” *Just at the moment of the application of the poultice Hezekiah saw the enormity of the condition and like Peter his faith failed and he looked for a sign to counter his doubt. Divine healing is sometimes instant but quite often it takes time like the healing of the lepers who became whole as they walked from Jesus and doubtless others whom the LORD healed.*

Then Isaiah said “For you this is the sign from the LORD that the LORD will activate His word that he spoke in promise – the shadow will either move on ten steps [*or degrees*]or go back ten. So Hezekiah said ‘It is a slight matter for the shadow to decline 10 steps – No! But let the shadow turn backwards ten steps or degrees! Then Isaiah the prophet proclaimed to the LORD and he brought the shadow back ten degrees by which it went down on the steps of *the sundial of Ahaz.*

### **THE MESSENGERS OF BABYLON ALLOWED TO SPY ON HEZEKIAH 12-19**

At that time Berodach [*Merodach*] Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent letters and a present to Hezekiah for he heard that Hezekiah was ill. And Hezekiah listened to them and showed them the entire house or stock of his spices, silver and gold, fragrant perfumes and best oils and the House of stock of his arms and all that

was found in his treasury. There was not one thing that Hezekiah did not show them in his house and in his entire kingdom.

Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and said to him **“What did these men say and from what land did they come?”** And Hezekiah said **“From a land far distant –from Babylon!”** And he said **“What did they see in your house?”** And Hezekiah said **“They saw all that is in my house!”** **“There is nothing that I did not show them throughout my treasury!”** Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah **“Hear the word of the LORD!”** **“Behold the days are coming when all that is in your house and all that your fathers have treasured up until this day will be carried of to Babylon and nothing will remain”** says the LORD.

**“Also from your sons that will spring from you – that you will father there will be taken eunuchs to the palace of the King of Babylon.”** Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah **“The word of the LORD you have spoken is good!”** Then he said **“It is not the case that peace or prosperity and truth shall survive my days?”** *It appears Hezekiah added a question showing the penny had dropped but expressing the hope that even in this God might relent and prosperity would go on longer. There is no recorded confirmation of lengthened prosperity and the question abides as a complacent smug comment on his remaining term being comfortable.*

#### **FURTHER REFERENCE IN CHRONICLES 20-21**

And the remainder of the acts of Hezekiah and all his prowess and how he created the pool and the channel and brought the water to the city are these not written in the book of the acts of the days of the kings of Judah? So Hezekiah slept with his fathers and his son Manasseh ruled in his place. *The tunnel of Hezekiah is one of the incredible engineering projects of ancient Jerusalem. Tourists still wade through the water and explore the underground feat achieved by two teams of men working from either end. The men met in the middle where their axes met so exact were their calculations of depth, distance and direction.*

### **CHAPTER 21**

#### **MANASSEH’S SIN SUMMARISED 1-9**

Manasseh began to rule at twelve and was king for fifty five years at Jerusalem and his mother’s name was Hephzibah. *This young prince like Josiah needed strong guidance. His mother “my delight is in her” by name would have been the delight of her faithful husband but clearly her hand on her son was not sufficient to set him on the path of right.* And he did evil in the LORD’S sight after the sort of the nations that the LORD dispossessed from before Israel. He even returned and built the high places that Hezekiah his father laid waste and raised up an altar to Baal and made Asherah after the sort Ahab king of Israel made and worshipped all the host of heaven and served them. Then he built altars at the house of the LORD of which the LORD said **“In Jerusalem I will set my name”**. And he built altars to all the host of heaven in both courts of the house of the LORD. *This offence was particularly heinous as it entailed priests breaking a solemn custom and leading the people away from the way of righteousness by atoning sacrifice and serving other gods.* Then he made his sons pass through the fire of Moloch and divined by the constellations and used python style enchantment and necromancy or enchantments and familiar spirits and did much evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke anger. Then he placed the image of the Asherah grove that he made in the house or palace of which the LORD said to David and Solomon his son **“In this house and in Jerusalem that I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel I will set my name for perpetuity. And I will not add again to cause the**

feet of Israel to wander or be disturbed from the fertile land I have given their fathers only they shall be vigilant to act according to all my commandments and do that related to all the Torah that my servant Moses commanded them. But they did not listen and obey but Manasseh led them astray to do evil beyond the nations that the LORD destroyed before the face of Israel.

