


ABC COMMENTARY No.14

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INTRODUCTION

This commentary renders complete (by the Grace of Almighty God) the Series of 66 commentaries i.e. the final piece of work on the original “Westgate commentary” series now revised and incorporated into ABC Classic commentaries.

The systematic work on the NT text on a day by day basis took two years whilst the OT work required the commitment of five years (*It is to be understood that a day represented work from 7am to 7pm with short intermission*). To give some idea of the work load one year was spent completing the Torah and another in the major prophets. Time out each Sunday over 3 years was spent developing commentary No.18 (The Psalms) and the remaining Sundays through May 2008-May12 2009 were given over to work on Job and Proverbs & the literature of Solomon.

The book of 2 Chronicles carries several special interests which I simply list for your interest.

- (1) It demonstrates a special interest in highlighting **the work of God’s prophets** in their ministry to the kings of Judah and Israel. Instances are marked by using the **“Broadway”** font in the commentary.
- (2) The text descends to quite **loose Hebrew** in many places and the Qere Hebrew commentators have supplied the words apparently wanting. I have bracketed samples of such loci in bold typescript. Once the gender is rendered in error.
- (3) The **instructive prayers** of Asa and Jehoshaphat are recorded verbatim and reference is made to those of Hezekiah, Josiah and Manasseh.
- (4) The need to recognise that **God speaks through non-Jewish and equally non-Christian persons** and leaders and believers are bound to pay attention. I refer to 35 20-24 and the narrative on Necho & Josiah. Another instance of this is Cyrus the Persian.
- (5) The principle of **faith in healing** is taught in 16.11-14.
- (6) The emphasis on **national unity** encouraged from the days of Hezekiah is enhanced by the unitive Passovers and the phrase “those that found themselves (living) in Jerusalem” serves to point up this theme.
- (7) Under the history of Asa 9th Cent.B.C. there is an important reference to **world turmoil** in the era.
- (8) In 20.31-34 a significant reference to **Jehu Son of Hanani** supports the view that this man is a substantial contributor to the records we have in **First and Second Kings** which are frequently quoted in Chronicles.
- (9) The book makes not a few references to song and **the joy of the LORD** and its writer has a distinctly spiritual stance. He quotes the famous saying “The Spirit of the LORD clothed himself with Gideon” cp.Judges 6.24 with 24.20.
- (10) The book’s **historical sweep** takes us from Solomon to Cyrus the Persian in 539B.C. and the author displays intimacy with Jeremiah’s writing.

The book rewards close reading and much spiritual profit will result from learning the lessons of how God teaches his servants by their own history. The ongoing assessment of the lives of kings features no little gracious comment on their righteousness and altogether **the book largely features divine mercy and grace.**

Bob Coffey

A Bible Companion

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SECOND CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 1

SOLOMON GOES UP TO GIBEON 1-6

And Solomon, David's son, had been taking firm hold upon his kingdom and the LORD his God was with him and he was becoming great to flourishing or elevation. Then Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of thousands and hundreds, to judges and to all the dignities who carried responsibility, to the heads of the fathers. And Solomon and the whole congregation of his people went with him to the high place that is in Gibeon for **the tent of meeting** which Moses the servant of the LORD had constructed in the desert was there. Truly [*The word –BALAH is used. It's root means "wasting away"*] David brought up the ark of God from Kirjath Jearim to the place prepared for it because he had spread out an expanding tent [*the word is associated with MATEH (Bier) so that again the fading glory of the old is alluded to – so David had made a new tent*]. But the bronze altar that Bezaleel the son of Uri, son of Hur had made was there before the tabernacle of the LORD and Solomon and the congregation sought or frequented Him[DARASH] there. And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the Lord at the tent of meeting and offered on it a thousand burnt offerings. *We might well ask why such prolific offering – why such bloodshed? Solomon had clearly some conception of the cost of a relationship with God. Also we should note that ELEPH is a cognate of ALAPH which means "to become familiar" or "to accustom to friendship". Thus the King was establishing what we might call a deep costly friendship with God for himself and the nation. The sequel says it all.*

GOD APPEARS TO SOLOMON 7-12

In that night God appeared to Solomon or "caused Himself to be seen and experienced as belonging to Solomon and said to him "Ask what I shall give you in the future! Then Solomon said to God. You have made a great covenant or created great lovingkindness with David my father and have caused me to be king in his stead. Now, O LORD God, be making sure or faithful your word with David my father for You have made me king over great people as the dust of the earth. *Solomon saw his role as not just to the comparatively small nation of Israel but as worldwide. He saw the worldwide relevance of the purpose of God. Therein lay his vision and wisdom even from the beginning.*

So give me the ornament of wisdom and knowledge that I may go forth or publish decrees or bring to be fruitful[YAZAH] before the face of this people for who will judge this your great people? *This question appertains to temporal things and also enters into the ineffable realm of Theology and there God alone is judge of His people.*

Then God said to Solomon "Because this is **what is constantly abiding with your heart** and you have not asked riches or tithes and treasures and glory and the soul (in death) of your enemies and you have not asked for great or long days but you have asked for wisdom and knowledge that you might judge my people over whom I have made you king. Wisdom and knowledge [*especially spiritual and practical wisdom and experimental knowledge of God*] will be given to you and I will give you wealth and treasures and honour the like of which has not been or continued with kings that were before you. [*The effect here is that the LORD promised Solomon's wisdom would continue with him life-long. This also was true despite his errors – and he maintains it is so in his Ecclesiastes*]and none that are after you will continue thus.

SOLOMON RETURNS TO JERUSALEM 13-17

Then Solomon went to Jerusalem belonging to the high place that is in Gibeon. *[A clearer rendering might be “Solomon came from his relationship to Gibeon to a relationship with Jerusalem”. Gibeon was ever in his heart – it was the “beloved hill” where God so wonderfully met with Him]* from and to the faces of the tent of meeting. And he reigned over Israel.

And Solomon added chariots and horses and he had on a constant basis 1400 chariots and 12,000 horses and he caused them to rest or be based in chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. And the king provided silver and gold in Jerusalem as stones and cedar as plentiful as sycamore trees in the Shephelah. The horses of Solomon were brought from Egypt and Qua. *Scholars say nothing of the latter country. It was known as “land of the rope” It speaks of a league of peoples – perhaps Arab ponies from those tribes.*

The travelling merchants *[SOHARIM]* of the king took them at the selling price from Qua. *[A horse there may have cost beyond 150 shekels]* They went up and brought the chariot from Egypt for 600 shekels and the horse for 150 shekels of silver. And this was the base where they went up to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria. *[Thus Solomon supplied horse to far away Turkey and intermediately to Syria]*

And Solomon commanded or spoke to direct the building of a house for the name of the LORD and a house for his kingly palace. *So this great chapter of the final book of the O.T. closes with Solomon’s increased strength as a merchant and commander-in-chief but primarily as a spiritual man whose priority was the House of God – the permanent dwelling with Him of the God He counted as His friend. Like Abrajham he would have the greatest conceit in the LORD’S friendship.*

What a Friend we have in Jesus
All our sins and griefs to bear
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer.

CHAPTER 2

SOLOMON’S WORKFORCE (40-1 FOREMAN) 1-2

And Solomon reckoned on seventy thousand men as labourers or load-bearers and eighty thousand men as hewers of stone *[HOZEB]* in the mount and 3,600 eminent or brightly clothed supervisors over them.

SOLOMON WRITES TO HIRAM 3-10

Then Solomon posted to Hiram king of Tyre saying “Let it be just as you worked with David my father and sent him cedars for the building of a palace for him to live in. Behold I am building a house for the name of the LORD my God to cause it to be set apart to Him for the burning in His presence of sweet incense and for setting in order (showbread) daily and morning and evening offerings and offerings for Sabbaths, new moons and feasts of the LORD our God for this agelong or perpetual (burden or offering) of Israel.” *Solomon appeals open-ended for the sympathy of Hiram to trade in cedar timber as formerly with David. He testifies to his personal commitment to the LORD and shares his view that the work is ultimately linked to the agelong witness of Israel. (The phrase is not complete but its meaning can be derived from the word AOLAH “offering” and is secreted in the terms AL ISRAEL.)*

So the house that I am building will be great for our God is greater than all the powerful gods. But who retains the strength or wealth to build a house for Him **for the heavens and the heavens of the heavens are not able to sustain or endure**

him. *Solomon in his wisdom shows that the house of the highest heavens will decay and cannot last as Yahweh nor indeed can the house He Solomon builds on earth – but the people of God can by covenant endure while God endures. This even 900 years before the coming of Christ was revealed to the wise king.*

So who am I that I should build a house for Him for but if (only) to offer incense for his presence? So now send to me a man of wisdom to be creative in gold and silver, in brass and iron, in purple and crimson and purple or royal blue dyeing and one who is experienced in engraving and sculpture to be alongside the skilled men that are with me in Judah and Jerusalem – men that David my father established.

Also send me cedar timber, pine and almug trees from Lebanon for I know that your servants are skilled in cutting and carpentry in Lebanon. And look, my servants will be in association with your servants in order to prepare timber for me in abundance for the house I am building is great and the wonder or marvel (of the world). And behold I will give to your servants the carpenters and wood-cutters 20,000 cor of milled wheat and 20,000 cor of barley, 20,000 baths of wine and 20,000 baths of olive oil.

HIRAM’S REPLY 11-16

Then Hiram King of Tyre sent in writing to Solomon and said “Through the LORD’S love for and delight in [AHAB] His people He has given you to be king over them.” And Hiram said “Blessed is the LORD God of Israel that made the heavens and the earth – that has given to David the king a wise son aware of skill and understanding or its mediation who will himself build a house for the LORD and for his kingdom. So now I am sending a man of wisdom – a man of my father Hiram – who is experienced in understanding or art – the son of a woman from the daughters of Dan but his father was a man from Tyre. He has experience for undertaking work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, in stone and various woods, in purple blue and linen or byssus and crimson. Also to sculpture all types of engraving and to think out or calculate any intention or plan that is given to him along with your wise and practical men and the wise men of my lord David your father. And the wheat and barley, and oil and wine that my Lord has promised you shall send to your servants. And we will cut trees from Lebanon according to all that you need and we will get rafts to you upon the sea to Joppa and you shall get it up to Jerusalem.

IMMIGRANTS AND ALIENS GIVEN WORK 17-18

Then Solomon took a count of all the sturdy strangers that were in the land of Israel following the count that David his father logged and they were discovered to number 153,600. So from them he made 70,000 bearers of loads and 80,000(stone) cutters in the hill and 3,600 supervisors to oversee the people.

CHAPTER 3

SOLOMON BEGINS TO BUILD 1-2

So Solomon was itching or waited to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on the mountain of Moriah [“chosen of God”] where the LORD revealed himself to his father David at the site that David had prepared on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. Now he waited to build in the second day of the second month in the fourth year of his kingship. This dating placed the commencement of work between the first and second Passovers (for the resident and for the traveller) so as not to disturb either celebration. The event followed firstfruits and preceded Pentecost by about 40 days.

BASIC FEATURES OF THE HOUSE 3-7

And these are the basics or orders decreed [*HOSAD* – “*what had been established*”] by Solomon for the building of the house of God. The length measured in cubits taking the main measurement was 60 cubits and the breadth 20 cubits. Then the porch that was in front of the house – its length along the face was as the breadth of the house twenty cubits and **its height was 120 cubits [180feet]**, and he covered its interior [*PENINAH*] with pure gold. And the great house he covered with pitched pine and overlaid it with the best gold. And he spread over it artificial palm trees [*TIMORIM*] and small circular chains [*SHARSHARAH*]. *The timbers and gold signified that which endures and is the best. The palms signify “victory” and that was the hallmark of the Lord through the theocracy of David. The circular chains or ropes signify the bonds of the covenant that bound the nation to perpetual divine service.* And he overlaid to overflowing [*YAZAP*] the house with precious stones for beauty or glory and gold of Parvaim. *The temple interior was studded with glittering gems and the gold was gold of Parvaim which Bochart takes to be Ophir but Gesenius prefers to believe is Indian or oriental gold.* And he covered the house – the roof beams – the bases or pillars – and the walls and the doors **with gold** and engraved cherubim on the walls. *The impression was all-golden – the best earth affords. The Cherubim suggest heaven and I favour the view that the root of the word is “near to” hence “near to God”. There is some credibility that it means “steed” or “ship” – hence a means of conveyance of God’s will or blessing or judgment.*

THE HOLY OF HOLIES 8-10

And he made the house of the holy of holies – the length as the face of the broad house – 20 cubits and the breadth 20 cubits and he overlaid it with the best gold – 600 talents weight. And the weight of the nails was 50 shekels of gold. And he overlaid the higher chambers with gold. *This building was almost 200 feet high and would be very impressive – probably at the time the highest tower in the world since it was erected at about 2,400 feet above sea level. It may have had as many as 45 or even sixty chambers or somewhat fewer should they have been designed for larger meetings. All of these were overlaid with gold.* And in the house of the holy of holies he made two cherubim formed and overlaid with gold. *The Hebrew root ZAAH suggests inclining or even able to be caused to incline or enfold or kneel rather like our children’s mutating transformers.*

THE CHERUBIM 11-13

And the wings of the Cherubim were 20 cubits long. A single wing was five cubits long – touching the wall of the house and the other wing was five cubits long touching the wing of the other cherub. And the wing of the other cherub was five cubits long touching the wall of the house and the other wing was five cubits long joining [*DABAQ* “*adhering in affection and union*”] the wing of the other cherub. *The Cherubim are not idols but intimations that among the highest ones there is a mutuality of affection the one for the other combined with a worship of God. This should be the type of our marital union in worship of God and also of Christian brotherhood in union and worship of our redeemer.* The wings of these Cherubim were spread out twenty cubits and these were standing ministering on their feet and legs and their faces were towards the house [*of meeting – i.e. marital union of God & His people*]. *The cherubim were on the ministering side of the ark but not in front of it. They were looking toward the presence of the LORD. Their posture speaks of activity and continuous activity at that.*

THE VEIL AND PILLARS

And he made the separating veil [“break” or “separation”] of blue purple and crimson and byssus or fine linen and he wrought or worked cherubim in embossed or raised embroidery upon it. And he made for the frontage of the house two standing pillars 35 cubits in length or height and the capital that was on the head was 5 cubits. *The overall supports of the roof show the height of the holy place was about 55 feet high – settled upon pillars of 52.5 feet long.*

And he made chains of the oracle style and placed them on the heads of the pillars. *The oracle chains or ropes were small circular bonds set both in the holy place and at the entrance to show the links of unity of the people of God and the strands of close knit fellowship in his worship and service.* And he made 100 pomegranates and placed them between the chains. *Thus the fruitful relationship of God in the lives of His people was signified – in character and in quality of living.*

And he raised up the pillars at the faces of the temple – one on the right side and one on the left and he called the name of the right pillar Jachin and the name of the left pillar Boaz. *The meaning of the names is “God strengthens” or “God founds”. The name of the one on the left is “fleetness” or “alacrity”. The names of the pillars or columns have a prophetic significance – the one on the right is linked with **the king or crown who would in the future cause the establishment or constitution of the temple of God** and the sacrifice that sanctifies the people of God. All that the pillars speak about this **Jachin** figure or “prepared person” would bring to pass. The name **Boaz** signifies also “alacrity” and the “strength of defence” and this speaks of the king as the one who is formidable as a lion and fierce of countenance (and here also the undertone of alacrity emerges) who also “secures” and “conquers”. This crowned head is also the LORD’S and the crown is over both left and right pillars representing the “left hand” of **Christ’s judgment**” and the other pillar the “right hand” of the Son of God and King of Israel who will establish His realm by the New **Covenant of grace**.*

CHAPTER 4

THE BRONZE SEA 1-5

And he made a brass altar twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide and whose height was ten cubits. And he made the molten sea [qwx literally “distressed” or “troubled” or even “scanty”] ten cubits from lip to lip or shore to shore – round or revolving turning or enclosed [bbs] five cubits in depth and a measuring line of thirty cubits went right round it. *The scripture is saying that the Lord is master of the sea and of humanity and this testimony is maintained in the temple and in heaven where the “glassy sea” is still in the sovereign presence of God.*

And the likeness of oxen was under it surrounding it round and round – ten to each cubit causing the sea to be surrounded or go round binding as by rope[pqn]. *The figure shows that the sea is in God’s control – bound to 300 oxen.* Two rows of oxen in series in its casting. *Thus there were ten per cubit but they doubled up as in pairs so that the world was on the back of El Shaddai who was able to hold it in His power just as the hymn says[v being 300]*

He’s got the whole world in His hand

He’s got the whole world in His hand

He’s got you and me, brother, in His hand.

He’s got the whole world in His hand.

It stood ministering on twelve oxen. Three faced north, three west, three south, three east and the sea was upon them from above and all their hinder or future and later

things or parts were within. *The sea is prophetic of two outstanding facts – first, that from heaven Christ would give authority to his 12 apostles to go serve the whole world and second, in the kingdom age, Israel would become at the last the servant of mankind.*

And the thickness of it was a handbreadth and its lips were made as a cup lip flourishing or blossoming of the lily caused to be strong so it would hold three thousand baths. *This immense capacity signified the capacity of the Lord to cleanse every sin of which man repents.*

LAVERS CANDLESTICKS TABLES 6-8

He also made ten lavers or basins (the word is also used for the “pulpit” in 2 Chron. 6.13 which Solomon made) and he put five on the right and five on the left to wash their hands that (**‘were used in’-missing words**) the work of the offering in them. But the sea was for the priests to wash in. Then he made a menorah of gold according to their form and use and put five in the temple on the right and on the left. Then he made ten tables and put them in the temple – five on the right and five on the left and he made a hundred sprinkling dishes of gold.

THE PRIEST’S COURT AND UTILITIES 9-22

Then he made the priest’s enclosure and the great court and the doors of the court and overlaid the doors with brass. And he placed the sea on the right wing of the east side towards the southern section. And Hiram made the pots or fishhooks, the shovels to clear up and the sprinkling bowls and Hiram completed the work he was to do for king Solomon in the house of God. *He completed* the two pillars and the two bowl cavities and the crowns around the head of the pillars and the two wreaths or crowns set to cover the two naked bowls which were upon the heads of the pillars. *The pommels or the “bellies” or womb like features at the head spoke of life and fruitfulness.* And the two networks to clothe or beautify the two naked or bare cavities of the crowns or capitals that were on the head of the pillars. And the four hundred pomegranates belonging to the two networks were double tiers of pomegranates to each network to conceal the cavities of the capitals that were on the surface of the pillars. *There is a sort of wreathing which one associates with innocence and the covering of the pubic area in artistic portrayals of the human anatomy.* He made stands or pedestals and also brazen lavers on the stands. Also, a single sea and twelve oxen underneath it. Both pots and shovels for clearing and forks and all the instruments that Hiram his father made for king Solomon for the house of the LORD were of bright polished brass. *The comment is intended to mean that they were scintillating – a truly great job.* In the country circumjacent to Jordan the king poured out the metal moulds in the dense red (clay) of the earth between Succoth and Zaredathah. *In that area the Jabbok, Jordan and another tributary merge to form the unitary river.* So Solomon made a very large amount of all these vessels because the weight and worth of the brass was not searched out.

EVERYTHING IN THE HOLY PLACE WAS OF GOLD 19-22

So Solomon made **all the vessels** which were in the house of the LORD and the **golden altar** and **the tables** upon which the bread of the presence was placed. Also the **candlesticks** and **their lamps to burn** with fire according to their appointed manner before the presence of the oracle of choice gold. And **the artificial blossoming flowers and lamps** and **the tongs** for gripping were gold – wholly of gold. And the **snuffers and the dishes** for sprinkling and the **spoons** and the fire

shovels or censers were of genuine or precious gold and the **inner doors** at the entrance of the house to the holy of holies and the **doors of the house** of the temple itself were of gold.