#### **JERUSALEM TO BE WIPED CLEAN FOR MANASSEH'S SIN 10-16**

Then the LORD spoke by His servants the prophets saying **“Because Manasseh King of Judah has done these abominations of evil beyond all that the Amorites did that were before him and because he also caused Judah to sin through his idols for that basic reason thus says the LORD God of Israel ‘Behold me bring evil upon Jerusalem and Judah such that booth the ears of all who hear shall rattle or be covered [ל/ח “be shaded”]. And I will extend over Jerusalem the measuring canon line of Samaria and the weighty plumb-line of the house of Ahab and I will wipe [ח/מ – a word used both for “wiping clean” and “wiping out”] Jerusalem clean as one wipes the plate wiping it and turning it over on its face. The illustration is vivid – it depicts a city with nothing in it and walls overturned. And I will abandon or scatter the remnant of my heritage and give them into the hand of their enemies because they have done evil in my sight and provoked me to anger from the day that your fathers left Egypt until this day.”** Also Manasseh shed a great quantity of innocent blood until he had filled Jerusalem from one opening to another apart from his sin by which he caused Judah to do evil in the sight of the LORD.

#### **REFERENCING THE REIGN TO CHRONICLES 17-18**

And the remainder of the actions of Manasseh and all that he did and his sin which he sinned are these not written in the book of the Acts of days of the kings of Judah. And Manasseh rested with his fathers and was buried in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza; and Amon his son ruled in his room.

#### **THE LIFE OF AMON 19-22**

Amon was a man of twenty two at the inception of his rule and he reigned two years in Jerusalem and his mother's name was Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. And he did evil in the eyes of the LORD of a sort with that his father Manasseh did. And he walked in all the ways that his father travelled and served the idols that his father served and worshipped them. And he departed from the LORD God of his fathers and did not walk in the way of the LORD.

#### **THE CONSPIRACY THAT ENDED HIS REIGN & ITS AFTERMATH 23-26**

Then the servants of Amon raised conspiracy against him and killed the king in his house. But the common people struck all those who conspired against King Amon. And the common people made Josiah king in his place. And the remainder of the acts of Amon that he did are these not written in the book of the acts of the days of the kings of Judah. And they buried him in his tomb in the garden of Ahaz and Josiah his son ruled in his place.

### **CHAPTER 22**

#### **JOSIAH THE BOY KING OF JUDAH 1-2**

Josiah was eight when he took rule and was king for thirty one years in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Jedidah, daughter of Adaiah from Bozcath. And he did

the right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in the way of his father and did not depart to the right or left.

### **REPAIR OF THE TEMPLE RESUMED UNDER JOSIAH 3-7**

*And it was reality* in year eighteen of King Josiah that the king sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam the scribe to the house of the LORD saying **“Go up to Hilkiyah the High Priest** *[This is the second mention of the high priest in Kings and occasions my comment that in the time of Jeremiah this term was still used interchangeably with “the priest” for this anointed leader]* **that he may “use”** *[mmt]* **the silver that has come in for the house of the LORD that those responsible for the house of the LORD** *[literally “the keepers” – equivalent to our “management committees”]* **have gathered from the people. And they shall give it over to the authority of those that undertake the work, who are regularly visiting the house of the LORD to see how it is** *[equivalent to our fabric committee]* **to strengthen or repair the cracks in the walls of house. They shall give it to the artificer-carpenters, the builders, the wallers and to buy wood and dressed stone** *[bxj m ymba]* **to repair the house.”** There was no definite estimate made of the money given into their hand because these workers were trusted *[“thoroughly faithful”]*.

### **THE FAMOUS RE-DISCOVERY OF THE TORAH 8-14**

Then Hilkiyah the High Priest said to Shaphan the scribe **“I have found the Torah in the house of the LORD”** and Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan and he read it aloud or proclaimed it. Then Shaphan the scribe went to the king and brought back a word of action to the king and said “Hilkiyah the priest, your servant, has found the money in the house and given it to those who visit and care for the house for those who are undertaking the work. *[The Hebrew text has a double object here – “those undertaking the work “of” or “under” those who care for the house” is another way of reading the text]* Then Shaphan the scribe informed the king saying **“Hilkiyah the priest has given a book to me”** and Shaphan read it aloud before the king. *The book [SEPHER] was literally “a written scroll.” It is worth observing that Shaphan makes little of the payment and much of the discovery of the word. The high significance of coming upon a text, perhaps even a scroll stretching back to Solomon’s day – was engrossing for these leaders.*

### **JOSIAH ORDERS THE PRIEST TO SEEK GOD 11-14**

*And in reality* as the king heard the words of the book of the law he tore his robe and the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest and Ahikam son of Shaphan and Achbor son of Michaiah and Shaphan the scribe and Asahiah servant of the king saying “Go, seek the LORD on my behalf and on behalf of the people and on behalf of all Judah over the words of this book that is found for the wrath of the LORD which is burning against us because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book to do all that is written in it.” So Hilkiyah the priest and Ahikam and Achbor and Shaphan and Asahiah went to Huldah the prophetess wife of Shallum son of Tikvah son of Harhas keeper of the robes and she was living in Jerusalem in the area of second rank *[MISHNAH of the city]* and they spoke or communed with her.

### **HULDAH BRINGS GOD’S WORD 15-20**

*The rare feature of a lady acting on the behalf of the LORD in the OT is profound enough. She had a long patronymic but her name “weasel” was not propitious. Her husband was forenamed “recompense” and his father “hope” and his grandfather*

*“poverty” and that very old man had risen in society and brought up his family in the second rank of Jewish aristocracy and was housed close to the palace tasked as he was with maintaining the king’s robes. The old tailor had gained a lovely recompense in standing for his family and his great-grand daughter was chosen by the LORD as one of His representatives alongside people like Isaiah. So much for male chauvinism!*

And she said to them **“Thus says the LORD God of Israel ‘speak to the man that sent you to me “Thus says the LORD ‘Behold me bring evil upon this place and upon its inhabitants – behold me bring all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read aloud. It is because of and in return for forsaking me and they have burned incense to other gods in order to cause me to be provoked by the work of their hands – therefore my wrath has ignited itself against this place and will not be extinguished.”** And to the king of Judah that sent you to enquire of the LORD, say to him **“Thus says the LORD God of Israel of the words you have heard “Because your heart is soft or timid and weak [Jkr – the expression sits easily with Paul’s advice to Timothy–1Timothy 4.12] and you have brought yourself low before the face of the LORD in paying attention to the words about this place and those who live in it that they are to be destroyed and cursed – and because you have torn your robes and have wept before me I also have heard, whispers the LORD tenderly. For that basic reason Behold me gather you to your fathers and gather you to your grave in peace and prosperity and your eyes will not see thoroughly all the evil that I am bringing on this place.”** So they brought the king a word of promise. *The great granddaughter of the tailor who was preparing new robes after the king had rent his clothing and who was busy keeping pace with the growth of the young king in clothing was herself well aware of the King’s reading from the scribe and the King’s sorrow from her great grandfather. She was ideally placed to understand his humility because she came from a very humble background. Besides all this she had an intimate walk with the LORD and He spoke with her and the high and mighty resorted to her for guidance and a word from God. There truly is no respect of persons with God!*

## CHAPTER 23

### JOSIAH’S COVENANT AND REFORMS 1-13

Then the king sent post haste and they brought together to him the entire eldership or leadership of Judah. And the king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah and every resident of Jerusalem with him and the priests, prophets and the entire people from the least to the great and he proclaimed in their ears the entire verbal content of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD. And the king stood at the pillar or stage and made a covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD and to keep His commandments and his testimonies and His statutes with all their heart and all their soul – to make the words of this covenant written in this book stand good. And the entire people stood for the covenant.

(1) Then the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest and the priests of the second order or Mishnah and the keepers of the threshold to take out from the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal and Asherah and for all the host of heaven and burn them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron and they carried the ashes to Bethel. *This was no half-hearted affair. It was by royal command which always ensures outward conformity but not equal inward enthusiasm. The confusion of syncretism was ended in Jerusalem itself and the idols burned to ashes in Kidron to the east and delivered miles northward at Bethel.*

(2) Then he caused the “love-priests” [*Chemarim*] to cease operating – they who had been empowered of the kings of Judah and were offering incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem

(3) Then he caused those who offered incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations and to all the host of heaven to cease.