CHAPTER 5

A PERFECT JOB 1-2

So all the prescribed artisan work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was complete entire and perfect and Solomon brought in the holy things of David his father – both the silver and gold and all the useful implements he donated to the treasury of the house of God. Then Solomon gathered together the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes and high officers of the fathers of the children of Israel to Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the city of David which is Zion. *The distance of Zion was but a few kilometers. Zion lay immediately south of Mount Ophel – the temple Mount and between the Tyropoeon and Kidron valleys.*

GOOD ORDER 3-10

- (1) So all the men of Israel congregated to the king at the feast that is the seventh month. *The season is that of the feast of Tabernacles and the highlight was the day of atonement when the strong man led the scapegoat into the desert.*
- (2) So all the elders of Israel came and the Levites bore up the ark.
- (3) And they brought up the ark and the tabernacle of the congregation and all the vessels of the holy place that had been in the tabernacle – these priests and Levites brought and presented.
- (4) King Solomon also and the entire congregation of Israel that came together at his appointment offered offerings of sheep and cattle that were not being calculated and numbered for greatness.
- (5) And the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord to its place at the oracle of the house – at the holy of holies under the wings of the Cherubim. And it was so that the Cherubim spread their wings over the the place of the ark and Cherubim covered the ark and its poles above.
- (6) And they drew out the poles and the heads of the poles of the ark were seen at the face of the oracle but they were not seen outside and it (the ark) is there until this day. *The supposed history of the switch of the ark in later times and its subsequent location in Ethiopia is not mentioned. The reference in 2Chronicles 21.12 to the elegy composed by Jeremiah on Josiah's death (608BC) suggests the uninterrupted residence of the ark to quite late times.*

There was nothing in the ark except two tables which Moses put in it at Horeb when the LORD made a covenant with the sons of Israel in their coming out of Egypt.

THE PRIESTS STRIKE UP PRAISE 11-14

And it was so when the priests came out of the holy place [for all the priests that went in had been sanctified – none were attached to keeping the courses. And the Levite singers attached to all (groups); to Asaph; to Heman; to Jeduthun; to their sons and to their brothers clothed in fine linen and with cymbals and psalteries and harps stood at the east of the altar and along with them 120 priests blowing trumpets. **And it was so** the trumpeters and singers were **as one** – *a telling harmony* – **to twist together** to cause one voice to be heard to praise and to thank the LORD and to cause a voice to be lifted up with trumpets cymbals and with musical instruments and **they kept on to praise** the Lord (*Piel*) for He is good for his covenant mercy is for perpetuity or as He lives and the house was filled with cloud – even the house of

the LORD. And the priests were not able to stand to minister from the presence of the cloud for the Glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

We are to note the total holiness of the priest of the period. None dipped out of the task of presenting before God. We should also note the intense unity among them. We should further note their thorough preparation and willingness to spend time singing to God's praise and enjoying the LORD. The manifestation of the Glory of God was a response to deeply genuine praise. Finally we are to see the event as one in which God Himself was ministering to them and showing a superior ministry of Glory existed for the welfare of His people.

CHAPTER 6

SOLOMON HINTS THE TRIUNITY OF GOD

Then Solomon said (under revelation) "The LORD said he would dwell in the obscurity of cloud. And **I have built a house of 'dwelling together' for You** and a place for your rest for ages." Solomon used the Hebrew words "House of conjugal dwelling" [BETH-ZEBEL] as if God were like husband and wife and there were companionship within the deity – although the union is first one of God and nation.

Then the king turned his face and blessed all the assembly of Israel and all the congregation of Israel was standing. And he said "Blessed is the LORD God of Israel who has perfected with His hands what He spoke of doing with His mouth to my father David saying..." *The LORD had literally "filled up" the empty house.* "From the day that I brought my people from the land of Egypt I have not chosen to build a house in a city of any of the tribes of Israel to be there for my name and I have not chosen any man to be leader or ruler of my people Israel. But I have chosen in Jerusalem that my name shall be there and I have chosen in David that there shall be oversight of my people." And it was with the heart of David to build a house for the LORD God of Israel. But the LORD said to David my father "Because it was a constant companion (thought) of your heart to build a house for my name you have caused the good or the best when that was with your heart. You will definitely not build the house for your son that comes from your loins – it is he who shall build the house for my name." So the Lord has raised or awakened His word which He spoke and I am raised up under David my father and I sit upon Israel's throne according to the promise of the LORD and I have built a house for the name of the God of Israel. And I have placed there the ark in which is the covenant of the LORD which He made with the children of Israel.

THE PRAYER OF SOLOMON

And he stood ministering before the face of the altar of the LORD in the sight of all the congregation of Israel and he spread forth his hands. For Solomon had made a brass scaffold or platform [KIYOR] and placed it in the midst of the temple court. It was five cubits long and five wide and three cubits in height. *This platform easily companioned the brazen altar and was the counterpart of that ministry involving "sacrifice" and "prayer".* Then he mounted it and bowed down upon his knees before all the assembly of Israel and spread his hands to heaven.

- (1) And he said "O LORD God of Israel **there is no God like You in heaven or on earth who watches over covenant and mercy** with your servants who walk before your face with all their heart. You watched over what you promised my father David and promised it with Your mouth and fulfilled it with your hand as it is this day. So now O LORD God of Israel keep with your

servant David my father that which you promised him saying “There shall not be cut off from you a man **‘from and belonging to my face’** sitting upon the throne of Israel provided [RAQ] your sons take care of their ways to walk in the law as you have walked before my face.” *Ultimately God speaks of His son.*

- (2) And now, O LORD God of Israel, Let Your word be made sure that You spoke to your servant David. “But **will God in a fixed Amen manner dwell with Adam or mankind upon the earth?** Behold the heaven of heavens will not sustain or provide for You [YECALCELUCH] on a continuing basis how much less this house that I have built?
- (3) So turn yourself to the prayer [TEPHILLAH] of Your servant and to the favour [HANAN] O LORD my God to hear the cry for help [RINAH] and to the prayer that your servant had prayed while in your presence. **So that your eyes may be open to this house day and night** at this place where You have said your name would dwell to hear the prayer Your servant has prayed at this place.
- (4) So listen to the request for favour of Your servant and you people Israel which they shall pray at this place and You from the place you rest [SABBATH] – from heaven and hear **and forgive or make our burden light.**

REALISTIC FUTURE SITUATIONS PUT TO GOD 22-39

- (1) **If a man sin against his neighbour** and he is put to oath to cause him to swear and the oath comes before Your altar in this house then You hear from heaven and take action and judge Your servants to repay the wicked by rewarding his way on his own head and causing the just to be justified rewarding him according to his righteousness.
- (2) **And if Your people Israel flee before the enemy** because they have sinned against You; then they repent and confess Your name and pray and seek favour before Your face at this place, then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel and return them to the land you gave them and their fathers.
- (3) **At the shutting and restraining of the heavens when there is no rain** because they have sinned against You but they will have prayed toward this place and confessed your name and turned from their sin when You give witness *to it* then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants and Your people Israel when you teach them [TOREM] the good way in which they are to walk and give them water on their land that You gave Your people for a heritage.
- (4) **When there is famine in the land** – when there is plague – there is blight and yellow mildew locusts and when there is crop devouring locust and when their enemies distress them in the cities of their land – any smiting or any disease or sickness [MAHALAH]. All prayer – all supplication for favour that will belong to any man or all your people Israel when each man has experience for himself of being smitten and sorrow or pain [CAAB] and stretches out his hands toward or at this then hear from heaven the appointed place of your Sabbath and forgive and render to every man according to all his ways whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of the sons of Adam)...” *We have a declaration of the unique omniscience of God. Present and perfect knowledge of man is proclaimed as a doctrine to be believed*

“...that they may reverence You all the days they live upon the fertile land that the LORD gave to their fathers.

- (5) **Then in addition concerning the stranger** who is not from Your people Israel –bhe who comes or came from a far-off land on account of Your great name and Your strong hand and stretched out arm if he comes and has prayed at this house then You hear from heaven – from the appointed place of your Sabbath and act according to all that concerning which the stranger calls upon You in order that all the peoples of the earth may have personal experience of Your name and fear You as Your people Israel and that they may know that Your name is proclaimed over this house which I have built.
- (6) **If your people goes to war against his enemy** in the way You send them and they have prayed to You in the direction of this city You have chosen and at this house I have built for Your name then hear their prayer from heaven and the favour they seek and take action to uphold their right.
- (7) **If they sin against You for there is no man that does not sin** and You are angry with them and give them into the hand of their enemies and they carry them captive to a far away land or one that is close – but if they cause them to return to their hearts or love in the land where they are captive and turn and cause them to seek favour of You in the land of their captivity saying ‘We have sinned; we have done iniquity; we have been wicked’ but they turn to You with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they became captives and they have prayed in the direction or manner of the land which you gave to their fathers and toward the city You chose for the house I have built then hear their prayer and the favour they seek from heaven the appointed place of Your Sabbath and act to uphold their cause and forgive Your people who have sinned against You. *This petition declares Solomon’s belief in mans natural sinfulness. Solomon uses the expression “When he will sin” which shows the inevitability of sin in the sinful estate.*

CONCLUDING PETITIONS 40-42

Now, O God, I pray it may be Your eyes will be open and Your ears attentive to the prayer of this place. So now Arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place – You and the ark of Your strength. May your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with “Salvation” and Your saints be radiant in your goodness. O LORD God, do not turn Your face from Your anointed. Remember the covenant mercy connection of David Your servant. *Solomon concludes this extended intercessory prayer with seven petitions. He desires God be ever vigilant of need and ever attentive to people praying. He desires third, that God arise and rest as upon a mighty throne at the nations heart upon the ark. He desires, fourth, that the priests who have lovely garments should be men who “cry for salvation” as their central ministry. He desires, fifth, that there be joy among the saints of his day. He desires, six to have the smiling of God’s face. He desires, seven that the covenant with David above all things is ever in mind as it moves towards the coming of Great David’s greater Son.*

CHAPTER 7

THE FIRE FELL – THE PEOPLE SING 1-3

When Solomon had completed having made his prayer the fire fell from heaven and swallowed up the burnt offering [OLA] and the offerings [ZEBAH] and the glory of the LORD filled the house. *The offerings on the nearby altar went up in flame close to Solomon to show the LORD’S acceptance of the king’s prayer. The*

other offerings variously slain and made ready were, it would appear, consumed where they were. Anything slaughtered was burned up. Again the priests seemed the merest accessories. The “filling” of the house is the “completion” of the house. All its grandeur was nothing or its gold or furniture unless the LORD were present. And the priests were not able to go into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD. And all the children of Israel had sight of the coming down of the fire and the Glory of the LORD upon the house and they bowed or sank down on their knees –faces toward the earth on the tassellated or checkered pavement [RATZAH] and they worshipped and praised the LORD because He is good for His covenant love is for perpetuity. The people of Israel were so aware of the promises and of the love of God for them that they fell into song and exalted the eternal covenant and the promises to Abraham. Israel’s God is a God that answers by fire and this was engraved on the Jewish psyche by Elijah’s act of faith and prayer at Carmel.

Send the fire O LORD we pray Thee
Let the flame of blessing fall
We are waiting we are waiting
O revive the hearts of all.

EXTENDED AREA FOR SACRIFICE 4-7

Then the king and all the people sacrificed a sacrifice before the LORD. And King Solomon sacrificed a sacrifice of twenty two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep and the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. And the priests ministered over their watch (as to the perfection of the sacrifices) and **the Levites** with the LORD’S instruments of music that David the king had made for God’s praise because His covenant love endures for ever in the praise of David by their hands. *In other words the Levites struck up psalms in David style with David’s instruments to commemorate the massive contribution of that King both to praise and to the house.* And the priests blew trumpets over against them and all Israel stood to minister. *There can be little doubt that many sang along with the music on this auspicious occasion. We are meant to catch the impression of joy – as later in Josiah’s Passover.* And Solomon set aside the centre of the court that is before the house of the LORD for there he offered burnt offerings and the fat or peace offerings because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to take the burnt offerings and the meat offerings and the fat.

THE SEVEN DAY FEAST 8-11

And also at that time Solomon made the feast continue seven days and all the people of Israel were with him – a very great congregation drawn from the entrance to Hamath to the river of Egypt. And they made a closure on the eighth day for they did the dedication of the altar for seven days and (*thereafter*) the feast seven days. And on the 23rd day of the seventh month he sent the people to their tents radiant and happy of heart on account of the prosperity or good the LORD had done for David and for Solomon and for Israel His people. And Solomon finished the house of the LORD and all that came into Solomon’s heart to do for the house of the LORD and his own house he accomplished with success.

SOLOMON’S PENIEL 12-22

And the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for my own for a house of sacrifice. If [HEN] I

close up heaven and there is no rain; if I command the locust to devour the land and if I send a plague among my people **and my people that call them by my name bow low as those subdued or submitting[KANAN] and will have prayed and will seek my face and alter their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sin and heal their land**". Now my eyes will be open and my ears acutely listening to the prayers of this place. And now I have chosen and consecrated this house to exist for my name here until the age and my eyes and my heart will be there every day or all the days.

DIVINE WARNING TO SOLOMON 17-22

"And you, if you will walk before my face as David your father walked to do after all that I commanded you and watch to keep the ordinances and judgments the I will cause the throne of your kingdom to stand as I covenanted with David your father saying 'There shall not be cut off from you a man to be ruler and teacher in Israel.'

But, if you turn and forsake my ordinances and my commandments that I have provided before your face and walk after and serve other gods, then I will tear them up from the fertile land that I gave to them and this house that I have sanctified for my name I will despise or cast down from before my face and I will make it a proverb [MOSHAL] and a taunt [SHANAN] among all peoples. And this house which is high will be a waste or desolation [YASHAM] to all who walk past it and they will say 'Why did the LORD do this to this land and to this house? And they will say to give light 'Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers who brought them from the land of Egypt and took strong hold of other gods and worshipped and served them. Therefore He brought all this evil on them'."

CHAPTER 8

THE PRODUCT OF TWENTY YEARS AS A BUILDER 1-6

And the product or harvest of twenty years was when Solomon built the house of the LORD and his house. And the cities that Hiram gave to Solomon built up and the children of Israel lived there. And Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and seized it. And he built Tadmor ["city of palm-trees"] in the wilderness and all the treasure cities for bounty that he received in Hamath. And he built upper Beth Horon and lower Beth-Horon, fortified cities with walls doors and bars. He also built cities of chariots and cities of mounted horsemen and all the delight or pleasing structures that he enjoyed building in Jerusalem and Lebanon and in all the land that he ruled.

SOLOMON TAXED THE EARLY INHABITANTS TO SERVE AS BUILDERS 7-10

All the remainder of the Hittite, Amorite, Perizzite, Hivite and Jebusite people – those who were not from Israel – their sons that the children of Israel did not finish off who remained after them in the land, on them Solomon apportioned tribute even to this day. *The time period is uncertain but Chronicles as John Kitto points out in 1Chronicles 9 gives appreciably larger accessions of members of the tribe of Judah in Jerusalem than in Nehemiah's time (690 as compared with 468 in Nehemiah 11) and 956 of the tribe of Benjamin as compared to Nehemiah's 928). 1 Chronicles 9.2 is firmly within the post-exilic period. Thus the tax Solomon*

served stood for 500 years and appears to have applied even after the exile. Together with the telling use of the term “Daric”(Gesenius) or drachma(Ewald) this genealogical data presents an authorship in the Persian or early Greek period. Rabbi Benjamin even suggests a date as late as 260BC.but I would be more content with the immediate post-exilic setting. 2Chronicles features the days of Jeremiah.

But Solomon did not provide manpower from the sons of Israel to serve his work projects for these were men of war and his chief captains and chief charioteers and horsemen. And these chiefs of the appointed military staff of the king were 250 who ruled over the people. *Solomon charged his people with the military security of his realm and the former inhabitants he set under tribute and service.*

SOLOMON AND PHARAOH’S DAUGHTER – A DISTINCT COMPROMISE 11

And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh from the city of David to the house he built for her because he said luminously “My woman shall not live in the house or palace of David king of Israel because the places the ark of the LORD God has come are holy. *We see the conscience of Solomon mirrored in his awareness that idolatry and David’s ark of God had no fellowship one with the other.*

SOLOMON RETAINS THE THRICE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OFFERINGS 12-13

At that time Solomon offered offerings to the LORD on the altar which he had built before the porch [*a building 120 feet high*] and according to a daily command or order for the offerings according to the commandments of Moses concerning Sabbaths and New moons and Feasts – three times a year in the feast of Unleavened Bread and the feast of Weeks and the feast of Tabernacles. *Solomon was fastidious in observation of religious duty*

SOLOMON AND THE PRIESTHOOD 14-16

He also established according to the usage of David his father the courses of the priests on their service and the Levites on their watches for praise and service before the priests according to the practice day by day. Also, the gatekeepers according to their assignment door by door for thus was the command of David the man of God. *Clearly both for welcome and for gaining some sense of the need of worshippers David had been punctilious about “doorkeeping” and considered this a high honour(Psalm 84.10).* And they did not cease from the command of the king on priests and Levites according to any affair and concerning the treasuries or gift boxes. *The house of God was well maintained in the days of Solomon and the praise of God was equally robust and inspiring. The matter of the people’s spirituality was of high priority.*

Now all the huge undertaking of Solomon was ready and confirmed to the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD and until he completed the whole of the house of the LORD.

AFTER TWENTY YEARS SOLOMON ESTABLISHES HIS NAVY 17-19

Then Solomon went to Ezion-Geber to Eilat on the coast of the sea in the land of Edom. And Hiram sent him by the hand of his servants both ships and servants who had personal experience of the sea and they went with the servants of

Solomon to Ophir and took from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold and caused it to be brought to King Solomon. *It appears they did not purchase the gold but rather were well able to find and mine it – perhaps it was an assign that the king had arranged – but more likely an area where any who were powerful enough could strike a claim. Ophir is a location which has been variously located in Africa and India. I favour Jerome’s understanding that the location is north of Bombay in India. The reason is that other items mentioned in I Kings 10 as coming from this area are all native to India perhaps exclusively. Besides, there was shipping already between the Persian Gulf and India. Solomon with the aid of the seamen of Hiram who may have worked the eastern route opened up at this time – one of the longest trade routes of the ancient world. In I Kings 10.22 we read that these metal trading ships which would be strongly constructed for long voyages set out for a round trip of between 1-2 or 3 years. The distance and the need for seasonal navigation between Eilat and Bombay would take best account of the Indian destination.*

CHAPTER 9

THE VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA 1-12

Then the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon and came to test or prove [hst] Solomon with enigmas or difficulties [dwj] at Jerusalem with a very great or honourable host or army and camels bearing sweet spices and abundant gold and precious stones. And she came to Solomon and he told her all that was upon her heart. And Solomon declared or made manifest to her matters she spoke of and there was no matter hidden from Solomon that he did not explain to her. So *when* the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon and the house that he built and the food eaten at his table and the situation or residence of his servants and the standing order of his attendants and their uniform and his cup-bearers and their official dress and his staircase or elevation by which he went up to the house of God there was no further spirit in her. Then she said to the king “The word was true which I heard in my land on your affairs and about your wisdom. But I did not believe their words until I came and my eyes saw it. And behold not one half of the great things of your wisdom was explained to me. You have added beyond the report that I heard.”

Happy are your warriors and happy your servants that stand to minister before your face constantly and listen to your wisdom. May Yahweh your God be blessed who inclines to or is pleased with you to place you on the throne to be king for it is the LORD your God **by the love of your God for Israel** to cause them to be established for age or perpetuity. And he provided you for their king to do judgment and righteousness.

Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold and a very great horde of spices and precious stones. And there was no spice like that which the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon. Also the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon that brought gold from Ophir also brought Almug trees and precious stones. And the king made elevated highways to the house of the Lord and the house of the king and harps and Nabalim for the singers and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah. And King Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all her desire – or all that her ardour asked apart from that which she brought to the king. **And she turned herself or “changed” and went back to her land,** she and her servants.

SOLOMON'S ANNUAL INCOME 13-14

And it was so that the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold apart from what the mining men and commercial traders brought. Also all the kings of Arabia and the deputies or governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon.