(4) Then he thrust out the Asherah from the house of the LORD outside Jerusalem to the River Kidron and burned it at the River Kidron and caused it to be ground to dust and cast the dust on the graves of the children of the people.

(5) Then he tore down the houses of the male prostitutes who honoured idols [*myvdaq*] that was at the house of the LORD – houses in which the women were plaiting hair for the Asherah. *The entire orgiastic Phallic and religion-sexual cultus was taken apart.*

(6) Then he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah and polluted the high places where the priests had offered incense from Geba to Beersheba.

(8) Then he broke down the high places of the gates that were at the open gate of Joshua, commander of the city. *The very governor of Jerusalem had a high place by the gate where his rule was exercised. They were on the left side of a man at the gate of the city. All who passed through the gate were virtually invited to participate in idolatry before they got to the temple. It was officially sanctioned.*

The priests of the high places definitely did not come up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem but rather ate unleavened bread among their brothers.

(10) Then he polluted Tophet in the valley of the sons of Hinnom to prevent a man making his son and daughter pass through fire to or for Moloch. *This was not mere fire-walking – the procedure quenched life itself and gave children to death.*

(11) Then he stopped the horses that the kings of Judah gave to the sun from coming to the house of the LORD to the side chamber of Nathan-Melech the eunuch who was in the suburbs [*rbrp see 1 Chronicles 26.18*] and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

(12) Then **the altars that were on the roof** of the upper chamber of Ahaz – that the kings of Judah made and **the altars that Manasseh made** in both courts of the house of the LORD the king broke down and rushed from there and cast away the dust at the Kidron stream. *Here the zeal of the king himself is stressed by the writer. Jeremiah the traditional writer was himself a priest and son of the famous Hilkiah referred to at the outset of the chapter. He would be well aware of the king’s zeal which was to become legendary.*

(13) Then the high places that were facing Jerusalem – that were on the right side of the Mount of Defilement or Corruption which Solomon King of Israel built for Asheroth the loathsome abomination of those of Sidon; and Chemosh the abomination of Moab and for Milcom the detestable thing of the sons of Ammon the king polluted.

(14) Then he broke down the images and cut down the Asherah groves and filled the well-known places with men’s bones.

### **JOSIAH FULFILLS AN EARLIER PROPHECY AND REFORMS FURTHER 15-23**

(15) Then the altar that was at Bethel and the high place that Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin had made – both the altar and the high place he broke down and burned the high place smashing it to dust and he burned the Asherah grove.

(16) Then Josiah turned his face about and saw the graves that were there on the Mountain and sent and took the bones from the sepulchres and burned them on the altar and contaminated it in accordance with the word of God that the man of God

proclaimed who *previously* proclaimed these words. Then he said **“What is the obscure monument [*hxx*] that I am peering at?”** And the leading men of the city told him **“The tomb of a man of God that came from Judah and proclaimed these things you have accomplished concerning the altar at Bethel.”** Then he said **“Let him rest no man shall disturb his bones”** and they caused his bones to escape *digging up* along with the bones of the prophet that came from Samaria. [*The story of these unnamed prophets is told in 1Kings 13 1-34.*]

(17) Then all the houses *for idolatrous or phallic worship* that were in Samaria that the kings of Israel had built to provoke the LORD Josiah also removed and did to them in concert with what he had done to Bethel. And he slew all the priests that were there on the altars and burned the bones of man upon them and returned to Jerusalem. *Thus the far-reaching changes he imposed deeply affected life in the northern capitol. Josiah endeavoured a root-and-branch return to Yahweh.*

### **THE KING RE-INSTATES PASSOVER 21-23**

(18) Then the king commanded the entire people saying **“Offer Passover to the LORD in keeping with that written in the book of this covenant.”** For there was not a Passover like this undertaken since the days of the judges that judged Israel through all the days of the kings that ruled Judah. *It is instructive to observe that the days of the judges, for instance those of Samuel, were days when huge participatory Passovers or PESACHS were last celebrated.*

But with year eighteen of Josiah this Passover was undertaken to the LORD in Jerusalem.

### **THE KING DEALS WITH SPIRITISM 24-25**

(19) And also the wizards and those with familiar spirits and teraphim and idols and all the abominations which they saw in the land of Judah and Jerusalem Josiah burned and removed that he might raise high the words of the law written in the book that Hilkiyah the priest found in the temple of the LORD. And there was no king like him before that turned to the LORD with his whole heart and his whole being and all his might in keeping with the whole Law of Moses and after him there arose none like him. Definitely the LORD did not turn from the fierce heat of his great wrath because His anger had been kindled against Judah over all the provocations with which Manasseh provoked him. And the LORD said “I will also remove Judah from my presence as I removed Israel and I will reject and dissolve [*sam*] this city that I have chosen – even Jerusalem and the house that I said I would set there. And the rest of the actions of Josiah and all that he did are they not written in the book of the Acts of the kings of Judah?”

### **THE DEATH OF JOSIAH AS HE OPPOSED EGYPT AT MEGIDDO 29-30**

In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt came up against the King of Assyria to the River Euphrates [*trp* “*sweet water*”] and King Josiah went out to encounter him but he (Necho) slew him as soon as he saw him. And his servants took him dead in his chariot from Megiddo and brought him to Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb. Then the common people took Jehoahaz son of Joash and anointed him and made him ruler in place of his father. Jehoahaz was a man of twenty three when he reigned and he ruled three months in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. *It is of special interest that the writer himself Jeremiah makes it clear that this other Jeremiah [“may the LORD establish”] was father-in-law to King Joash. The unlikely name of the Queen was “father-in-law of dew or*



*benevolence.” The Libnah namesake of Jeremiah was somewhat prophetic also in the naming of his daughter as he anticipated her marriage – though perhaps not to the monarch himself.*

And he (Jehoahaz) did evil in the sight of the LORD of a sort with all that his fathers had done. *The inclusion of Josiah must not be understood from this generalisation.* Then Pharaoh Necho put him in custody in the land of Hamath from being king [*The Qere confirms Pharaoh’s disruption of his entire rule – the Kethibh text allows that he was imprisoned “in” the term of his rule*] in Jerusalem and applied a tax or fine of a hundred cor of silver and the same of gold on the land. Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of Jehoahaz his father and turned his name round to Jehoiakim and he took Jehoahaz to Egypt and he died there. So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh but definitely he estimated the reach or capacity of the land to supply the silver for the mouth of Pharaoh; he distressed every man as far as he could reach to pay the silver and the gold – he oppressed the common people to supply Pharaoh Necho. *Jeremiah as the received writer is expressing his own distress and that of his people at the straitened circumstances introduced by the taxation of the time. The change of name from “God shall establish” to “May the LORD establish” appears to be the one indulgence of Pharaoh who uses the name of God that defines Him in Egyptian history. However, the name is translated from a promise to a hope.*

#### **SUMMARY OF JEHOIAKIM’S RULE 36-7**

Jehoiakim was a man of twenty five when he took rule and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem and his mother’s name was Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD after the sort of all that his fathers did. *Like all the kings of this period Jehoiakim was well known to the writer Jeremiah and his family background is detailed as are those of kings immediately preceding. All this attests the familiarity of the writer with these rulers and their background.*

### **CHAPTER 24**

#### **MANY NATIONS ASSAULT JEHOIAKIM 1-4**

In his days Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon came up and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Then he turned and revolted against him. And the LORD sent troops of Chaldea and of Syria and Moab and of the sons of Ammon against Judah to lay it in ruin in keeping with the word of the LORD spoken by His servants the prophets. This definitely happened to Judah according to the mouth of the LORD to remove them from his presence through the sin of Manasseh in concert with all that he did. And there was also the innocent blood that he spilled for he filled Jerusalem with the blood of the innocent and the LORD was not willing to pardon or be placated.

#### **FINAL REFERENCE TO JEHOIAKIM’S REIGN 5-7**

And the remaining acts of Jehoiakim and all that he did are these not written in the book of the Acts of the day of the kings of Judah? So Jehoiakim rested with his fathers and Jehoiachin his son ruled in his place. So the King of Egypt did not add to come any more from his land for the King of Babylon had taken possession of all that had belonged to the King of Egypt from the River of Egypt to the River Euphrates.