SOLOMON'S WEAPONRY DISPLAYED IN HIS LEBANON PALACE 15-19

And King Solomon made 200 shields of beaten gold; 600 (shekels) of beaten gold were over one shield and 300 shields of beaten gold with 300 (shekels) upon each shield. *The target[mx] was a prickly shield – with sharp projecting sharp bosses for assault* and the king placed them in the palace of the forest of Lebanon. The king also made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with pure gold. And there were six risers fastened to the throne and a gold stool belonging to the throne and handrails fastened on either side of the seat and two lions standing beside the supports. So, twelve lions stood there six on either side of the rising steps. There was not the like made for any kingdom.

SOLOMON'S WINE VESSELS AND THI-ANNUAL INCOME 20-24

And all the vessels of king Solomon used for drinking wine were of gold and all the vessels of the forest of the palace of Lebanon were pure gold. None was silver. In the days of Solomon it was not thought about as this or that. *Thus gold was the medium of choice – no particular consideration was given to cost.* For the ships of the king went to Tarshish with servants of Hiram. **Once in three years** the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold silver, tusks of (elephants) apes and peacocks [jkt]. And King Solomon was greater than all the kings of the earth for riches and wisdom. And all the kings of the earth sought the face of Solomon to hear his wisdom **which God provided in his heart.** And they each brought a gift – vessels of silver and vessels of gold and robes and battle armour and spices and horses and mules according to a business plan year by year.

SOLOMON'S HORSES 25

And Solomon had 4000 mangers [hwrā]for horses and chariots and 12,000 horsemen whom he caused to rest in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

SOLOMON'S REIGN FROM EUPHRATES TO EGYPT 26-28

And it was a fact that he had power or lordship and the power to assimilate [lvm]in the kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) and to the land of the Philistines and to the borders of Egypt. And the king provided that silver became like stone in Jerusalem and he made cedars as manifold as sycomores in the Shephelah. And they caused horses to be brought to Solomon from Egypt and from every land.

SOLOMON'S FORTY YEAR REIGN 29-31

And the remainder of the acts of Solomon – first and last – are these not written in the books of Nathan the prophet and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jereboam the son of Nebat? So Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years. And Solomon slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David his father and Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

CHAPTER 10

THE EMBASSY OF JEREBOAM AND THE PEOPLE ABOUT SLAVERY 1-4

And Rehoboam went to Shechem for all Israel had come to Shechem to crown him king. And it was a fact that when Jereboam the son of Nebat who was in Egypt heard of it where he had passed in flight from the face of Solomon the king Jereboam then returned from Egypt. Then they send and called him and Jereboam and all Israel came and spoke in negotiation with Rehoboam saying “Your father caused a heavy yoke to be upon us and now lessen the hard service of your father and his heavy continual or habitual yoke [| |] which he placed upon us and we will be your servants!” And he spoke in reply to them “Return to me the day after tomorrow” and the people left.

RHEHOBOAM REJECTS THE COUNSEL OF THE OLD MEN & THEN RECEIVES THAT OF THE YOUNG 5-14

And king Rehoboam enquired of the old men who had stood to minister before Solomon his father during his lifetime saying “What word would you advise [x[y] tht I reply to this people? So they responded to him saying “If you will be good to this people and speak acceptable compensatory words [hxr] to them they will be your servants all the days of your life.” But, he departed from the counsel of the old men that they advised and he enquired of the young men that grew up with him and stood to minister before him. And he said to them “What advice do you give me that I may reply to this people who speak to me saying ‘Diminish the burden which your father laid on us.’” And the young men that had grown up along with him said “Thus you shall say to the people who spoke to you saying ‘Your father cause our yoke to be heavy but you will diminish it from upon us’ ...thus you shall say to the people that said ‘Your father made the yoke heavy on us and you make it lighter ‘thus you shall say to them “My little finger shall be thicker than my father’s thighs. Until now my father laid heavy burdens of servitude on you and I will add to your burdens. My father disciplined you with whips and I will discipline you with scorpion scourges.’”

Then Jereboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day as the king had directed saying “Return the third day”. And the king responded harshly and the king departed from the counsel that the elders had advised. And he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men saying “My father made your burdens heavy and I will add to that; my father disciplined you with whips and I will chastise you with scorpions.”

THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF GOD PREVAILS 15

Thus the king did not listen to the people for it was turned around or changed with or by God in order that the his word which he spoke by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jereboam the son of Nebat might be raised up or brought to pass.

THE DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM 16-19

So all Israel when the King did not listen to them returned the people’s answer to the king saying “What lot have we in David and we have no heritage in the son of Jesse – to your tents O Israel!” “And now David see to your house”. And all Israel went to their tents. But Rehoboam was still ruling over the sons of Israel that lived in the cities of Judah. Then king Rehoboam quickly sent Hadoram who was over the oppression [smj] and the children of Israel stoned him [mgr] with stones

so he died though King Rehoboam caused him to be encouraged or active bringing him up into his chariot to hasten to Jerusalem. But Israel rebelled against the house of David until this day. *This temperal notice takes us a long way towards the end of the monarchy when the Chronicles were compiled and concluded.*

CHAPTER 11

RHEHOBOAM GATHERS THE WARRIORS OF JUDAH & BENJAMIN 1-12

And Rehoboam came to Jerusalem and gathered the house of Judah and Benjamin; a hundred and eighty thousand chosen men of war to fight with Israel to retrieve the kingdom for Rehoboam. And the word of God came to Shemayahu saying “Speak to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah and to all Israel in the house of Judah and Benjamin saying “Thus says the LORD “You shall not go up and you shall not fight with your brothers. Return every man to his house for this thing is not from me.” And they listened to the the words of the Lord and returned from war with Jereboam. And Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built cities to fortify Jerusalem. And he built Bethlehem, Etam and Tekoa. Also the house of fortification (Beth Zur) and Shoco and Adullam. Also Gath and Mareshah and Ziph and Adorim and Lachish and Azekah and Zorah and Aijalon and Hebron which is in Judah and defensible cities in Benjamin (*A sizeable building programme of 15 cities in all*). And he strengthened the fortified places and placed over them commanders and a reserve of vituals and oil and wine. Then he placed in every separate city shields and spears and caused them to be exceedingly strong. Both Judah and Benjamin were with him.

THE LEVITES FORSAKE JEREBOAM 13-17

And the priests and Levites in the whole of Israel set them alongside him to minister from all their borders for the Levites left their pasturelands and their holdings and ported to Judah and Jerusalem for Jereboam and his sons had rejected them from the priesthood of the Lord. Then he caused priests to minister for him who belonged to the high places and to devilish spirits and for the calves he made. *Jereboam made an ungodly start and invoked evil spirits and dedicated the high places in open rebellion against Yahweh. The Priests for their part **by faith** left their alimony and source of welath and moved out in utter dependence on God.*

God of Israel from the tribes of Israel came to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the Lord God of their fathers. Thus they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and caused Rehoboam the son of Solomon to be strengthened for three years for for those three years they walked in then ways of David and Solomon. *The Levites played their part with the priests in adding spiritual strength to the monarchy.*

RHEHOBOAM’S LOVE FOR MAACHAH – ABSALOM’S DAUGHTER 18-23

And Rehoboam took Mahalath “daughter”(*the Hebrew text erroneously says “son of”*) Jerimoth, son of David...Abihail daughter of Eliab son of Jesse in marriage. And she produced sons for him: Jeush and Shamariah and Zaham. And after that he took Maachah the daughter of Absalom, and she produced Abijah and Attai and Ziza and Shelomith. So Rehoboam loved Maachah daughter of Absalom more than all his wives and concubines for he acquired *eighteen wives and sixty concubines* and produced twenty eight sons and sixty daughters. And Rehoboam established Abijah son of Maachah as first (*in line*) to rule among his brothers for he would cause him to be king. And he was of understanding and divided all his sons throughout the land of Judah and Benjamin to every fortified city and gave them abundant wealth and he

himself demanded [1ac] a noisy multitude of wives. *Rhehoboam was on the way to having his heart stolen from God by the harem he began to build. Otherwise he was skilled in construction, militarily acute, and shrewd in building his family power base. He even went so far as to combine in his family the houses of David and Saul.*

CHAPTER 12

RHEHOBOAM TURNS AWAY FROM THE LORD 1-5

And it was the case as soon as Rhehoboam had established the kingdom and made it strong he abandoned the Law of the LORD and with him the whole nation of Israel. And it was the case in the fifth year of king Rhehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt went up against Jerusalem through their going against the LORD. With twelve hundred chariots and six thousand horsemen and there was no numbering of the army that came with him from Egypt, the Lubims and Sukkims and Ethiopians. And he captured the fortified cities that appertained to Judah and came to Jerusalem.

RHEHOBOAM HUMBLING HIMSELF & THE LORD RELENTS 6-12

Then **Shemaiah the prophet** came to Rhehoboam and the princes of Judah that were massed at Jerusalem in face of Shishak and said to them “Thus says the LORD ‘You have forsaken me and I also have forsaken you to the hand of Shishak’”. *Shishak is well known historically – he was a prince of Libya who founded the 22nd dynasty of Egypt and reigned from 945-924 BC. It was in 925BC the year before his decease that he attacked Jerusalem. At the Thebes temple of Amun the list of towns he conquered in Palestine is recorded(NBC).* Then the princes of Israel and the king submitted themselves humbly and said “The Lord is righteous”. And when the LORD saw that they humbled them the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah saying “They have made them humble; I will not destroy them but I will give them deliverance in a little or limited measure and my wrath will not be delivered to Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. But they will be his servants and they shall have experience of my service and the slavery of the kingdoms of these lands. *The chastisement of the LORD involved a reciprocal “forsaking” so that some of the Jews would taste slavery. The LORD decided to highlight the “perfect freedom” of His service as over against the hard labour of slaves in the lands around.*

Thus Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem and took the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s house – he took the lot. He also confiscated the shields of gold that Solomon made. Then Rhehoboam made shields of brass instead and deposited them [dqp] to the authority of the favoured princes of the guard at the door of the king’s palace. And it (traditionally) happened when the king came into the house of the LORD the favourite princes returned them to the chamber of the princes. And through his humbling himself the wrath of the LORD turned from him and he would not spoil him to the end of his life and in Judah the course of events was prosperous and good.

SUMMARY OF HIS 17 YEAR REIGN 13-16

In this way king Rhehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and continued to reign for he was a man of forty one years when he commenced his reign and he reigned seventeen years in the city of Jerusalem – the city the LORD had chosen in which to set his name out of all the tribes of Israel. And the name of his mother was Naamah –a native of Ammon. And he did evil because he did not establish his heart to seek the LORD. And the acts of Rhehoboam – his early acts and later affairs are these not written in the recorded words of **Shemaiah the prophet** and of

Iddo the seer as to the family register and there were the wars of Rehoboam and Jeroboam through all the days. And Rehoboam lay to rest with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David and his son Abijah reigned in his place. *The dual record of the Prophet and the Seer told the story of Rehoboam from two perspectives – his public life and his family life. Scripture passes over the inveterate wars of these rivals with no other comment than that they were incessant. The LORD eschews the discord of His people.*

CHAPTER 13

ABIJAH'S REIGN BEGINS WITH WAR 1-3

In the eighteenth year of king Jereboam Abijah also rule over Judah. He ruled three years in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Michaiah daughter of Uriel from Gibeah. And war opened between Abijah and Jereboam. And Abijah tied down the battle with an army of mighty men of war – four hundred thousand select soldiers. Jereboam then stretched out the battle front with him with eight hundred thousand choice soldiers, mighty men of war.

JEROBOAM'S GODLY SPEECH OF DETERRENCE 4-12

Then Abijah rose up taking his stand from over the hill of Zemarim which is in Mount Ephraim and said “O Jeroboam and all Israel, listen to me. Are you not fully aware that the LORD God of Israel gave the rule over Israel to David for ever – to him and his sons by a covenant of salt.” *This type of covenant is referred to in Numbers 18.19 and Leviticus 2.13 and in this context. Salt was eaten by both parties to the covenant. By sacrifice in the time of David – perhaps under Samuel – the kingship of David was assured forever and assured to be “preserved without decay”. This covenant may seem to have decayed with the end of the monarchy but in Jesus Christ it has been preserved for a future glorious Messianic time. You may ask how God ate salt. The answer is that Christ in His death fulfilled this covenant besides the new covenant.* “But Jeroboam the son of Nebat the servant of Solomon son of David has risen up and has created sedition against his Lord. There are also ‘empty men’ drawn together to him – sons of Belial and they have caused themselves to gain power against Rehoboam the son of Solomon when Rehoboam was a youth and tender or easily frightened in his heart and was not strong enough to face them. And now you talk of having become strong enough to face the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David and you are a milling multitude and with you are the calves of gold that Jeroboam made for your gods. Have you not driven away the priests of the LORD – the sons of Aaron and the Levites and made for yourselves priests in the manner of the people of other countries. Each who comes to fill his hands with a bullock calf and seven rams will then be a priest belonging to gods that are not gods. But for ourselves – the LORD is our God. We have not forsaken Him and the priests who minister zealously to the LORD are sons of Aaron and the Levites are in the place of their service. And they burn ascending sacrifices morning by morning and evening by evening and aromatic incense and arrange the bread on the pure table and order the golden candlestick and its lights to continue burning morning and evening for we are guardians of the rites of the LORD our God but you have forsaken Him. And behold God is with us as the head or first and His priests with shophar blast to give warning of you O Children of Israel; do not war against the LORD God of your fathers for you will not be fit for it or succeed.”

JEROBOAM SPOILS FOR FIGHT AND SUSTAINS GREAT LOSS 13-20

But Jeroboam encircled them with an ambush from behind them so that they were facing Judah and the ambush was also behind them. Then Judah looked and behold their battle was behind and before so **they cried to the LORD** and the priests sounded the shophars. Then the men of Judah shouted in distress [[ry] and it happened at the shout of the men of Judah that God struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. And the children of Israel fled before Abijah and Judah. So the sons of Israel fled before Judah and God gave them into their hand. And Abijah and his army struck among them with great loss of life and there fell 500,000 chosen men of Israel. **So at that time the children of Israel submitted and the sons of Judah overcame for they stayed upon the LORD God of their fathers** (*An irreversible weakening of Israel*). And Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured cities from him: Bethel with its daughter towns; and Jeshanah and its daughter towns and Ephraim and its daughter towns. And the strength of Jeroboam was not ever dominant during the days of Abijah and the LORD smote him and he died.

ABIJAH GROWS MIGHTY 21-22

Then Abijah grew strong and he had fourteen wives and fathered twenty two sons and sixteen daughters. And the remainder of the acts of Abijah and his ways and his words are written in **the commentary of the prophet Iddo**.

CHAPTER 14

ASA STEMS IDOLATRY 1-5

So Abijah slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David and Asa [*“Physician” – in a sense he lived up to his name and in his time God healed his people spiritually*] his son ruled in his place. **In his days the land was undisturbed for ten years**. And Asa did what was good and straight in the eyes of the LORD for he removed the altars of the foreign gods and the high places and shattered the images to the sun [mmj] and put to rest Melchart or Astarte the queen of heaven before his face.

ASA BUILDS UP MILITARY DEFENCES 6-7

And he built fortified cities in Judah for the land was undisturbed[fqc]and **none warred with him in those years** because the LORD had caused there to be rest for him. So he said to Judah “Let us build ourselves these cities and encircle them with walls, towers, gates and bars while we still have the land belonging to us for we have consulted and frequented[vrd] the LORD. We have sought the LORD and He has given us rest all around. So they built and had good success [*The king consciously followed David’s spiritual model and kept in step with God*]. And Asa had military that carried shield and spear [*signifying heavily armed*]. From Judah there were 300,000 and from Benjamin those that carried the smaller shield [ngm] and used bows numbered 280,000. All these were mighty men of battle.

ASA CRIES TO THE LORD AND DEFEATS THE ETHIOPIAN MILLION 8-15

And Zerah the Ethiopian went out against them with with an army of one million and three hundred chariots and came to Mareshah. And Asa went out to face him and set the battle line in the valley of Zephanath at Mareshah. Then Asa cried to the LORD his God and said “**Lord, it is nothing with you to give help at the top of the scale a great number or at the other end those with no power. Help us O LORD our**

God for upon You we we are leaning [n[v “relying” “trusting” “depending as on a staff”] and in Your name we go against this milling multitude. O LORD You are our God, do not let fleshly man restrain your strength [rx[“stay your dominion” “restrain your strength].”

So the LORD struck the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah and the Ethiopians fled. And Asa and the army with him chased them to Gerar and the Ethiopians collapsed beyond recovery because they were completely broken before the LORD and His host and they (Judah) carried off very great spoil of war. And they struck all the cities around Gerar for the fear of the LORD was upon them and they plundered all the cities for there was great plunder within them. They also struck the goats hair tent enclosures of cattle and carried captive great flocks of sheep and cattle and returned to Jerusalem. *This was another singular victory achieved by utter dependence on the LORD. Seldom ever did Israel face a million foes. The prayer of Asa is historic. Asa stated Judah’s absolute faith in Yahweh alone and stated also that the honour of the name of the LORD went with His support of His people. He further believed that God’s sovereignty would prevail over the fleshly schemes of man. His prayer shows utter confidence in the LORD’S ability to assist the smallest suppliant. The prayer has three elements found in our LORD’S model prayer. The sacredness of the name of the LORD; the personal relationship to the LORD and the assurance of being heard because God’s is the power and glory or “dominion”. Forgiveness and deliverance from evil in the LORD’S prayer, notably, is connected to a solid assurance of the power and glory of the LORD.*

CHAPTER 15

JUDAH FLOURISHES BY FAITH AMID 9TH CENTURY B.C. TURMOIL 1-15

Then the Spirit of God came upon **Azariah son of Oded** and he went into the presence of Asa and said to him “Listen to me Asa and all Judah and Benjamin – the LORD is with you in the time when you are with Him and if you seek Him He will be found of you and if you forsake Him He will also forsake you.” *This prophetic message came at a significant time when Asa had achieved victory by divine help and before he turned as many kings have turned to personal gratification or idolatry. Azariah showed that it is vital to continue in fellowship with the LORD and that “seeking the LORD” with enthusiasm leads to God delighting to be present among His people.*

Then for many days Israel had been without the God of truth and had no priest to teach them, nor the law. But in their distress they turned to the LORD God of Israel and sought Him and He was found by them. And in those times there was no peace or security for anyone going out or in for there were great waves of tumult [mwh] over all who lived in all lands. And nation was beaten to pieces [ttk “as by a smith in a forge”] by nation and city by city for God routed or dispersed them amid every adversity. *It becomes important to know exactly of which period we are thinking for two things were decreed at this time. First there was a spreading out again of the human race and this was triggered and necessitated by distress touching the “purse” and the “stomach”. Men and nations were fighting over resources. Asa reigned 912-872 and this period appears to have been in the first phase of his reign – in the early 9th century B.C. During this period Carthage came on the map and the Lacedaemonians became legally organised whilst the Assyrian empire was waning. There appears to have been a time of impoverishment in the earth when the economic boom established under Solomon finally changed to bust. Egypt was taken over by Ethiopians and new powers were awakening in the west and in Africa.*

“So you be strong and do not let your hands relax in weakness for there will be wages or reward for your labour. So, as Asa listened to these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet he caused himself to be strong and removed the abominable things from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities he had captured from Mount Ephraim and freshened up the altar of the LORD which was in front of the porch of the LORD. Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin and the strangers with their company from Ephraim and Manasseh and from Simeon for there fell away to him many from Israel when they saw that the Lord God was with him. Then they gathered at Jerusalem in the thrid month and the fifteenth year of King Asa. And they offered the LORD that day of the spoil. They had come with seven hundred cattle and seven thousand sheep. They then came into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with their whole heart and soul. And all that would not seek the LORD God of Israel were put to death from little to great, whether man of woman. *The pressure to put God in His rightful place was absolute in the theocracy. We are used to absolute liberty to worship or to refrain at pleasure. It was not so in that day. In the time of Messiah’s golden rule with an iron rod there will be patience displayed even to 100 years but one who has not learned by then will be punished [Isaiah 66.20].*

And they took an oath to the LORD with a great voice and with triumphant shout and with trumpets and Shophars. And all Judah was radiant over the sworn oath for they had sworn with their whole heart and sought Him with entire delight and He was found of them and the LORD provided them rest all around. *The joy of “finding the LORD is on a par with our experience of being redeemed by grace. This was no formal ceremony – amid the national rejoicing many found a personal relationship with God for the first time. The result was rest in their souls and in their relationships with others.*

THE SAD FAILURE OF THE QUEEN MOTHER 16-17

And he also relieved Maachah , mother of king Asa from her mighty office as queen because she made a terrible Asherah and Asa cut down her abomination and beat it to dust and burned it at the brook Kidron. Yet the high places were not taken away from Israel nonetheless **the heart of Asa was whole or perfect [ml v]all his days.** *We need to observe such biblical statements showing the holy intent and daily reality of a good spiritual life. Asa goes down as one of the great kings of Judah. His utter dependence of the Lord and his **thorough** religious earnestness are clear. He established “teaching priests” and his people came joyfully to know the LORD.*

ASA DEDICATES VESSELS TO THE TEMPLE 18-19

And he brought the holy things of this father and his own holy dedicated things into the house of God – vessels of silver and gold. And there was no war until the thirty fifth year of King Asa. *In sum for 10 years Asa had peace to build up the strength of his nation. Then, he was attacked by a million strong Egyptian army of Ethiopians. After this for a full 30 years his realm was at peace despite the current worldwide turmoil. This good king was shielded and kept by the power of the LORD he sought and frequented daily.*

CHAPTER 16

ASA OUTMANOEUVRES BAASHA CITING AN OLD ALLIANCE 1-6

In the thirty-sixth year of Asa King of Judah, Baasha King of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah in order to prevent giving access for any to come and go to Asa king of Judah. *Baasha was intent on putting a stop to the drain on manpower from his kingdom. Many godly persons were falling away to the better monarch. And*

Asa, taking out silver and gold from the house of the LORD and the house of the king then sent to Ben-Hadad King of Syria who lived in Damascus saying “There is a treaty between me and you and between my father and your father. Behold I have sent you silver and gold. Go and declare void [rrp] your treaty with Baasha King of Israel that he may go up from me.” And Ben-Hadad heard and acted in obedience to King Asa and sent commanders of his army against cities of Israel and they took Ijon and Dan and Abel by the waters and all the prosperous cities of store of Naphtali. So when Baasha heard he ceased building Ramah and let the large scheme of work fall into abeyance. Then Asa the King took all Judah and they lifted all the stones of Ramah and its timber which Baasha was using as building material and with them He(Asa) built Geba and Mizpah.