### **BRIEF SUMMARY OF JEHOIAKIN'S CAREER 8-9**

Jehoiachin was a man of eighteen years of age when he took rule and he reigned three months in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Nehushta [*“brass”*] daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did evil in the eyes of the LORD of the sort his father did.

### **JEHOIACHIN SURRENDERS 10-16**

At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon went up to Jerusalem and arrived at the city with siege-work. So Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city and his servants were laying siege to it. But Jehoiachin King of Judah went out to the King of Babylon – he and his mother and his servants and his princes and his eunuchs and the King of Babylon captured him in year eight of his reign. And he brought out from there all the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the house of the king and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold that Solomon King of Israel had made for the temple of the LORD according to the word of the LORD. And he took captive all Jerusalem and all the princes and all the valiant men of war –ten thousand captives and all the workers in wood and stone and joiners. No remnant was left only the poor among the common people. So he took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon and the mother of the king and the wives of the king and the eunuchs and the mighty of the land he caused to go into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of wealth and power seven thousand and the wood and metal workers and joiners a thousand and all the warriors who undertook warfare the King of Babylon also brought captive to Babylon.

### **ZEDEKIAH'S REBELLION SEALS HIS FATE 17-20**

And the King of Babylon made Mattaniah his uncle king in his place and changed his name to Zedekiah. Zedekiah was twenty one years of age when he took rule and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Hamutal daughter of Jeremaih of Libnah. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD of a sort with all that Jehoiakim did. For on account of the anger of the LORD it happened that Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon in Jerusalem and Judah until He [*the LORD*] cast them from His presence

## **CHAPTER 25**

### **FINAL SIX MONTH SIEGE OF JERUSALEM 1-3**

*And the reality was* in year ten of the king in the tenth month of the year and the tenth day of the month Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon – he and all his army – came to Jerusalem and encamped against it and built circumvallation against it. So he made the city suffer by siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. *Essentially it was perhaps a six month siege- a period of gallant but essentially hopeless resistance.* Then in the ninth day... [*“of the fourth month” – Jeremiah39.2 & 52.6. The text of Kings simply says “on the ninth” as if we would say “on 9/11”. The prophetic writer in his own record within the prophecy of Jeremiah is more specific*]... the strength of famine overcame the city and there was no food for the ordinary people.

### **CRUEL SUMMARY JUSTICE MEETED OUT TO ZEDEKIAH 4 -7**

And the city was broken through and torn apart and all the men of war went off at night on the path of the gate between the walls that is beside the garden of the King towards the Arabah [for the Chaldeans were surrounding the city]. But the army of the Chaldeans set out in pursuit after the king and fell upon him in the Arabah of Jericho

and all his army had dispersed from nearby. So they had separated the king as a leper [*hcp*] and brought him up to the King of Babylon at Riblah and they promised him judgment. Then they slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes and gouged out his eyes and bound him in brass fetters brought him to Babylon. *The last sight Zedekiah witnessed must have made him hate his captors and rendered his remaining life one of great handicap.*

### **NEBUZARADAN TORCHES JERUSALEM MOPS US RESIDENTS & TAKES THE PRECIOUS BRASS OF THE TEMPLE 8-17**

Then in the fifth month on the seventh day of the month – that was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuzaradan chief of the guard or executioners, servant of the King of Babylon came to Jerusalem. *He was the very man who gave orders for the brutal killing of the princes.* And he burned the house of the LORD and the house of the king and all the houses of Jerusalem and every great house he burned with fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans that were with the chief of the guard tore down the walls of Jerusalem. And the remainder of the people – those remnants in the city and those traitors that fell away to the King of Babylon and the rest of the noisy crowd Nebuzaradan chief of the guard took captive. But the poor remnant of the land the captain of the guard caused to stay as vinedressers and ploughmen.