ASA DEALS CRUELLY WITH THE SEER HANANI 7-10

But at that time **Hanani the seer** came to Asa King of Judah and said to him “Because of the reliance upon the King of Syria and your failure to rely on the LORD your God therefore the army of the King of Syria has escaped out of your hand. Were the Ethiopians and Lubim not a great army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen but through your reliance on the LORD He gave them into your hand?” **“For the eyes of the LORD have been constantly whipping around or running to and from in all the earth [ffv] to have shown his strength alongside the hearts of those who are safe or submitted in peace to Him”** [ml v “those disposed to” or “executing and operating with” Him]. Here is a noble lesson from Chronicles that all should note. God today is looking for you if you are crying out in full reliance upon him! Hanani continued “You have shown yourself foolish over this therefore from this time there will be battles you must fight.” And Asa was provoked to anger at the seer and cause him to be put in stocks in the prison [Jph]for he was angry and sullen with him over this. And Asa struggled with and crushed some of the people at this time. *It would appear that this departure cost the king dearly. Some who were in sympathy or who similarly spoke up against his unrighteousness suffered. This departure was deeply sad after so many years of godly living. It is an instruction to us to “Do justly love mercy and walk humbly with God” and continue therein.*

ASA’S FAILURE TO SEEK THE LORD IN ILLNESS 11-14

And behold the deeds of Asa first and last, these are written upon the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. And in the **thirty ninth** year of his reign Asa had a disease in his feet until from that the disease grew and **yet amid the disease he did not seek the LORD but the physicians.** *I have learned yet another noble lesson from the book of Chronicles. Asa had 11 years to seek God for his problem but those eleven plus silent years carry no testimony of his cries to God on behalf of his health.*

ASA’S DEATH 13-14

And Asa slept with his fathers and died in his forty-first year as king. And they buried him in his sepulchres which he had cut for himself in the city of David and they laid him to rest in a bed which was full of spices and all sorts of ointment made by the apothecary. And they made a **burning of spices** for him of a very large order. Cf. Jeremiah 34.5. *We could say that there was a most fragrant offering made at the departure of Asa as if to tell the story of his people’s appreciation of his lovely life. Withal there was deep sadness in his latter failure to “cry” to God. It is not what the*

people (of the nation) think of me that matters – it is precisely what God thinks. It is not my story but my heart’s story that matters.

CHAPTER 17

JEHOSHAPHAT HAS AN ELEVATED SPIRITUALITY 1-6

And Jehoshaphat his son ruled in his room and made himself strong in face of Israel. And he provided army units for all the fortified cities of Judah and garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father captured. And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in ways of David – **the first ways of his father** (*Asa*) and did not follow the Baalim. But he sought the LORD God of his father and walked in His commandments and did not act like Israel. Then the LORD established the kingdom firmly in his hand and all Judah brought presents to Jehoshaphat and he had riches and glory in large measure. When his heart was magnificent [hbg] in the ways of the LORD he continued to remove the high places and Asherah from Judah.

JEHOSHAPHAT SETS OUT TO TEACH THE NATION 7-9

Then in the third year of his rule he despatched his princes Ben Hayil and Ebed Yahu (**Obadiah**) [*Talmud Sanhedrin 39a places the prophet Obadiah in the 9th c. B.C. and links him to Ahab’s time*] and Zechariah and Nethaniel and Michaiah **to teach** in the cities of Judah. *The King appointed five teachers to train his people much as generally kings teach war.* And with them he despatched **Levites** Shemaiah and Nethaniah and Zebadiah and Asahel and Shemiramoth and Jehonathan and Adonijah and Tobijah and Tob-Adonijah – Levites and with them Elishama and Jehoram the **priests**. And they taught in Judah and with them was the book of the Torah of the LORD and they circled among all the cities of Judah and they taught among the people.

THE LORD MAKES HIS ENEMIES TO BE AT PEACE WITH HIM 10-11

And the fear of the LORD came upon all the lands that encircled Judah and they did not go to war with Jehoshaphat. And from among the Philistines they brought presents to Jehoshaphat and silver tribute. The Arabians also brought him flocks – seven thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred goats.

JEHOSHAPHAT’S MIGHTIES 12-19

And so it was that Jehoshaphat went on and became great to the height of greatness and built castle-fortresses [nr̄yb] and store cities in Judah. And this was a massive undertaking for him in the cities of Judah and there were men of war – mighty armed warriors in Jerusalem. And these were their numbers by the house of their fathers. For Judah the captains of thousands were Adnah the prince and with him 300,000 valiant men. And at his hand or command was Johanan the captain and with him 280,000 valiant men. Also under his command was Amasiah the son of Zichri (“*the celebrated*”) **who had given himself spontaneously to the LORD** and with him 200,000 valiant men. Then from Benjamin there was Eliada – a mighty war warrior and with him those heavily armed [qv̄n] with bow and small shield, 200,000. Also under his command was Jehozabad and with him 180,000 men prepared for [*the call*] to war. These waited to serve the king ardently [mytr̄vm] – as their single or only task [dbl m] – which men the king placed in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

This outstanding King Jehoshaphat was fortunate to have valiant men who were dedicated to him alone and who would warmly serve him. This style of service is a model for that of the Christian who serves the LORD with a single eye.

CHAPTER 18

JEHOSHAPHAT MAKES ALLIANCE WITH AHAB 1-3

And Jehohoshaphat had great riches and honour but he married his interest with that of Ahab[אָחָב]. And after the passage of some years he went down to Ahab to Samaria and Ahab sacrificed sheep and cattle in great numbers for him and for the people that were with him and he induced or urged him to go up to Ramoth Gilead. And Ahab the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah “Will you go up with me to Ramoth Gilead?” And he said to him “As you are so am I and as your people my people and we will be with you in war.”

THE LONG STORY OF ENQUIRY FROM THE LORD ABOUT WAR 4-34

(i) Then Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel “**Seek, I implore, after the word of the LORD**”. So the king of Israel gathered four hundred men of the prophets and said to them ‘Shall we march up to Ramoth Gilead to Battle or shall we decline?’ And they said ‘Go up and God will render it into the hand of the king.’

(ii) Then Jehoshaphat said ‘**Is there not here still a prophet belonging to Yahweh** so that we might ask him?’ Then the king of Israel said ‘There is still one man by whom we may seek Yahweh but I hate him for there is never anything in his prophecy that is good for me but all my days it has been for evil. He is **Micaiah son of Imlah**.’

(iii) And Jehoshaphat said ‘Let not the king speak in this manner.’ Then the king of Israel called one of his commanders and said ‘**Hasten** (here) Micaiah son of Imlah.’ And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting each on his throne clothed in royal robes and they sat on a level (forum?) at the gate of Samaria and all the prophets prophesied before them.

(iv) And Zedekiah son of Chenanah **made horns of iron** and said ‘Thus Yahweh says ‘Thus you will push the Syrian till they are wiped out.’ And all the prophets prophesied alike saying ‘Go up to Ramoth Gilead and succeed and Yahweh will give it into the king’s hand.’

(v) But the messenger that went to call Micaiah spoke to him saying ‘Behold the prophets with one voice are proclaiming the welfare of the king and let it be, I implore you, that you speak as one of them and declare (his) welfare.’ But Micaiah said ‘As Yahweh lives what my God speaks that I will declare.’

(vi) So he came to the king and the king said to him ‘Micaiah shall I go up to Ramoth Gilead to battle or shall I desist?’ And he said ‘Go up and succeed and they will be delivered into your hands.’

(vii) And the king said to him ‘How many times have I caused you to swear that what you declare to me in the name of Yahweh is nothing except the truth?’

(viii) And he (Micaiah) said ‘I saw all Israel dispersed and confused[חָפְזִים] on the hills as sheep without a shepherd and Yahweh said “Have these no masters? Let them return each to his house in peace!”’

(ix) And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat ‘Did I not say to you that he would not prophesy success to me but ill tidings.’

(x) Then he (Micaiah) said “Belonging to this same hear and obey the word of Yahweh ‘I have seen Yahweh sitting on His throne and the entire host of heaven standing to minister on his right and left.’ And Yahweh said ‘Who will open Ahab

king of Israel (to persuasion) so he may go up and fall in Ramoth Gilead?” And this one spoke in this style and that one in that style.

(xi) But there came out that Spirit and stood before the face of Yahweh and said ‘ I will open him (to suggestion)! And Yahweh said to him ‘By what means?’ And he said ‘I will go and I will be a false deceitful Spirit in the mouth of all his prophets’ And He (Yahweh) said ‘You will render him suggestible and you will also **be permitted** to prevail[l ky]. Go and do thus!’ *There is a very important theological point to be made here. First, it is to be assumed that this spirit is none other than Satan and that as in the case of Job he seeks permission to do what he has in mind. He has at his disposal the prophets of Baalim or we might say familiar spirits. He urges that “He will be a deceiving spirit” – in other words he will be himself. He acts as the tempter or subtle suggesting one as in Eden! He is well aware that what he promotes is not correct but it is valid in the context of lack of faith in Yahweh. There are enough parallel instances in scripture to enable us to discern that this is the manner of Satan’s working. He is under discipline and must seek divine prerogative for action against the people of God. His great subtlety reflects the outstanding capability of this angel of light who remains active in the world we inhabit but whose active world involvement will be long halted at the inception of the realised kingdom of our LORD Christ. We are taught in scripture that immediately prior to this he will put forth Herculean effort to wrestle the world from the sovereign power and purpose of God.*

(xii) ‘Now, **look**, Yahweh has provided or permitted a spirit of deceit by the mouth of these your prophets and Yahweh has enacted evil by declaration against you.’ *Micaiah was setting it out very plainly that Satan was in this development as the leaven in a loaf(Christ’s teaching) and the rabble of prophets was under his baton. He was also drawing a deep contrast between the thrones of these kings and that of Yahweh. He was giving Ahab every opportunity to save his life in previously speaking of a “leaderless” nation. The plain word of God bade the kings and the people to return every man to his house – but as Yahweh said Satan would prevail.*

(xiii) Then Zedekiah son of Chenanah pressed forward [vgn] and struck Micaiah on the cheek bone and said ‘Where is the tread or passage of this spirit of Yahweh from me to speak in contention to subdue you[rbd]?’ *The significance of this action is that Zedekiah wants to hide his connection with Satan and by seeking to silence Micaiah he desires to convey to Jehoshaphat the impression that there is no contest – he is on message and this story of the spirit in heaven cooperating with him is a fiction.*

(xiv) Then Micaiah said ‘You will behold and see in that day when you go from secret chamber to chamber to lie hidden.’

(xv) And the king of Israel said “Take Micaiah and cause him to return to Amon the city governor and to Joash the son of the king and say to them ‘Thus says the king... ‘Put this man in the house of confinement and cause him to eat the bread of affliction until the day I return in peace.’”

(xvi) Then Micaiah said ‘If you definitely return in peace Yahweh has not spoken by me’ and then he said ‘**Listen all you people...**’ *–these are famous last words...this message was curtailed by some form of despatch because the kings began their progress toward Ramoth and the peoples’ ear was turned away.*

And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah marched up to Ramoth Gilead. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat ‘I will cause myself to be hard to find by disguise [vpj] but you dress in your royal robes.’ So the king of Israel masked himself in secrecy and went into battle. *This rouse declared the fear with which Ahab actually envisaged the debut ahead. He had a radical concern for his safety but no feeling for*

Jehoshaphat. Perhaps he thought Jehoshaphat was secure in Yahweh and was even now challenging him to depend by faith on Yahweh whom he was so zealous to seek. But the king of Syria had given command to the chariot captains saying ‘Do not engage in battle with small or great but only with the king of Israel’ (another instance of God motivating the heathen). And it occurred as the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat these men then said ‘He is the king of Israel; and they circled around him to engage in battle but Jehoshaphat cried out and Yahweh helped him and God caused them to be urged away from him. As the sequel shows they mutually perceived that however illustrious their quarry he was not Ahab and they were under orders so they disengaged.

So it happened that the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel and they turned from following him. And a certain soldier stretched out his bow to the full to empty his quiver... *the significance of [mmtl] is to deliver a last shot.* And he hit the king of Israel between the metal folds of his armour and in the flat of the chest [mwrV] and he said to his charioteer ‘Change or slack your speed and get me away from the host for I am wounded and I feel ill[y] j]. But the battle rose to other heights [hl []] during that day and the king of Israel survived, remaining erect in his chariot opposite the Syrian front until the evening when he died at the time the sun went down. *Ahab put up a brave battle for victory as he tried to sit upright or even stand in the hope of encouraging his troops and bringing home a victory to confound his adversary, Micaiah the prophet. But this was not to be. At sundown Israel was “as a flock without a shepherd” exactly as the prophet said. God’s word was vindicated and the king who would go it alone was deceased whilst the king who cried out to God lived to fight another day.*

CHAPTER 19

JEHOSHAPHAT FINDS AN ITINERANT CALLING 1-4

Then Jehoshaphat king of Judah returned to his palace in Jerusalem in peace or safety. And **Jehu son of Hanani the seer** went before his face and said to king Jehoshaphat “Does it belong (to you) to help the wicked that you should love those who are resigned (*lit. “attached”*) to hating Yahweh. **On this account provocation or anger is breaking out from before the face of Yahweh upon you.** Yet there are good deeds found with you. You have burned and destroyed the Asherah groves from the land and established your heart to seek God. And Jehoshaphat would live in Jerusalem **but he also went and stayed among the people from Beersheba to Mount Ephraim and caused them to return to the God of their fathers.** *He mingled widely with his people and promoted faith by example and fellowship!*

JEHOSHAPHAT ESTABLISHES JUSTICE THROUGH THE LAND 5-7

Then he set judges to minister in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah – city after city. And he said to the judges ‘Look to your (judicial) actions for you are not judging for man but for Yahweh and He is with you in the act and verdict of judgment. So now the fear of Yahweh shall be upon you. Be vigilant and take action for there is no injustice[lw[]] and partiality or receiving of gifts (to bribe)’.

JEHOSHAPHAT SETS UP HIGH JUDICIARIES IN JERUSALEM 8-11

And also in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat set up an administration from the Levites and priests and princes of the fathers of Israel for justice under Yahweh and for controversial matters and they would return to Jerusalem. *Thus the king centered ultimate high court actions in the capitol and it would seem these consistories*

operated seasonally or in sessions. And he commanded them saying ‘Thus you shall act in the fear of Yahweh, with reliability and a perfect heart. And any controversy that comes to you from your brothers that dwell in their cities as between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statute and judgments given you shall caution and admonish [rhz] them lest they trespass against Yahweh **and there be wrath or anger provoked over you** (cf.vv1-4 – *Jehoshaphat had learned to honour & respect the LORD*) and on account of your brethren. Act after this manner and you will not fall short. And behold Amariah the chief priest in in charge concerning all actions relating to Yahweh and Zebadiah son of Ishmael the leading ruler of the house of Judah in all matters respecting the king. Also the Levites shall be overseers or magistrates and writer s[rfv] before you(in the court). Be strong and take action and the LORD will be with the good or support the right and good. *Jehoshaphat took trouble to establish a system of temporal and spiritual justice for all. He put the best people he could find in prime office and gave them instruction to be vigilant and not to delay acting. He ensured that proper records of all civil and religious cases were kept. His visits to the people of the land had taught him that righteousness must be firmly established. “Righteousness exalts a nation”.*

CHAPTER 20

AMMON AND MOAB ATTACK JUDAH 1-4

And it occurred after this state of things that the children of Moab and the children of Ammon and with them others besides the Ammonites came up to engage in battle against Jehoshaphat. And there were (some) that came and explained to Jehoshaphat saying ‘There is a massive noisy horde coming from across the sea beyond Syria and these are in Hazazon-Tamar (“cutting of Palm trees) – that is Engedi.’ And Jehoshaphat was afraid and set his face to seeking Yahweh and called a fast throughout Judah. And Judah came together to petition from Yahweh; also from all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

JEHOSHAPHAT’S PRAYER 5-13

And Jehoshaphat stood up amid the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the house of the LORD before the new court and said ‘O LORD God of our fathers, are you not God in the heavens and you are the ruler and teacher amid all the kingdoms of the Gentiles and in your hand is power and warrior strength and none can have the victory or conquer You? Are You not our God who dispossessed those who dwelt in this land before your people Israel and gave it to the seed of **Abraham your friend** for perpetuity. So they lived in it and they built a holy place for You associated with Your name in it saying ‘If evil, the sword, judgment, and pestilence and famine comes upon us we will stand in front of this house and before Your face – for Your name is upon this house – and cry to You out of our distress and You will hear and save us. And look now – the children of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir that You did not yield over to Israel that they might come through them in their passage from the land of Egypt but they turned from right upon them and did not caused them to be laid waste. And behold these recompense us by coming to cast us out from Your possession which You caused us to inherit. Our God, will You not mete out justice to them for there is no strength in us to face this great multitude that comes against us and we do not know what we will do but our eyes are upon You.” *This humble prayer displays an understanding of standing on*

the promises of God and of God's undertaking in response to Solomon's opening prayer at the dedication of the temple that had stood for about a century since circa 950BC. Jehoshaphat like Asa and David before him as a first reaction to concern sought the LORD. His appeal was on behalf of the great name of Yahweh.

And all Judah stood as servants before the LORD with their little ones their wives and their children.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD COMES UPON JAHAZIEL 14-19

Then in the middle of the congregation the Spirit of the LORD came upon **Jahaziel son of Benaiah**, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite from the sons of Asaph and he said "Cause yourselves to listen acutely, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and king Jehoshaphat – thus says the LORD to you 'Do not be afraid or terrified [t t] from the appearance of this great multitude for the battle is not yours but the LORD'S'. Tomorrow flow down against them. Behold they will come up by the rise Ziz and you will find them at the extreme end of the stream facing the wilderness of Jeruel. There is no need for you to engage in this battle. **You must stand still as conquerors**[bxy]; stand and see the salvation of the LORD (who is present) with you O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or terrified. Go out tomorrow against them and the LORD will be with you.'" And Jehoshaphat bowed the crown of his head [ddq] to the earth and all Judah and those that lived in Jerusalem fell on their faces before the LORD to worship the LORD. And the Levites from the sons of the Kohathites and the sons of Korah rose up on a platform to praise the LORD God of Israel with a great voice. *The joy of reading of the Holy Spirit gripping the priests of the day is heightened through reading of the king's obeisance and the Levites' songs of praise. The faith of the whole people was very great – for the victory was still pending.. The instruction to "Stand as victors" was indeed stirring.*

THE KING ACTS IN FAITH 20-21

So they awoke in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa and as they issued forth Jehoshaphat stood and said 'Hear me, O Judah and those that dwell in Jerusalem. You must believe in the LORD God and you will be unswerving or stand faithful. Believe in His prophets and you will have success.' And when he had counselled or deliberated with the people he appointed a ministry of singers for the LORD that they should celebrate in praise the splendid honour or beauty [ddh] of holiness or tht which is consecrated to God in going out in front of the prepared host [xlj] – usually indicative of a well armed host but here significant of a people ready to stand acting by faith while the LORD fights for them] and say 'Praise the LORD for his mercy endures for ever.'

THE ENEMY DESTROYS ITSELF 22-25

And at the time they caused the praise (to begin) with shout of a joyful song of praise the LORD gave ambushers against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir that had come against Judah and they were defeated [pqn] for the sons of Ammon and Moab took up position against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to devote them to utter destruction [mrj] and to cut them off [dmv] and when they had finished off [ml k] the inhabitants of Mount Seir every man helped to destroy and snare his neighbour [tj v]. Then Judah came to the watch-tower of the wilderness and looked at the multitude; they were then corpses fallen on the earth and no one escaped. When Jehoshaphat

and his army came to plunder the spoils they found among them both very great wealth and very many corpses and delightful precious jewels that they stripped and plundered from them to the extent that none could carry them and they were three days plundering the spoil for it was very great. *This battle required not a sword thrust!*

PRAISE IN THE VALLEY – PRAISE & PEACE IN THE CITY 26-30

And on the fourth day they gathered in the valley of Beracah for there they blessed the LORD and therefore they call the name of that place Berachah to this day. And every many of Judah and they of Jerusalem returned – Jehoshaphat at their head – returning to Jerusalem with joy for the LORD had caused them rejoicing over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem with Nabalim and harps and trumpets to the house of the LORD. And the fear of the LORD came upon all the kingdoms of the lands of the earth on hearing that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. Then the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was undisturbed for the LORD had given him rest all around.

A TWENTY FOUR YEAR REIGN SUMMARISED 31-34

And Jehoshaphat ruled Judah. He was thirty five when he began to reign and spent twenty five years as king in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Azubah, daughter of Shilhi. *Jehoshaphat took the reins of power as a mature man and was called home to be with the LORD he loved and served at 60. His mother gets honourable mention. Her name means “forsaken”. His grandfather was named Shilhi “armed” as an archer or swordsman. The strange name of his mother suggests some sad event in family life – perhaps even the premature death of his maternal grandmother.* And he walked in the path of his father Asa and did not remove or decline from it doing that which was straight in the LORD’S eyes. Definitely the high places (*of alternative worship*) were not removed and the people of the land were not yet established firmly in heart in relation to the God of their fathers. And the remainder of the accomplishments of Jehoshaphat first and last these are written in the “**Records of Jehu**”, son of Hanani **who (himself) is the channel (contributing to) the book of “The Kings of Israel”**. *In the book of kings Jehu son of Nimshi is mentioned 13 times but our Jehu (the son of Hanani) is also mentioned as the AV notes in its translation three times in Chapter 16 of the first book of Kings. He is a prophet of the Northern Kingdom concurrent with the early years of Asa, father of Jehoshaphat. Jehu may even have contributed the material of 1 Kings 16 and much of what we read concerning Elijah may equally well have entered “Kings” by way of Jehu’s pen because Jehu lived on to witness the end of Jehoshaphat’s reign. This Jehu would have been well known to Elijah and Micaiah who like him ministered in the Northern Kingdom. So we come upon a vital prophet and scribe – the source of our historical records over several reigns represented in the annals of the last 7 chapters of 1 Kings and the entire first half of 2 Kings.*

JEHOSHAPHAT’S ALLIANCE & SHIPPING ADVENTURE FAILS 35-37

And after this Jehoshaphat King of Judah had been united with Ahaziah king of Israel – the king who caused evil to be executed. But he joined with him to construct ships to sail to Tarshish and they built the ships at Ezion-Geber. *Ahaziah needed the southern port to construct a fleet to sail for Ophir and Arabia. The fact is the Red sea was unnavigable to give entrance to the Mediterranean. It may be that the southern construction site presented other trading options besides the very hazardous passage around Africa to the West – if this was already realisable. The southern port had been*

associated with the copper and mining industry in Solomon's days and it may be that these kings were together engaged in opening up again a lucrative trade in metals. At this period the Phoenicians controlled trade on the Mediterranean. It is unlikely that this was a historic first and an attempt at opening up a new trade route encircling Africa and therefore we have to envisage other eastern metal smelting sources open to trade at this time.

Then Eliezer son of Dodavahu ("beloved of the LORD") of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying 'Through your having joined with Ahaziah the LORD has shattered what you are making'. So the ships were broken to pieces and they were not strong enough to sail to Tarshish. *We are now introduced to another prophet of the general period following Elijah. The impact of the telling ministry of Elijah was that a significant group of prophets arose of which Eliezer is another.*

CHAPTER 21

JEHORAM SLAYS HIS FATHER'S HOUSEHOLD 1-4

And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and he was buried with his fathers in the city of David and Jehoram his son ruled the realm in his place. And he had brothers – sons of Jehoshaphat; Azariah and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah. These were all sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel. And their father gave them great gifts of silver, gold and precious things with fortified cities in Judah but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram for he was the firstborn. But when Jehoram had risen to rule the kingdom of his father and had grown strong he slew all his brothers with the sword and also the princes of Israel.

JEHORAM WALKS AFTER AHAB BUT GOD SPARES THE REALM 5-7

And Jehoram was thirty two when he took power as king and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked the path of the kings of Israel and acted just as the house of Ahab acted for the daughter of Ahab was his wife and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant He cut with David and in accordance with what He said (by way of promise) to give him and his children a light through all the days.

REVOLT BY EDOM AND LIBNAH

In his days Edom rebelled and defected[[vp] from subservience to the power of Judah and set up their own king. Then Jehoram passed over and his princes with him and it happened that he rose in the night and struck Edom who had surrounded him and the commanders of his chariots. Yet Edom defected from under the hand of Judah **till this day**. And Libnah would also revolt at this time from under his authority because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers. *The writer – most probably Jehu son of Hanani, sees the spiritual import of ill rule and writes with a backward look probably from the days of Joash after which Edom was again subservient under Amaziah. That could be to the inception of Joash's reign 17 years later – added to the 41 years of Asa and the 25 of Jehoshaphat that would give Jehu 83 years of experience and 70-80 years of prophetic ministry. Jehoiada the priest who shortly followed him lived to the ripe old age of 130 so that may very well be possible. It is, however, much more likely that Jehoiada the kingmaker supervised the ongoing narrative and was the next channel the Spirit of God used in setting forth the record of the theocracy and its spiritual vicissitudes.*

He (*Jehoram*) also created high places in the hills of Judah and he committed fornication **and compelled the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah so to do.**

ELIJAH'S MESSAGE 8-15

And there came a written message to him from **Elijah the prophet** saying “Thus says the LORD God of David your father “Because you have not walked in the path of Jehoshaphat your father and in the path of Asa king of Judah but you have walked in the path of the kings of Israel and have made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication exactly like the fornication of the house of Ahab and because you have slain your brothers of your father’s house – better men than you behold the LORD will strike your people with a great disease or pestilence among your people, your sons, your wives and in all you own. And you will be in serious illness by disease [hl j] of your intestines until your intestines come out through your grave illness day after day.”

THE PHILISTINES ATTACK JEHORAM AT GOD’S STIRRING 16-17

And the LORD awakened the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabians that were empowered by the Ethiopians against Jehoram. So they came up into Judah and tore open (its fenced cities) and carried away all the wealth of the house of the king and his sons and wives and there wasn’t a son remaining to him except Jehoahaz the tiniest of his sons.

JEHORAM’S TERMINAL ILLNESS STRIKES AS ELIJAH PREDICTED 18-20

And after all this the LORD struck him in the intestines with an illness that could not be healed. And it happened after days on days and as time passed the end of his days came in two years time – his intestines came out through his illness and he died by grave illness. But his people made no burning (*of incense*) like the burning of his fathers. He was thirty two years when he came to the throne of the kingdom and he was king in Jerusalem for eight years and went without being the desire (*of his people*) and they buried him in the city of David but not in the tombs of the kings. *The nemesis of divine judgment caught up on this miscreant king who sold his birthright. The written judgment by Elijah’s hand took hold of his life. His eight years made him no friends among his people whom he forced into terrible sin.*

CHAPTER 22

AHAZIAH’S ONE YEAR EVIL REIGN OVER JUDAH 1-4

And those who lived in Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his place for the party that came with the Arabians to the encampment slew all the older (sons) and Ahaziah son of Jehoram reigned in his place. Ahaziah was forty two by the time he became king and he ruled one year in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Athaliah, Omri’s daughter. He also walked in the path of the house of Ahab for his mother was his adviser regarding wickedness. So he did evil in the eyes of the LORD just like the house of Ahab for they were his advisors to his ruin after his father’s death.

THE WAR STORY OF AHAZIAH & HIS DEATH UNDER JEHU 5-9

So he also walked according to their hard counsel[hx[]] and marched with **Jehoram** king of Israel to battle against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth Gilead and the people of Ramoth slew **Joram**. And he went back because he might have been healed in Jezreel of (*wounds from*)the blows with which he was smitten at Ramah in fighting with Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram, son of Aha, in Jezreel for he was ill and wounded. But the treading down of Ahaziah was from God and related to his coming to Joram for when he came

he went out with Jehoram against **Jehu son of Nimshi** – the man the LORD anointed (*cf. Elisha's command from Elijah*) to cut out the household of Ahab. And it took place just as Jehu was contending in judgment with the house of Ahab he also found the princes of Judah and sons of the brothers of Ahaziah and smote them. And he searched for Ahaziah and they captured him and brought him into Samaria and brought him to Jehu himself and he slew him and they buried him for they said 'He is a son of Jehoshaphat who sought Yahweh with his whole heart' and there were none belonging to the house of Ahaziah to retain the power to reign. *The divine judgment against Ahab stretched to the clearing out of the house of Judah but the divine mercy provided for the sparing of young Joash and his upbringing by a godly family in the house of God. The life of Joash is testimony to what is possible when a child is exposed fully to godly living for the first six years of his or her life.*

ATHALIAH ASSUMES THE REINS OF POWER 10-12

But the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead and she arose and **acted destructively** [*a specialist use of rbd "to decree or speak (with evil intent)" pointed out by Rabbi Davidson*] against the seed of the royal family. But Jehosheba, the daughter of the king took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the sons of the king that were killed and provided him and his nurse who suckled him [qny] with a bedchamber. So Jehosheba the daughter of king Jehoram, wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was sister to Ahaziah) was well away from the face of Athaliah and she did not slay him. And he (Joash) was with them in the house of God a (*courageous little*) man coming on six years and Athaliah ruled over the land. *The parallel with Moses is inescapable. The safety of Joash was well assured for Athaliah did not darken the doors of the house of God.*

CHAPTER 23

SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CROWNING OF JOASH 1-11

Then in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself and took the commanders of hundreds belonging to Azariah son of Jeroham together with Ishmael son of Jehohanan and Azariah son of Obed and Maaseiah and Elishaphat son of Zichri into a covenant. And they went round throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah and the heads of the fathers of Israel and came to Jerusalem. And the entire congregation made a covenant at the house of God with the king and he (Jehoiada) said to them 'Behold the son of the king shall reign as the Lord declared in a promise to the sons of David. This is the action you shall effect; a third of you coming in on the sabbath shall act as threshold porters at the doors and a third of you shall be in the palace of the king and a third at the gate of the foundation (or assembly of the city) and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD. They are not to come into the house of the LORD for that is exclusive and only for the priests and Levites that minister. These shall go in for they are consecrated but all the people shall be watchful in worship of the LORD. And the Levites shall cause the king to be **encircled** [pqn – as his guard] right around and each with his weapon in his hand and the one that (otherwise) comes into the house shall die. And you will be around the king in his coming in and going out. So the Levites and all Judah did all that Jehoiada the high-priest commanded and each took his men who came on the Sabbath with those who went out on the Sabbath for Jehoiada the priest did not exempt [r'fp] the allotted courses from duty. Jehoiada the priest also provided spears for the captains of hundreds and small shields and large shields which belonged to David that were in the house of God. And he stationed all the people and each had his

sword [j | v] in his hand from the right wing of the temple to the left wing by the altar and in that part of the house around and over against the king. Then they led out the son of the king and placed the crowning diadem upon him and the testimony (of the law) and made him king and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said 'God save the king'.

THE DEATH OF ATHALIAH 12-15

Then Athaliah heard the sound of the people running swiftly and celebrating the king; she also went to the people at the house of the LORD. *It took a lot to drag Athaliah to God's house. She was no worshipper and her motive was to discover what the commotion portended.* Then she caught sight and behold the king was standing at his place at the entrance and the princes and the trumpets or trumpeters over against the king and all the people of the land rejoicing and making a triumphant sound on trumpets and the singers with instrumental music and those experienced to sing praise. Then Athaliah tore her robes and exclaimed 'Conspiracy, conspiracy.' Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds posted over the army and said to them 'Cause her to have been brought away from the chambers of the porch [rds] of the house and the one who follows her shall die by the sword because the priest said 'Do not kill her in the house of the LORD.'

JEHOIADA ESTABLISHES THE FAITH & THE THRONE 16-21

And Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people (*for the one part*) and between the king that they should be the people of the LORD. Then the entire people went into the house of Baal **and they had been** throwing it down [qtñ] and they shattered his altars and his images and they slew Mattan the priest of Baal in front of the altars. And Jehoiada appointed officers of the house of the LORD by the authority of the priests and Levites that David allotted to the house of the LORD as is written in the Law of Moses with rejoicing and singing under the authority of David. And he made the doorkeepers to stand at the doors of the house of the LORD so that nothing with defilement should be admitted in. He then took the captains of hundreds and noblemen and leader-teachers among the people and all the people of the land and brought the king down from the house of the LORD and they went through the midst of the high gate into the king's house and they caused the king to sit (*as the resident occupant*) upon the throne of the kingdom. And all the people of the land were radiantly happy and the city was undisturbed when they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

CHAPTER 24

JOASH BEGINS WELL UNDER JEHOIADA'S MENTORING 1-3

Joash was seven years of age when he came to the throne and he ruled forty years in Jerusalem and the name of his mother was Zibiah ["Gazelle"] of Beersheba. And Joash did the right thing in the eyes of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. And Jehoiada presented him with two wives and he fathered sons and daughters.

THE REPAIR OF THE TEMPLE AND PROVISION OF FINANCE 4-16

And it was after this that it was in the heart of Joash to renovate the house of the LORD. So he gathered the priests and Levites and said to them 'Go out to the cities of Judah and gather from all Israel silver coin to repair the house of God from one year to another and you shall be prompt in the matter' but the Levites were not prompt. So the king called for Jehoiada the chief and said to him 'Why have you not followed up the Levites to bring in from Judah and from Israel the debt [avñ 'debt owed'] of

(*instruction of*) Moses the servant of the LORD and owed by the congregation of Israel rightly belonging to the tabernacle of witness? For the sons of the wicked Athaliah have broken down the house of God and also all the holy instruments of the house of the LORD they have made the property of Baal.' Then the king directed and they made a single chest and set it at the door of the house of the LORD without. And they made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the LORD the due offering that Moses the servant of God served on all Israel in the wilderness. And all the princes and all the people rejoiced and brought and threw [*Lit "shot" from their garment pockets*] that which belonged to the chest until they had fulfilled [*their duty*]. Now it was so at the time the chest was brought to the depository of the king by the hand of the Levites and as they saw that the coined shekel [*collected*] was substantial the king's scribe and the finance officer of the high priest went and poured out [hr []] the chest and lifted it and caused it to be replaced in its position. The proceeded in this manner day by day and gathered a great deal of silver coin. Then the king and Jehoiada gave it to those who undertook the work of the service of the LORD'S house and they continued to hire stone masons and carpenters to renovate the house of the LORD and also those who could forge and engrave iron and brass to repair the house of the LORD. Thus the workmen worked and the undertaking was at length promoted successfully under their hand and they made the house of God stand in the full measure of its lovely structure [*tm literally "like a well proportioned and full grown man"*] and they had made it strong [*so also like a fully grown man it was sturdy for its service*]. And as they finished they brought the remainder of the silver coin before the king and Jehoiada so they made vessels for the house of the LORD. They made vessels for service and for use in offering – both spoons and vessels of gold and silver and offered whole burnt offerings at the house of the LORD daily all the days of Jehoiada.

RADICAL CHANGE AFTER JEHOIADA DIES – JOASH WEAKENS 15-22

But Jehoiada was old and full of days when he died at one hundred and thirty years of age. And they buried him in the city of David with the kings because he had done well for Israel both with God and his house. *Jehoiada actually comes nearest to being a "priest-king" but he never desired to be a ruler. He undertook the duties of state to repair the absence of suited persons and was like an interim prince. His reputation was unsullied and for many years he promoted godly standards and practice in the nation.*

Now after the death of Jehoiada the princes of Judah came and bowed in reverence to the king so the king listened to them. But they forsook the house of the LORD God of their fathers and served Asherah (poles) and idols and so it was that (divine) wrath was provoked upon Judah and Jerusalem for this that they were guilty of doing. But He (the LORD) **swiftly sent prophets** to them and they testified against them (*This was the era of Elisha and the sons of the prophets*) to turn them to the LORD but they would not listen acutely to them. [*The verb *נזא* suggests they listened *amv* but not with any degree of care to "weigh up" their desperate situation*] And the **Spirit of the LORD clothed** [*Vbl*] **Zechariah** the son of Jehoiada the priest when he ministered over the people and he said to them 'Thus God is saying 'Why do you cross the commands of the LORD and do not prosper because you have forsaken the LORD and He has forsaken you!' And they were treacherous against him and stoned him to death [*mgr*] with stones by the very command of the king in the court of the house of the LORD (itself). Thus, Joash the king did not recall the covenant

kindness that Jehoiada his father did to him and he slew his son. And as he died he said ‘The LORD look and follow it up’.

DIVINE RETRIBUTION IN DEFEAT & DISEASE AFFLICTS JOASH 23-26

And it occurred within the circuit of the year that the army of Syria came up against him and came to Judah and Jerusalem and destroyed all the princes of the people from their midst and all their spoil they sent expeditiously to Damascus. The army of Syria came with a very minimal contingent of forces, but the LORD gave a very great army into their hand because they had departed from the LORD God of their fathers. So they became the righteous judges of Joash. And in their departure from him [for they left him with great wounds and illness] his servants had mounted a conspiracy against him for the blood-guilt of the sons of Jehoiada the priest and they struck him on his bed and he died and they buried him in the city of David but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. And these are the conspirators who opposed him; Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonite and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabitess.