And the brazen pillars of the house of the LORD and the bases and the sea of brass that was in the house of the LORD the Chaldeans smashed up and they transported the brass to Babylon. And the cooking pots and the clearing shovels and the light snuffers and the spoons and all the vessels of brass that did service there they took away. And the fire-pans and the bowls that were gold – gold! And that which was silver – silver! The chief of the guard took away. *The writer emphasises the character of the gold and silver and that this was the real trophy of the conquest.*

The two pillars, the unique sea [*dja* “one and only” of its kind] and the bases that Solomon made for the house of the LORD – there was no weight estimate for all these utilities. The height of a single pillar was 18 cubits and the diadem upon it was brass and the chapters rose three cubits above and the ornamental branch embellishment and pomegranates upon the chapters around were entirely brass and similarly as to the second pillar upon its wreathen work or ornamental branches.

### **CIVIL & RELIGIOUS LEADERS SENT TO BABYLON 18-21**

So the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest and the three doorkeepers. And from the city he took one eunuch who was in charge of the men of war and five men of those that watched the person of the king who were discovered in the city and the secretary scribe of the captain of the host that mustered the common people of the land *for war* and sixty men of the people of the land that were found in the city. *There is just a hint of a reconstituting of the military which the captain snuffed out.* Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the royal guard took these and brought them to the King of Babylon at Riblah [*a location 50 miles north of Damascus*]. And the King of Babylon smote them and they died in Riblah in the land of Hamath. *Nebuchadnezzar killed the high priest of the LORD and also this band of sixty ordinary persons suspected of refuelling conspiracy.* So Judah was taken captive from their fertile land. And the people that were left in the land of Judah – those that Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon caused to remain – over them he set Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan as ruler.

Then all the commanders of the armies – they and their soldiers – heard that the King of Babylon had caused Gedaliah to be officer in charge these came to Gedaliah to

Mizpeh- Ishmael the son of Nehtaniah and Johanan the son of Careah and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite and Jaazaniah the son of Maachathite – they and their men. And Gedaliah swore to them and their men and said to them “Do not fear being servants of the Chaldeans. Reside in the land and serve the King of Babylon and it will be well with you.

*But the reality was* in the seventh month Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, from the seed of the royal house and ten men with him struck Gedaliah and he died and they also struck the Jews and Chaldeans that were with him at Mizpah. Then all the people from the small to the great arose and the commanders of the armies and they went to Egypt for they feared the faces of the Chaldeans. *This action was a kind of reprisal for the cruel slaughter of Israel’s king and priests. It also granted a window of opportunity for the Jews to escape to Egypt. We know from the prophecy of Jeremiah that he spoke against this emigration to Johanan and others that fled south to Bethlehem and were intent on settling in Egypt as a supposed safe haven. Jeremiah 40-46 deals with this final period of Jewish history as the monarchy ended. The account in Kings is a summarised version of Jeremiah’s own written prophecy and a detailed reading of both is recommended. The details and features totally corroborate each other and together with other evidence already adduced tend to confirm the two accounts as from one hand.*

*And the reality was* in year thirty seven of the captivity of Jehoiachin King of Judah in the twelfth month and the twentieth seventh day of the month Evil Merodach King of Babylon in his first year raised the head of Jehoiachin King of Judah from the house of solitary confinement and he spoke of better things with him and gave him a throne higher than the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon. And he changed the garments of his imprisonment and he ate his food continually in his presence all the days of his life. And his appointed portion was a constant portion given him by the king – a new allotment [literally “pasture”] daily throughout his day all the days he lived. *The last notice of the captivity is kinder. It may be that the dealing of God with Nebuchadnezzar had changed these cruel monarchs somewhat. Daniel’s wonderful counsels and wisdom was coming into play and the story of the three Hebrew children must have had a profound effect. There can be no doubt but that the LORD was easing the burden of His people in their captivity.*

## THE END OF THE BOOKS OF KINGS

### HELP OR REPAIR AND GIVEN RESTORATION

#### *Concluding Hebrew Postscript*

*There are 1534 “openings of the lips” belonging to the scroll of the book of kings. And our constitution or appointment is that of a happy people whose God is the LORD. There are 53 sederim in the book. So we are appointed and “I will be her own” whispers the LORD “a wall of fire about her and I will be for Glory in her midst and the Messiah king will gather the divisions of Israel by the prophets.”*

Bob Coffey  
A BIBLE COMPANION