COMPANION REFERENCES IN “KINGS” 27

Now of his sons and the greatness of the burden or “exaltation” or even “prophetic burden” concerning him and the establishing of the house of God; these things are written in the recorded narrative memoirs or commentary (*lit. “Midrash”*) of “Kings”. And Amaziah his son reigned in his place.

CHAPTER 25

AMAZIAH’S PERFUNCTORY RELIGION 1-2

Amaziah reigned when he was twenty five years of age and he ruled twenty nine years in Jerusalem. And the name of his mother was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem. And he did that which was right and straight in the eyes of the LORD only **not with a sound heart**. [*ml v -a heart “at peace” or “restored” – as we would say “not saved” and so lacking in a relationship with God*]

AMAZIAH’S RETRIBUTION RESTRAINED BY SCRIPURE 3-4

Now it came o pass as soon as the kingdom was secured to him he then slew his servants that had killed his father the king. But he did not put their sons to death but as is written in the Torah in the book of Moses where the LORD commanded saying ‘The fathers shall not die for the sons nor the soins for the fathers but every man shall die for his own sin.’ [*Deut.24.16*]

AMAZIAH HEEDS THE PROPHET OF GOD 5-10

Then Amaziah gathered Judah and caused captains of thousands and hundreds to stand in command for Judah and Benjamin for the houses of their fathers. And he numbered tem from twenty five years and upwards. *Twenty five appears to have been the accepted age for entering military service*. And he found there were three hundred thoiusand crack troops that possessed spear and basket shield [mX]. Then he engaged one hundred thousand valiant men of war from Israel for one hundred talents of silver. But **a man of God** came to him saying to the king ‘The army of Israel should not go with you for the LORD is not with Israel, that is, the whole congregation of Ephraim. But if you go do so. Be strong for war but God shall cause you to stumble and collapse before the enemy for there is strength in God to help as an ally and to cause collapse. Then Amaziah said to the man of God ‘But what is to be done concerning the hundred talents I have given to the troops of Israel?’ And the man of

God said 'There is wealth belonging to God to give you more than this'. Then Amaziah isolated the troops that came to him from Ephraim to go to their own (home) place. Their anger against Judah was great but they returned to their place in their burning anger.

AMAZIAH SUBSEQUENTLY DEFEATS EDOM 11-12

So Amaziah continually strengthened himself and led his people forth by chariot [ghn] and went to the valley of Salt and smote ten thousand of the sons of Seir. And ten thousand others the sons of Judah took alive and brought them to the top of Selah (the rock of Edom) and threw them from the top of the rock and they were all torn open [[qn].

EPHRAIM TURNS PERFIDIOUS 13

But the men of the troops that Amaziah sent back from proceeding to battle with his people they also pillaged in the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-Horon and struck three thousand people and looted much spoil.

AMAZIAH TURNS TO IDOLATRY AND BRAZENLY COUNTERS THE PROPHET 14-16

And it happened after Amaziah had returned from the strike against the Edomites he brought the gods of the sons of Seir and caused them to stand to minister to him as God and bowed in worship to them and offered incense to them. Then the anger of the LORD became hot against Amaziah and **He sent a prophet to him** who said to him 'Why are you seeking the gods of the people who could not deliver their people from your power?' And it happened in his deliberation with him that he said to him 'Are you providing yourself as adviser[x[y] to the king? Leave off! Why should you be struck? Then the prophet desisted and said 'I know that God has advised [x[y] to destroy you because you have done this and not listened to my advice.' *The prophet put the stark truth of the life-threatening danger that would result from despising divine advice.*

JOASH OF ISRAEL DEFEATS THE PROVOCATIVE AHAZIAH 17-24

Then Amaziah king of Judah got advice for himself and sent to **Joash son of Jehoahaz**, son of Jehu, king of Israel saying 'Let me meet you face to face!' So Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah saying "The thorn bush that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar which was in Lebanon saying 'give me your daughter as a wife for my son; and a wild beast of the field that was in Lebanon passed and walked over the thorn. You say 'Behold you have struck the Edomites and your heart is lifted to glorify yourself. Now abide in your house for why should you have proposed war (in the first place) for your injury that you should fall and Judah with you?'" *In a further outstanding example of good advice the king of Israel cannot deter the now alarmingly foolish Amaziah.* But Amaziah would not obey for it was from God to give them into (his) power because he sought the gods of Edom. Then Joash the king of Israel went up and they looked each other in the face – he and Amaziah at Beth-Shemesh that belongs to Judah. And **Judah was defeated before the face of Israel** and they fled each to his tent. And Joash king of Israel seized Amaziah king of Judah, son of Joash son of Jehoshaphat at Bethshemesh and caused him to come to Jerusalem and tumbled the walls of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate – four hundred cubits. And he captured all the gold and silver and all the vessels found in the house of God with Obed-Edom and the precious treasures of the palace of the king

and also hostages and brought them back to Samaria. *This was an intensely humbling episode in Judah's history and it need not have taken place had the advice of the Lord and the advice of king Joash been accepted. This extended story teaches us with utmost gravity the wisdom of receiving humbly the good counsel of God and man.*

SUMMARY OF AMAZIAH'S LIFE 25-28

And Ahaziah son of Joash king of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel. And the remainder of the acts of Amaziah first and last are the not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. *Note that "Kings" is described as "one book".*

EVENTS FOLLOWING AMAZIAH'S APOSTACY 27-8

But from the time Amaziah turned from following the LORD they conspired against him in Jerusalem and he took flight to Lachish but they sent speedily after him to Lachish and killed him there. Then they bore him on horses and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah [cf 2Kings 14.20 – *we have to presume this to be Jerusalem though perhaps the connection is being played down on account of his sin.*

CHAPTER 26

UZZIAH'S SUCCESS – HE DEVELOPS & FORTIFIES JUDAH 1-15

And the whole nation of Judah took Uzziah at sixteen years of age and made him king in place of his father Amaziah. He built Eiloth and returned it to Judah after (*his father*) the king slept with his fathers. Uzziah was sixteen when he became king and he reigned fifty two years in Jerusalem and his mother's name was Jecholiah of Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the LORD'S eyes in the fashion of all his father Amaziah did. And it was so – he sought the LORD in the days of Zechariah – the wise teacher in divine visions and in the days of his seeking God God prospered him. And he went out and fought a battle with the Philistines and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod and built cities by Ashdod and in the midst of the Philistines. Thus the LORD helped him against the Philistines and against the Arabians who were settled in Gur-Baal and against the Methunims. And the Ammonites gave gifts (*of tribute*) to Uzziah and his fame went out and came to Egypt itself for he was strong to the very height (of power). Then Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the gate of the corner and the valley gate and at the angle of the wall and strengthened them. Then he built towers in the wilderness and hewed out many wells for there were many cattle in his possession in the Shephelah and in the flat plains. He also had ploughmen and vinedressers in the hills and in Carmel for **he was one who loved the soil**. And Uzziah produced an army for war – a host that went forth by troop contingents by the number of their muster by the authority of Jeiel the scribe.

And Maaseiah was the officer in charge under the overall command of Hananiah of the commanders of the king. The overall count of the chief of the fathers so far as the valiant men of war was concerned, was two thousand six hundred. And under their authority was a military host of 307,500 hastening to war with mighty military force to help the king against the enemy. And Uzziah instituted ordinance for the entire army: small shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows and slings for (casting) stones. He also made military devices in Jerusalem devised by clever inventers for the towers and on top of the (reinforced) corners to shoot with arrows and with great stones and his fame went out far a field for he was He(the LORD) caused him to be helped until he was strong.

UZZIAH EXCEEDS HIS KINGLY POSITION TO OFFER INCENSE 16-23

And as soon as he was strong his heart was uplifted tending toward his destruction – then he acted **without faith** or treacherously against the LORD God and he went into the temple of the LORD to offer incense on the altar of incense. But Azariah the priest went after him and with him eighty priests of the LORD – men of valour. And they stood against Uzziah the king and said to him ‘Uzziah, it is not for you to offer incense to the LORD but the duty of the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to offer incense. Go from the sanctuary for you have acted perversely and it is not to your honour from the LORD God. But Uzziah was enraged [p[z] – censer in hand to offer incense – and amid his rage with the priests leprosy rose [j rʔ] on his brow before the eyes of the priests in the house of the LORD right over against the altar of incense. And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him and behold he was leprous in his forehead and they hastened him out from there and he also was urgent to get out because the LORD had struck him. And King Uzziah was a leper until the day he died and he lived in a retirement or sick bay – a leper for he was cut off from the house of the LORD and Jonathan his son was in charge of the house of the king judging the people of the land. *This Severe punishment was occasioned on account of Uzziah’s presumption to act as a Priest-King. Only Messiah would have such entitlement.*

FINAL COMMENT ON UZZIAH’S LIFE 22-23

And the remainder of the acts of Uzziah first and last **Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz wrote**. And Uzziah slept with his fathers and they buried him with his fathers in the burial ground belonging to the kings for they said ‘He is a leper’. And Jotham his son reigned in his place. *We have confirmation that Isaiah also had a hand in the writing of the later section of the book of Kings.*

CHAPTER 27

JOTHAM’S EXCELLENT WAY OF LIFE BUT LACK OF WORSHIP 1-4

Jotham was twenty five when he became king and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem and his mother’s name was Jerushah, daughter of Zadok. *The refrain about the maternal line in Chronicles is never more important than here where her training left its mark on her son – but a very big question remains as to why he never entered the temple.* And he did the right in the eyes of the LORD in the fashion which Azariah his father had done except that he did not go to the temple of the LORD and the people were still morally corrupt or defiled. He built the high gate of the house of the LORD and upon the wall of Ophel he built a lot. He also built cities in the hill country of Judah and in the forests he built palace like castles [hryb] and towers. *Jotham was an industrious builder and an upright man. However he paid little attention to the corruption developing among the people of the nation. He was too much an individualist. His diffidence about entering the temple can be well understood in the light of Uzziah’s death. His omission was too much of a protest against the priests of God and also displayed an unhealed hurt. He took over from his father at 25 when he should have been old enough to appreciate his father’s sin.*

JOTHAM’S CONQUEST OF AMMON 5-6

He went to war with the king of the Ammonites and conquered and subdued them and the Ammonites gave him one hundred talents of silver and 10,000 measures of wheat and 10,000 of barley in that year. This (tribute) the Ammonites repeated in the second

and third years. So Jotham had become strong because he caused his path of life to be laid out or consolidated before the face of the LORD his God.

JOTHAM'S WAYS AND WARS REFERENCED IN "KINGS" 7-8

And the remainder of the works of Jotham and all his wars and his ways behold they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. He was twenty five when he ascended the throne of the kingdom and he reigned as king for sixteen years in Jerusalem.

JOTHAM'S BURIAL AND SUCCESSOR AHAZ 9

So Jotham slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David and Ahaz his son reigned in his place. *Not until we come to the heir of Jotham will we discover the real effect of the life of a moral man who avoids worship but lives otherwise godly and prayerful – even reading the Torah as kings of Israel and Judah were obliged to do. True godliness involves personal experience of God, worship and morality. To fail on any one of these counts would be to serve an indifferent testimony to the next generation.*

CHAPTER 28

FOUR GREAT & GOOD MEN OF ISRAEL REVERSE AN ARMY'S PERFIDIOUS ACTION 1-15

Ahaz was twenty years of age when he became king and he ruled for 16 years in Jerusalem but he did not do that which was right in the LORD'S eyes as David his father. But he walked in the path of the kings of Israel and also made embellished images for Baal. He also offered incense in the valley of the son of Hinnon and he burned his children in the fire after the fashion of the abominations of the nations that the LORD had dispossessed before the sons of Israel. Then he offered sacrifice and incense on the high places and upon the hills and under every flourishing green tree. *The widespread practice of Ahaz was a Baalite cultus in which he marked the fruitfulness of the olive and other trees and popularised Baal worship making it accessible to the whole people and drawing them away from Yahweh.* Then Yahweh his God gave him over to the power of the king of Syria and they struck him and carried off a great captivity from them to Damascus. And he was also given to be subject to the authority of the king of Israel who delivered him a blow with a great threshing [*hkm - a disastrous loss of life compared to "threshing" of corn*]. Also Pekah son of Remaliah slaughtered 120,000 in one day – the entirety of the men of war through their forsaking of Yahweh God of their fathers. Also Zichri – a warrior of Ephraim slaughtered Maaseiah the regent's son and Azrikam overseer of the household and Elkanah who was second only to the king. And the children of Israel carried captive 200,000 women from their brothers (the men of Judah), sons and daughters and plundered large spoil and brought the spoil to Samaria. But there was a prophet of the LORD named Oded and he went out before the army host and came to Samaria and said to them 'Behold in **the wrath of the LORD God** of your fathers against Judah He has delivered them over to your hands and you have slain them with **an indignation** approaching heavens in its **swollen fury**. And now you say you are going to tread those of Judah and Jerusalem under foot as slaves and female maidservants of yours. Is it not definite that with you there are transgressions (or "consequences of sin") concerning the LORD your God? Now listen to me and return the captivity that you have taken from your brothers for the **burning wrath** [רַף] of the LORD is upon you. Also men from among the chiefs of Ephraim stood up against them that came from the warfare: **Azariah** son of Johanan, **Berechiah** son of

Meshullemoth and **Jehizkiah** son of Shallum and **Amasa** son of Haddai. They also said to them ‘You shall not bring in (here) the captivity for behold added to the guilt of our sin against the LORD that is upon us you speak of adding to our sin and to our guilt for our guilt is already great and there is burning anger against Israel.’ Then the armed men left the captivity and the spoil before the face of the princes and the whole congregation. And the brave men who were specified [bqñ] by name rose up and took control of the captivity and caused all who were naked to be clothed from the spoil and clad them well and put footwear on them and made them food and drink and poured oil upon them [*probably to help heal wounds*] and set the weak who were tottering on donkeys and caused them to be brought to Jericho city of Tamarisks close to their brethren and they returned to Samaria. *There is something very special in the term “close” for these gallant leaders of Israel spared 200,000 women and youth and joined them again to their families. They had been as kind to them as the father of the prodigal. Just as Jericho was remarkably preserved after the wrath of the LORD determined its ruin so these lives were spared. Just as the Tamarisk was noble and held its head high so these captives returned with dignity and the noblemen of Judah returned also with their heads held high. It was a singular act of brotherly kindness and must have seemed god in the eyes of the LORD.*

AHAZ APPEALS TO ASSYRIA AGAINST EDMON & THE PHILISTINES 16-21

At that time Ahaz the king sent swiftly to the king of Assyria for his help. For once more the Edomites had come and struck Judah and returned with captives. The Philistines also had pillaged through the cities of the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah and they had captured Bethshemesh and Ajalon and Gederoth and Shocho with their villages and also Gimzo and its villages and they were resident there. For the LORD had caused Judah to be brought low because Ahaz the king of Israel had made bare the heads of Judah and been faithlessly treacherous [l [m] against the LORD.

And Tiglath Pilneser king of Assyria came and besieged or guarded him but did not strengthen him as an ally. Ahaz took the allotted portion of the house of the LORD and of the house of the king and princes and gave it to the king of Assyria but he did nothing for his help.

AHAZ DELIBERATELY PROMOTES IDOLATRY AND SHUTS THE TEMPLE 22-25

And at that time of his adversity he even added to his treacherous faithlessness to the LORD – that same king Ahaz. He then sacrificed to the gods of Damascus that had struck him and he said ‘Because these gods of the kings of Assyria are helping them I will offer sacrifice to them and they will help me’ but these were his downfall and the downfall of all Israel. And Ahaz collected the vessels of the house of God and cut up the vessels of the house of God and shut the doors of the house of the LORD and made altars for himself in all the corners of Jerusalem. *Ahaz was a militant idolater. He put up altars in every available space in the city and littered the hills and mountains with altars. So greatly did he despise the LORD.* And in each city and city belonging to Judah or “praise” (of the LORD) he made high places to offer incense to other gods and provoked the LORD God of his fathers.

FINAL REMARKS ON AN INFAMOUS KING 26-27

So the remainder of his acts and all his paths first and last behold they are written in the books of the kings of Judah and Israel. *The second book of Kings does indeed contain one chapter on the life of Ahaz.*

And Ahaz slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of Jerusalem but they did not bring him to the tombs of the kings of Israel. And Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

CHAPTER 29

HEZEKIAH BEGINS HIS REIGN WITH ZEAL FOR GOD 1-2

Hezekiah reigned from twenty five years of age and ruled in Jerusalem for twenty years. And his mother's name was Abijah, daughter of Zechariah. And he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD after the fashion of David his father. *The immediate alliance with David thought that patriarch was spaced from him by 12 kings in between is accounted for by his faith by which he was united to David as we are to Abraham.*

HEZEKIAH OPENS THE DOORS OF GOD'S HOUSE 3-4

He it was in the first year of his reign in the first new moon **who opened the doors of the house of the LORD** and strengthened or repaired them. *There is a play on his name in this statement. "He", Hezekiah, "hezoked" the doors of the house. This emphatic pun is joyfully inserted in the text to highlight the promise with which he began to reign.*

Then he brought the priests and Levites and gathered them to the concourse of the east.

THE SOLEMN PROTEST OF HEZEKIAH – HE STIRS THE LEVITES TO THEIR HOLY DUTIES 5-11

And he said to them 'Listen to me you Levites – you must or **should have been sanctified** and you must sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers and you should cause the filth (used of filth of incest and phallic type idols) to be taken out from the holy place. For our fathers have been guilty and transgressed and done evil in the sight of the LORD our God and forsaken him and turned their faces from the dwelling place of the LORD and turned their back on Him. They have also shut the doors of the entrance porch and quenched the lamps and have not offered incense nor burnt offerings to the God of Israel. So it has come to pass that the wrath of the Lord is provoked against Judah and Jerusalem and He has delivered them over to the shivering agitation of terror[[wz], to desolation and astonishment [mmv] and the hissing of contempt as is plain to your eyes to see. And behold our fathers have fallen by the sword and our sons, daughters and wives have gone captive for this very reason. Now it is firmly my mind to covenant with the LORD God of Israel so that the burning ardour [hrj] of his wrath may turn from us. My sons, do not now allow yourselves to be careless or led astray [hl v](as by promises or prosperity) for through you the LORD has chosen to minister before Him and to serve Him zealously[trv] and that you should be the ardent ones burning incense.' *The speech contained a mild rebuke in the "passive imperative" concerning the neglected duty of consecration. It directed that every semblance of false Baalite worship be removed. It pointed to the direct connection between Judah's forsaking God and his forsaking them. It showed that national fear and ruin and utter loss of reputation were the results of godlessness. It called for burning zeal to turn away burning wrath.*

THE LEVITES RESPOND SWIFTLY AND PREPARE THE SANCTUARY FOR WORSHIP 12-19

Then the Levites rose up – Mahath son of Amasah and Joel son of Azariah of the children of the Kohathites, and from the children of Merari Kish son of Abdi and Azariah son of Jehalelel. And of the Gershonites Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah. And of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel. And of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah. Also of the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei. And of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel. Then they brought together their brothers and had them sanctified and came in concert with the command of the king by the words of instruction of the LORD to purify the house of the LORD. And the priests went to the inner walls of the LORD'S house to clean it up and brought out all the pollution that they found in the temple of the LORD to the outer court of the house of the LORD and the Levites met them standing over against to accept it [l bq] and took it away to the stream of Kidron outside (the city). And they opened up beginning [l l j] on day one of the first month to sanctify and on the eighth day of the month they came to the porch of the LORD. Thus they were sanctifying the house for eight days and on the sixteenth day of the first month they completed (the task). They then went face to face with Hezekiah the king and said 'We have cleansed the whole house of the LORD – the altar of burnt offering and all the vessels and the table for showbread and all its vessels. Also all the vessels that Ahaz during his reign caused to be cast away through his sin we have set out and sanctified and behold they are before the altar of the LORD. *The vessels were placed at the altar figuratively to demonstrate that they were ready to serve. It is a perfect picture of our lives which when cleansed by the precious blood of Christ are ready for service and should alike be placed by the altar symbolically in token of our will to spend and be spent for Him.*

THE DAWN OF WORSHIP AWAKES SUDDENLY 20-36

Then king Hezekiah arose from sleep and gathered together the princes of the city and went up to the house of the LORD. And they brought with them seven bullocks and seven rams and seven ewe lambs [vbk] and seven kids of the he-goats for a sin offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary and for Judah. And He gave command to the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them up on the altar of the LORD. So they killed the bullocks and the priests were over against to receive the blood and sprinkled the blood on the altar. And they drew the he-goats of the sin offering near before the king and the congregation and they imposed their hands heavily upon it. *One can imagine with what difficulty the goats were pulled along to stand awaiting slaughter. Equally one can envisage the unwillingness of the goats to have hands laid upon them. How different our Lord who willingly bore our sins on the tree.*

Then the priests killed them and offered their blood as expiation at the altar or declared [afj] their blood guilt at the altar for a covering expiation or pardon [rpk] for all Israel for the king ordered that the burnt offering and sin offering be on behalf of all Israel. *This recognition on the part of the king that not alone Judah but the entire nation was culpable and so inclusively he set forth atonement for north and south. This large heart of Hezekiah takes us to the Christ who offered Himself not alone for one nation but for a world of needy sinners. "While we were yet sinners He died for us – the just for the unjust to bring us to God".*

Then he placed the Levites to minister in the house of the LORD with cymbals and Nabal psalters and harps after the commandment of David and Gad the seer of the king and **Nathan the prophet** for the commandment by the authority of the LORD was by the hand of His prophets. *It is notable that the praise of the courts of*

the LORD was revealed as God's will by the prophets Gad and Nathan and put into effect through the king and then executed by the Levites. This remark is revealing and tells us more of the importance of the prophets as men of song and initiators of divine praise.

And the Levites stood to minister with the musical instruments of David and the priests with trumpets or shophars. Then Hezekiah spoke by way of instruction that they were to offer the burnt offering on the altar and at the moment of time the offering began the song of the Yahweh opened up with the trumpets and with the guiding hands of the instruments of David king of Israel. *The reference to David underscores the interpretation that this opening of the temple was for "all Israel" which at the inception of the monarchy had one king as a united Theocracy.*

And the whole congregation worshipped and the singers sang and the trumpeters sounded forth – the whole (continued) until the end of the burnt offering. *The element of praise was co-terminal with the offering. Thus the ancients in a figure gave voluminous praise for the atonement and in reality for that for which the altar stood – namely the death of the atoning Lamb of God.*

And at the finish of offering the burnt sacrifice, the king and all those that found themselves in his company worshipped (with bowed head). *The fundamental finish when the fire had burned out was that **the king bowed prayerfully in thanks to God and the people with him.** This we also do when we receive the elements of communion. Ours is a deep awe and worship that He (my Saviour) should die for me.*

Also the king spoke instructions to the singers of the Levites to praise the LORD using the words of David and of Asaph the seer. So they sang praise until they were radiantly joyful and they bowed their heads and worshipped. *This attitude of lowering the crown of the head symbolically recognises Yahweh as King and LORD.*

Then Hezekiah replied (to the response of the people) and said 'Now you have filled your hands or given you fully to the LORD. Come close and bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the LORD. So the congregation brought offerings and thank offerings and all who had a willing heart (volunteers) brought burnt offerings.

And it was so that the count of the burnt offerings that the congregation brought was **seventy bullocks** and a **hundred rams** and **two hundred ewe-lambs**; all these were burnt offerings for the LORD. *Seeing the event was hastily organised this was a very substantial response.* And the consecrated offerings were 600 oxen and 3000 sheep.

The priests were definitely insufficient and they were unable to skin all the burnt offerings and their brethren the Levites gave them support to complete the undertaking and until the priests had been sanctified for the Levites were right in their hearts to have themselves sanctified and ready more than the priests. And also the burnt offerings were en masse with the fat of the peace offerings and the drink offerings with each burnt offering. Then the service of the house of the LORD was established or instituted. And Hezekiah rejoiced and all the people because God had established the people firmly for the matter happened with suddenness or undesignedly. *This event is often heralded as a revival or even reformation. It was as the sacred writer testifies an almost instant act of fervent response to the call of the king. It lacked the depth of preparation that a long tradition grants. Yet was it very joyful and deeply acceptable to God and a glorious start to the monarchy under Hezekiah whom the LORD blessed through his 29 years of rule in Jerusalem.*

CHAPTER 30

THE GREAT UNIFYING PASSOVER PROCLAMATION 1-12

Then Hezekiah sent out over all Israel and Judah and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem to make the Passover of the LORD God of Israel. And the king and the princes and the whole congregation had deliberated to make or create the Passover in the second month. *The discussion was wide-ranging. This was not a sudden matter like the opening of the temple. It was a matter of receiving and giving opinion through all ranks of society. The people of the city were assuredly behind it. The date chosen was the later date of Numbers 9.10-11 which date as coming between barley and corn harvest suited the rural community. Thus the city people gave consideration to the people of the land. Also the weather quickly favors in Mid April providing good travelling conditions.*

For they were not able to make it at that (proper) time for the priests had not been sanctified in time or in accordance with custom and the people could not be gathered to Jerusalem (in time). And the decision was right in the eyes of the king and the whole congregation. Then they made the declaration to have effect (*literally “to stand and act”*) to pass through (the land) – a call through all Israel from Beersheba and even to Dan. To come to make a Passover to the LORD God of Israel in Jerusalem for they had not done as was written for a great while. So runners[חַרְר] with letters from the king went and his princes also throughout the land of Israel and Judah both in accordance with the king’s command saying ‘ O children of Israel return to the LORD God of your fathers – the God of Isaac and Israel and He will return to the remnant of you that has slipped out of the palm of the hand of the king of Assyria. But do not be as your fathers and brothers who transgressed against the LORD God of your fathers and He gave them over to ruin as you yourselves are seeing. Now do not be hard to turn about (*literally “stiff of neck”*) like your fathers. **Give your hand (to join in union with) to the LORD** and come into His holy place that He sanctified for perpetuity and serve the LORD your God that the fury or heat of His anger may turn from you. For in your turning to the LORD your brothers and your sons will have mercy in the presence of their captors to return to this land for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful and will not turn His face from you if you return to him. So it went on – the runners passed from city to city through the land of Ephraim and Manasseh and **even Zebulun** but there were those who (a) had them in derision and laughed and (b) those who detested and cursed them. **Definite(ly) men from Asher and Manasseh and Zebulun humbled them and came to Jerusalem.** Also **in Judah the hand of the LORD was to give them a single heart** to do the command of the king and princes by the word of the LORD. *The take up was significant and for the first time for centuries the nation worshipped as one.*

UNLEAVENED BREAD & PASSOVER CELEBRATED AND EXTENDED ANOTHER SEVEN DAYS 13-26

And many people gathered at Jerusalem to keep the feast of unleavened bread at the second new moon (month) – a very large gathering. And they rose up and removed the altars that were throughout Jerusalem and they put away all the altars of incense and threw them into the torrent of Kidron. *This stream in spate would carry flotsam down to the Dead Sea.* So they killed the Passover (lambs) on the 14th day of the second month and the priests and Levites felt ashamed and had been sanctified (since) and brought the burnt offerings of the house of the LORD. And they ministered in their place according to the righteous law written by Moses the man of God. The priests sprinkled the blood (received) from the hands of the Levites. Because there

were many in the assembly that had not been sanctified so the Levites were over the slaying of the Passover (lambs) for all that were not cleansed to sanctify them to the LORD. For great numbers of the people – numerous from Ephraim and Manasseh Issachar and Zebulun had not purified themselves but they ate the Passover but not as it was written but Hezekiah had continually prayed on their behalf saying **‘May the good LORD continually cover on behalf of (them).** *The ultimate “atonement” Hezekiah believed inhered in the Lord and his own goodness covering or made over on behalf of the ones who could not keep the law. In this Hezekiah came within a whisker of the principle of imputed righteousness – indeed his prayer pinioned upon it. Everyone that causes his heart to be established or fixed to seek or frequent God – the LORD God of his fathers though his is not as the purity of the sanctuary.’* And the LORD heard Hezekiah and healed or **joined the people together.** *There was a big danger that the unpreparedness of the northern tribes might drive a wedge between the people but grace brought them together on the basis of “seeking “and having a relationship with the LORD and of His own interposing to atone for the lack of purity or holiness in those who had become unfamiliar with the written ordinances or had opportunity to be prepared for the feast.*

So (a) **the sons of Israel that were found in Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great radiant joy** and the Levites and priests were singing praise to the LORD day by day with powerful musical instruments to the LORD. And Hezekiah spoke to the heart of all the Levites who skilfully taught the good pious instruction of the LORD and they ate the food of the feast for seven days offering peace offerings and “extended confession and thanks to the LORD God of their fathers. And all the assembly counselled to keep seven days afterwards and they kept seven (other) days joyfully because Hezekiah king of Judah caused to lift up [*myrh Hiphil infinitive*] for the assembly 1000 bullocks and 7000 sheep and the princes gave the assembly 10,000 sheep and priests in large numbers had sanctified them. And all the assembly of Judah and the priests and Levites and all the assembly that came from Israel and the strangers that came from the land of Israel and (b) **those living in Judah rejoiced with gladness.** And (c) **there was great joy in Jerusalem** for from the days of Solomon son of David king of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. Then the priests and Levites arose and blessed the people and through their (loud) utterance it was heard and their prayer came to His (God’s) dwelling in heaven. *This is a quintessentially brilliant touch with which to end this thrice joyful occasion. The priest’s blessing was everywhere heard and the priests and Levites prayer was heard immensely further afield in glory where God dwells. There was unity and the LORD commanded the blessing. The emphasis on joy is reminiscent of Paul’s Philippian literature where he says “My dearly beloved, my joy and crown....rejoice in the LORD always and again I say rejoice” (Philippians 4.1-4).*

CHAPTER 31

THE THOROUGHGOING DESTRUCTION OF SHRINES 1-2

We now enter a third chapter in the full and interesting spiritual journal of Hezekiah as recorded by the sacred writer. And as a (suited) end to all this all Israel that were found present went out to the cities of Judah and kept shattering to pieces the images and kept cutting and breaking the groves and kept tearing down the high places and the altars from the whole of Judah and throughout Benjamin and through Ephraim and Manasseh till they had made an end. Then all the sons of Israel returned every man to his holding and to their cities.

MORNING & EVENING WORSHIP RESTORED 2-4

And Hezekiah restored the priestly and Levite courses of ministry according to their lot – each man according to the task at hand in which he served – the priests and Levites for burnt offerings and peace offerings, to serve ardently and to celebrate with thanks and to utter praise at the gate of the hosts of the LORD. *Also* the portion of the King from his property for the offerings – more precisely for the morning and evening Offerings, burnt offerings, for the Sabbaths and new moons and for the feasts as is written in the Torah of the LORD. And he said *by way of instruction* to the people that lived in Jerusalem to give a portion to the priests and Levites that the might be supported and strengthened in the Torah of Yahweh.

ABUNDANT PROVISION THROUGH THE PEOPLE’S LIBERALITY 5-10

And at the breaking news of the declaration(or) as the word spread the sons of Israel made large (**offerings**) or firstfruits – of corn and wine and oil and honey and all the produce of the field and they brought a tenth of all to abundance. Then the sons of Israel and Judah that lived in the cities of Judah also brought a tenth of their cattle and sheep and they brought the tenth of that which was dedicated and dedicated to the LORD their God – they gave heaps and heaps. In the third month they opened up to lay the basis of the heaps and in the seventh month they completed the heaps. *May to September would normally be dry and heaps of produce as corn and other field produce would not spoil but by the beginning of the former rains in December they would be endangered and spoil.* Then Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps and they blessed the LORD and His people Israel. And Hezekiah searched out with the priests and Levites the detail about the heaps and Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok spoke to him and he said ‘From the start of the heave offerings for the house of the LORD there is enough to eat and plenty left over, for the LORD has blessed his people and that left over is this riches. And Hezekiah spoke *giving direction* to prepare storerooms (*as were constructed by the side of the temple*)and they prepared them.

And they brought in the heave offerings and tithes and that which was dedicated in faithfulness and the officer over them was Coroniah the Levite and Shimei his brother was second *in charge*. And the officers under the authority of Coroniah and Shimei his brother at the command of Hezekiah the king and Azariah ruler of God’s house were Jehiel and Azariah and Jerimoth and Jozabad and Eliel and Ismachiah and Mahath and Benaiah (eight in all). And Kore son of Imnah the Levite was the gate-keeper for the east over the voluntary offerings to God to provide the priestly offerings[*hmnwrt*]to the LORD and *for* the holy of holies. And at his hand or his assistants were Eden and Miniamin and Yeshua and Shemaiah, Amariah and Shecaniah(*six helpers*)through the cities of the priests in their position of trust **to distribute to their brethren** according to their courses great and small. Other duties were the **enrolling of the family names of males** from three years of age and more and **checking the daily portion for their service** of everyone that came to the house of the LORD during their duty vigils according to their courses. And that *had to do with* **the family enrolment of the priests** relating to the house of their fathers and the Levites from twenty years of age and over in their duty vigils and according to their courses. Also *their task* related to the **family enrolment** of all their little toddlers [pf “those that trip along or fall easily”], their wives and sons and daughters for the whole congregation for to their trusted position they dedicated themselves completely. Also *record was kept* of **the sons of Aaron the priests who were in the fields** of the surrounding pasturelands of the cities everywhere city by city – men that were

specifically named in the gifting of portions to all males among the priests and to all enrolled among the Levites. *These officers had five large clerical and administrative tasks which required utter dedication to duty and they satisfied that criteria after a fitful beginning and careless history in fulfilling their office. They are an example of what can happen when the heart is in the work of the LORD.*

HEZEKIAH DID EVERYTHING WHOLEHEARTEDLY 20-21

In this fashion Hezekiah did things throughout all Judah and did that which was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God. And in every task that he started in the service of the house of God and in the law and commandments to search and enquire after God he did it with his whole heart and he prospered. *This comment is written from a religious standpoint and clearly it captures the spirit of Hezekiah's administration and the spiritual purpose that imbued all that he undertook. He established more than adequate support for the priests and through the tithe enabled their hands to be filled with offerings for the ministry of the house of God. Since the time of David there had not been a king of such spiritual calibre.*

CHAPTER 32

STRONGER THAN SENNACHERIB 1-8

After these events and their confirmation Sennacherib king of Assyria came and he came right into Judah and pitched his tents[*hnj*] against the fortified cities and spoke of breaking them open like hatched eggs[*qb*] or opening them up for himself. But when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had arrived and that he appeared to purpose war against Jerusalem he counselled with his commanders and his warriors to obstruct and close the waters of the external fountains and they (the leaders & mighties) helped him. Then many people gathered themselves together and stopped all the fountains and the stream that swept as a flood [*pfv*] through the midst of the land saying "Why should the king of Assyria come and find lots of water?" He also had been strengthened and built up the entire wall that had been broken and raised towers upon it and outside he built another wall and strengthened the Millo (bulwark) of the city of David and made javelins or darts and shields in quantity. Then he placed the people under war command and gathered them around him at the precinct of the gate of the city and spoke to their hearts saying 'Be strong [*qz*] – firm and strong to prevail] and courageous or restored[*xma*]; do not fear and do not be broken(in spirit) and terrified [*ttj*] from the appearance of the king of Assyria and the sight of all that multitude of his for there is **a greater** with us that with him. With him is the forearm of the flesh and with us is Yahweh our God to help us and **to fight as us** (Niphal) our battles and the people rested heavily[*Jms*] on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

SENNACHERIB'S THREAT AND VILIFICATION OF YAHWEH 9-20

After this Sennacherib king of Assyria while he was opposing Lachish (all his leadership being with him) smartly sent his servants to Jerusalem to Hezekiah king of Judah and to all Judah at Jerusalem saying 'Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria "Upon what are you trusting and why are you living within fortifications in Jerusalem? Is it not the case that Hezekiah is inducing you [*tws*] to deliver yourselves over to death through famine and by thirst saying 'The LORD our God will deliver us from the power of the king of Assyria. **Is this not the Hezekiah** (Yahweh help One) that took away his high places and his altars and speaks to instruct Judah and Jerusalem saying 'You must worship at one altar and burnt incense upon it?' *Sennacherib played fun at the very name of Hezekiah and though he misunderstood*

*the difference between the altar of burnt offering and the prayer altar he got the facts straight that Hezekiah sought to unify the nation under Yahweh and his temple and altar. “Are you not aware of what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of the lands? Who were the prevailing gods of the nations of those lands that were capable of saving their lands from my hand?” Who was there among the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed that would be able to save his people out of my hand but your God would have been able to save you from my hand?” “But now do not let Hezekiah lead you astray[avn]and don’t let him induce you as to this matter and do not trust him for no god of all the nations was capable of saving their people from my hand and from the hand of my fathers. Furthermore it is a case of **if** that your Gods – and they won’t save you from my hand. And his servants spoke again against the LORD God and against Hezekiah his servant. Then he wrote letters to reproach Yahweh the God of Israel and to speak against Him saying ‘Like the gods of the nations of the land that have not caused their people to be saved from my hand even so the God of Hezekiah shall not save his people from my hand. Then they made a proclamation in a loud Jewish [tydwhy] voice over against the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall to frighten them and to agitate and terrify them [lhb] in order that they might capture the city. And they pronounced against the God of Jerusalem as against the Gods of the peoples of the earth that were made by man’s hands. On this account Hezekiah the king and Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz prayed and cried to heaven.*

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD SLAYS THE MIGHTIES OF ASSYRIA 21-23

Then the LORD swiftly sent an angel and **he covered** all the valiant men of war **with blackness** or destroyed them [dj k] and leaders and **the commander (The AV puts “captains” and thus errs for rv not myrv is the term – a simple grammatical error)** in the camp of the king of Assyria so he returned with shame of face to his land and he came to the house of his god they that came from his own fountain caused him to be cut in pieces with a sword. So Yahweh saved Hezekiah and those that lived in Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib king of Assyria and from the power of them all and sustained them[as a shepherd provides & sustains] all around. And many brought gifts or tribute to the LORD to Jerusalem and choice presents [dgm] to Hezekiah king of Judah. Then he was lifted up before the eyes of all nations after that.

THE SICKNESS OF HEZEKIAH 24-26

In those days Hezekiah was sick approaching death but he had kept on praying [l lqty] to the LORD and he spoke to him and gave him a miracle or proof and prodigy [tpwm]. But Hezekiah did not cause a return for the great benefit done for him. *God yielded to his request and gave him a “camel load” size benefit but Hezekiah did not return as the LORD desired.* For he was arrogant [hbg] in his heart and there was (divine) anger provoked against Judah and Jerusalem. *One hesitates to step beyond the principles of exegesis to consider what the LORD might have desired – but one of the express desires of the LORD is the good upbringing of one’s family and there may have been something to be desired in that area of conduct. Was Hezekiah too indulgent of his son Manasseh?* But Hezekiah humbled him in the midst of his arrogance of heart – he and those who dwelt in Jerusalem – and the wrath of the LORD did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

THE WEALTH AND HISTORIC TUNNEL WORK OF HEZEKIAH 27-30

And it was so that Hezekiah had very great wealth and glory and he made treasuries for silver and gold and precious stones and spices and small shields and all kinds of valuable jewels. He also made stores for the bringing in of grain and wine and oil and stables for all sorts of cattle and arrangement for gatherings (of doves?). He created cities for himself and acquisitions of flock and herd in quantity for God gave him very great property or wealth. **And this very Hezekiah** [A term Sennacherib used] closed and concealed the origin of the waters of the Gihon that come down straight underneath the west[br [m]of the city of David and Hezekiah succeeded in all his works.

CONCLUDING POSTSCRIPT (1) HEZEKIAH ERRS IN HIS PROUD DEMONSTRATION FOR THE EYES OF THE BABYLONIANS. THE CONCERN GOD EXPRESSES 31

But truly[tk] Hezekiah in respect of the interpreters or scoffers of the prince of Babylon set suddenly to enquire of the prodigy or miracle that happened in the land God left him to prove and **essay him as metal** for the acquaintance of all that was in his heart. *It would seem the LORD knows the heart but the LORD left him as hot metal is left to cool so that God might show the cooling of his relationship.*

CONCLUDING POSTSCRIPT (2) THE HONOURS MEN CONFER 32-3

And the remainder of the affairs or acts of Hezekiah and **his covenant love** or steadfast covenant – behold they are written in **the vision of Isaiah** the son of Amoz the prophet... upon the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. And Hezekiah slept with his fathers and they buried him in the highest of the tombs of the sons of David and all Judah and those who lived in Jerusalem did honour to him at his death and Manasseh his son reigned in his place. *Isaiah in his prophecy laid emphasis on the steadfastness and love of Hezekiah for his God. The present writer seems strongly to suggest a cooling of the fervour of the king in later years – the God-given years for which he pleaded. So with the loss of fervour came the lack of interest of his son and perhaps other attendant ills besides. Nevertheless this king lived a life which few kings matched over twenty nine years (fifteen of which were added by grace). The great gift of God was that he doubled the period of this king's monarchy but apart from cities built and dovecotes and stables there is little else reported of the second breath God gave this much blessed monarch.*

CHAPTER 33

MANASSEH'S RULE 1-2

Manasseh was twelve years of age when he commenced his reign and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. *This very young king was much like Joash in his tender years when he was called on to assume the office of state. He lacked a Jehoiada figure and his father was consumed with building and arable development defence and aggregating wealth so that his place for the Almighty grew increasingly less. This sad state of affairs as the sacred writer testified increased as his 15 year bonus of time grew longer. Nevertheless we have to avoid falling into the trap of “dad's sour grapes and lad's poor teeth”.*

But he did the evil before the LORD'S eyes like the abomination sof the nations whom the Lord dispossessed before the face of the children of Israel.

MANASSEH'S SINS AND THE LORD'S UNHEEDED CAUTION 3-10

And he brought back and built the high places that his father Hezekiah had torn down and he raised up the altars to the Baalim and the Asheroth and worshipped all the host of heaven and served them. Then he built altars at the house of the LORD where the LORD Himself said "My name shall be in Jerusalem to perpetuity." Then he built altars for the entire host of heaven in both courts of the house of the LORD. And he caused his sons to pass through the fire in Ben Hinnon and worked with the cloud diviner and snake enchanter and witch and the restless driven necromancer with familiar spirit to do terrible evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke Him to anger. Then he set the carved image – a crafted likeness that he made – in the house of God where God said to David and Solomon his son 'In this house and Jerusalem that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel I have set my name for perpetuity and I will not add to move the foot of Israel from the fertile land that I established to support your fathers – certainly (**this will be so**) if they hear and obey to do all the things I have commanded according to the whole law statutes and righteous ordinances by the hand of Moses. Then Manasseh made Judah and those that lived in Jerusalem wander astray in error [h[t] and to do worse than the nations that the LORD destroyed or cut off before the children of Israel. Then the LORD spoke by oracle to Manasseh and the people but they would not pay careful attention.

MANASSEH REPENTS IN BABYLON 11-17

So the LORD brought against them captains of the army of the king of Assyria and they took Manasseh in captors rings [j nj] and bound him with brass fetters or chains [mytvj n] and took him as a captive to Babylon. And as he was enclosed (in house arrest) he sought mercy or supplicated [hl h] the LORD his God and humbled him greatly before the face of the God of his fathers. And he persistently prayed to Him and he was entreated of him and heard his cry for mercy and caused him to return to Jerusalem to his realm. And Manasseh became deeply aware that the LORD was truly God.

And after **this** (nk protection of God) he built a wall outside the city of David to the west of Gihon in the valley as you come toward the fish gate and circling round Ophel and he caused it to be raised very high. And he set captains of war in all the fortified cities in Judah. He also removed the foreign gods and the carved image from the house of the LORD and all the altars that he had built in the hill of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem and he threw them outside the city. And he established the altar of the LORD and offered peace offerings and thank-offerings on it and spoke (his) directions to Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. Still the people were sacrificing besides [l ba] at the high places except (now) to the LORD God.

MANASSEH'S LIFE – BAD AND GOOD

And the remainder of the acts of Manasseh and his prayer to God and the oracle words of **the seers** spoken to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel – behold they are in the books of the kings of Israel. Also his prayer and His being entreaty of him and all his sin and transgression and the popular places where he built high places and established Asheroth and carved images before his humbling – behold they are written in the words of the seers.

MANASSEH'S DEATH & BURIAL 20

And Manasseh slept with his fathers and they buried him in his house and Amon his son reigned in his place.

AMON'S FAILED TWO YEAR REIGN 21-25

Amon was twenty two when he began to reign and he ruled for two years in Jerusalem. But he did what was evil in the eyes of the LORD after the fashion that his father Manasseh did and Amon made sacrifice to all the carved images that Manasseh his father made and he served them. But he did not humble himself before the face of the LORD as Manasseh his father humbled himself but he Amon multiplied transgression. Then his servants committed treason against him and killed him in his house. But the common people of the land struck and killed all those who were traitors against king Amon. And the common people of the land installed Josiah his son as king in his place.

CHAPTER 34

JOSIAH THE REFORMER – TURNS NEITHER TO THE RIGHT OR LEFT 1-2

Josiah was eight when he became king and he reigned thirty one years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked after the fashion of David his father and did not turn to the right or the left.

JOSIAH'S REFORMATION – BAALISM ENDED OVER ALL ISRAEL 3-7

Then in year eight of his reign whilst he was still a youth he himself was prompted (*Lit. "caused to begin"*) to search after the God of David his father and in year twelve he was prompted to clean up Judah and Jerusalem from the high places and the groves and the molten images. And they had the altars of Baalim torn down [ztn] before his very eyes and he cut down [[dg]the images of the sun that belonged to them and were high above them. Then he shattered to shreds the Asherah groves and carved images and moulded images and ground them to powder [qqd] and scattered them as seed upon the burial places of those that sacrificed to them. Then he burned the bones of the priests who zealously sacrificed on the altars and purged Judah and Jerusalem. Thus it was in the cities of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon even to Naphtali with their sharp cutting instruments all around [*The Qere renders rjb (the Kethibh) as Mhytbrjb – "with their mauls" [A.V.] but the Kethibh could be translated "in the hill or by choice in their houses all around" which makes good sense and could mean "they voluntarily chose to cleanse their homes" from images of all kinds so I am loathe to give way to the Qere*]. And when he had broken down the altars and the Asherahs and the carved images he cut them to powder and cut off all the sun images [mm]] through all the land of Israel he went back to Jerusalem.

ISRAEL'S COLLECTION APPLIED TO TEMPLE RESTORATION BY HILKIAH THE HIGH PRIEST 8-13

Then in the eighteenth year of his rule of purging the land and the house he expressly sent Shaphan son of Azaliah and Maaseiah governor of the city, and **Joash son of Joahaz the historical chronicler** [rykzm] to strengthen and restore the house of the LORD God. So they came to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the silver shekels that had come in for the house of God which the Levites which abundant count the watchmen at the doors had collected from the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel besides all Judah and Benjamin and those who lived in Jerusalem. *Support for the temple was now strong through Manasseh and Ephraim as well as in Judah and Benjamin.* And they provided it to the hand of the one who put in action the scheme of the custodians of the house of the LORD and they in turn

provided it for the workmen who were working on the scheme to repair the breach and strengthen the house. So they gave it to the silent workers in wood and stone[VRJ] builders to purchase cut-stone and sawn timbers for joists and beams and for rafter frames of the houses that the kings of Israel had ruined. *The temple itself and ancillary buildings are here in mind.* And the sturdy men worked with trustworthiness in the scheme and the **foremen inspectors** over them were Jahath and Obadiah, Levites – sons of Merarites; and Zechariah and Meshullam, sons of the Kohathites, to superintend and Levites all of whom were teachers of song. *The suggestion is that the men in charge were men capable of teaching praise and the songs of David once familiar to the house and the work went on singing with not a few workers becoming familiar with the psalms as they grafted.* They were also over the burden bearers [myl bs] and superintendants [myj xnm] belonging to the whole operation of the scheme for service (in building) and service (in worship). *The A.V. may not have picked up the nuance of the twinning of types of service and earlier and modern scholars figure the writer is speaking of the various tradesmen. Modern translators render “from job to job”. The relevance of the “song instructors” is lost through the traditional rendering.* And from the Levites there were writers[rpws draughtsmen & surveyors] and overseers[rfs who wrote instructions] and porters [myr [v]or gatekeepers. *The Levites were distributed through the whole scheme and their practical skills and ministry zeal were an asset to setting forward the work.*

THE RECOVERY FROM THE DEBRIS OF THE TORAH 14-22

And when they had brought the silver that came for the house of the LORD Hilkiyah the high priest found writing of the law of the LORD by the hand of Moses. *It was not just a book or another Torah but writing that stretched back to ancient times. Had it been present in the original temple of Solomon preserved from 900BC? Was it of even greater antiquity and could it possibly be the document referred to in Joshua 1.8 & 8.34 Exodus 24.7 & 2 Kings 23.2 survivor of 800 years? Could it have been the “volume of the book” referred to by David in Psalm 40.8? Perhaps not. Then again the emphasis laid on the discovery would have been “much ado about nothing” if the discovery was not rather special for I have no doubt but that Torah copy was extant and currently known.* Then Hilkiyah announced in answer and said to Shaphan the scribe **I have found a written copy of the Torah** in the house of the LORD and Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan brought the book to the king and returned again the word to the king saying ‘All that is given to the hand of your servants these servants are doing.’ And **they have poured out the silver** found in the house of the LORD as water and given it to be dispensed as reward by those committed to the care of the house and so onwards into the hand of those who execute the work. *Thus Shaphan first delivered his undertaking that the work proceeded to plan and the payments were laid out and high expenses were being incurred but met.*

Then Shaphan the scribe explained to the king saying ‘Hilkiyah the priest gave a writing or book to me. Then Shaphan recited in it distinctly or as a herald before the king. *The sense in which we are to take this recitation is that it was a “heralding of the king and God’s theocratic kingdom”.* We are to understand what kings needed to know and so Shaphan in all probability read Deuteronomy 17.14 and onwards to the raising up of the Messiah (18.18). Perhaps he read the Shema and doubtless the commandments but the “covenant” and the “Blessing & Curse” and “the Song” and the final”Benediction on the tribes” which relate to heralding the King who is to

come may well have been included. Whatever text he chose Shaphan read as a herald of the future God had planned for his people[arq].

And it was so as the king heard the words of the Torah he tore his robes. Then the king gave orders to **Hilkiah** and Ahikam son of Shaphan and Abdon son of Micah and **Shaphan** the scribe and **Asaiah** attendant of the king saying “Go, enquire from the LORD on my behalf and on behalf of the remnant through Israel and Judah over the matters of the book which we have found or **which has revealed itself**. *[the expression by preference should be taken as a Niphal – as if the book showed up in providence supposedly on its own initiative though truly by divine providence]* for **the wrath of God that has been poured out upon us like water** is great because our fathers did not keep vigilant watch on the declaration of the LORD to do all that is written upon this book.” *Josiah may be quoting from what he has heard and the context of this expression is Joshua 1.8 which I fancy was closely attached to the early copies of the law. The passage I have observed as most probably heralded to the king spoke of not hoarding silver and gold and in that context the reference to the pouring out of silver on the temple would have been music to the ear of the king but the Mosaic references to Israel’s future prospects would seem to have deeply stunned Josiah.*

Then Hilkiah –**also he whom the king** appointed (*a probably reference to Asaiah and the delegation with him*) went to **Huldah the prophetess** wife of Shallum [*“recompense” or “quiet”*], son of Tikvath[*“congregation” or better “hope”*], son of Hasrah[*poverty*] who watched over the robes [and she rested from her labour or interrupted her work in Jerusalem in the Mishnah or **second copy** (of the book)] and they spoke to her about these things. *Huldah (“weasel”-recognised as a particularly clever animal in Israel. The term may also apply to Mongoose which has natural immunity to snake venom). Huldah clearly possessed and was working on a “second” copy of the law. Her husband came from a poor family two generations back who was keeper of the Royal Wardrobe(We are not apprised as to whether this Hasrah was currently alive). The father of Shallum was named by his poor father who was doubtless a fervent worshipper “hope and “assembly of God”. This family on the paternal side had a stout and sincere faith and three generations later this “wife” of the great man’s grandson was a prophetess of God. Huldah was a woman who could see God’s future plans under the Spirit’s revelation and a rare woman who studied the scriptures or such writings from the law as were available to her – and they seem to have been considerable to give her the prophetic perspective.*

HULDAH’S PROPHECY OF JOSIAH’S RIGHTEOUS PEACEFUL REIGN 23-28

And she said to them ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel “ You must tell the man that sent **you(plural)** to me...Thus says the LORD ‘Behold me bringing evil upon this place and its inhabitants –all the curses that are written in the book that they have read before the king of Judah.’” *This statement confirms (a) that Huldah had a copy of the Torah and (b) that Hilkiah read from the latter section of Deuteronomy and in particular our chapter 27. “Under which (provisions) they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods to provoke me by all the works of their hands and my hot wrath will be poured on this place and not extinguished. And to the king of Judah who sent you to search after the LORD ...thus shall you say to him “Thus says the LORD God of Israel “These are the declarations you are to obey.” “Because your heart is tender and you humbled yourself before the face of God when you heard His declarations against this place and its inhabitants and humbled yourself before me and*

tore your robes and you would weep before me so also I have heard” **whispers the LORD** (in mercy). *The wonderful word san is used by the prophets to describe the “anger” and “mercy” of the LORD. Elijah at Horeb heard the “whisper of God” to encourage him and now Josiah similarly is uplifted by the quiet voice of God. Behold me gathering you to your fathers and you will gather yourself toward you burial in peace and your eyes will not see through to all the evil that I will bring over this place and upon its inhabitants”* and they brought this oracular word back to the king.

THE COVENANT OF JOSIAH AND HIS REFORMS 29-33

Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. Then the king went up to the house of the LORD and every man of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites and all the people from greatest to least and he read in their attentive ears all the words of **the book of the covenant** that was found in the house of the LORD. So the king stood in his place and cut a covenant before the face of the LORD ‘to walk after the LORD and to keep His commands and His testimonies and statutes with his whole heart and whole soul and to enact the matters of the covenant that are written in this book.’ Then he made (a) **all that were found present** in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand up or stand loyal and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did after the fashion of the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. The Josiah removed all the abominations from the entire land which belonged to the children of Israel and he caused to serve – (b) **all who found themselves in Israel** to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they did not depart from after the LORD God of their fathers. *There can be no doubting the scope or depth of the reformation of Josiah in its generation. The people “found” in Jerusalem were technically “those that reached Jerusalem” and spiritually those who found “the foundation of peace with God”. The role of Hilkiah was simply one of expressing new interest in the holy place and thus as he rummaged finding the book. The role of Huldah was that of directing from personal experience of God both king and nation as to the meaning of the book and also bringing a word of prophecy to the godly monarch which would encourage him over the remainder of his 32 years on the throne.*

CHAPTER 35

JOSIAH’S PASSOVER OF AWESOME WORSHIP 1-19

Then Josiah made a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem and they killed the Passover (lambs) on the fourteenth day of the first month. And he instituted the ministry of the priests over their duties and supported or strengthened them for their service of the house of the LORD. And he said to the Levites who made all Israel understand (the significance) – those that were consecrated to the LORD “Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon son of David king of Israel built. It is not to be a burden on your shoulders. *The ark was to be conveyed as taught by its poles and not mounted on the shoulder.* Now serve the LORD your God and his people Israel. And get set up in relation to the house of your fathers according to your allotted (order) in the written (instructions) of David king of Israel and the (further) instructions written by Solomon his son. Then stand to minister in the sanctuary by the divisions of the house of your father’s brethren, the sons of the nation and after the apportioned lot of the house of the father of the Levites. *This roundabout instruction detailed Hezekiah’s desire that “national” order be restored and that Levites from everywhere be involved.* Then kill the Passover but (first) have yourselves sanctified [the Hithpael reflects a prior duty]and initiate your brethren to work in accordance with the revealed word and manner of the LORD by the hand of Moses. *All this showed that the king*

had now full command of what was written in Exodus and Leviticus. And Josiah offered as a gift to the nation lambs from the young of the flock and young male kids of the goats – all that was required for Passovers (c) **for all that found themselves present** to the count of 30,000 and 3000 bullocks. These were from the wealth or substance of the king. And his captains or princes made oblations [mwr] with willingness for the nation to the priests and Levites. Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel rulers of God's house gave 2,600 oblations (probably lambs) for Passover offerings and 300 oxen. Then Conaniah and Shemaiah and Nethaneel his brothers and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad – princes of of Levi – gave oblations of Passover (lambs) to the Levites, 5000 (lambs) and 500 oxen. Thus the service was prepared and the priests were standing or stationed for their ministry and the Levites by their courses after the commandment of the king. Then they killed the Passover and the priest sprinkled of the blood and the Levites flayed or skinned them (the sacrifices). Then they removed the burnt offerings to give to the divisions of the house of the fathers of the children of the nation to come near in worship to the LORD as it is written in the book of Moses and so (they did) with oxen. *This accords with Leviticus 4 and relates to transgression in ignorance and sin of which a man is aware. The bullock speaks as a "beast of burden" of our Lord's carrying in His body of our sin (known and unknown) and is the other aspect of relationship with God. The Lamb which in this case was the gift of the King and priests etc. is a model of the free sacrificial atonement of Christ who paid the judgment due and the bullock bespeaks those personal sins and failures that interfere with our daily relationship to God. Thus the law of Moses is attentive to issues that are still reality under the New Covenant.* Then they boiled or roasted the Passover with fire according to the judgment or institution but they boiled the consecrated things in boiling pots, cauldrons and roasting vessels. And had them taken by runners to all the sons of the nation. *[That is, those who "found themselves" in Jerusalem].* Afterwards they prepared for themselves and for the priests because the priests the sons of Aaron were involved in offering up the burnt offerings and the fat until nightfall so the Levites prepared for themselves as well as the priests, the sons of Aaron. And the singers, the sons of Asaph were in their place according to the commandment of David and Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun the king's seer [hzj-one who was prophetic but practiced the presence of God and was thus suited to message the king from God – it is evident that the prophetic aspect of Jewish faith is strongly upheld by the Chronicler who gives us an eyewitness report] and the porters were present gate by gate. There was no (occasion of) forsaking of their service for their brothers the Levites had prepare (the Passover) for them. So all the service of the LORD was prepared in that same day to make and offer the Passover and the offering of the burnt offering on the altar of the LORD according to the command of King Josiah. And (d) **the children of Israel who found themselves present** made and offered [hv[has the significance of 'making or creating' something and also of 'offering as a sacrifice'. This verb is used in Genesis 1 in connection with the creation of the "firmament" "fruit trees" and "animals" – all of which are sacrificed for or give to man] the Passover at that time and the feast of unleavened bread for seven days. And there was no Passover like it offered up since the days of Samuel the prophet. *We have a further alliance with prophecy and Passover. The prophetess Huldah was the initiator of the reformation that led to this occasion of drawing near to God. Equally the Seer of David was the one who long ago inspired that intimacy with God that is well known through the psalms of David and resurfaced in the praise of God under Josiah.* Even all the kings of Israel never made such a Passover as Josiah the king made and the priests and Levites and all

Judah and Israel that found themselves present and living as inhabitants of Jerusalem. *This statement aims to show that the unity of the nation was never since Samuel so evidently displayed. The concord and the joy and the reality of dealing with personal sin and coming near to the LORD set this Passover apart. This Passover was offered in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah. Josiah had 13 years to fulfil and the story is not so lustrous – indeed it marks his grave miss-judgment on the political scene in respect of Necho's intent and attracted the sad lamentation of **Jeremiah the prophet**. Again the chronicler houses the kingship within the forward movement of the prophetic will of God.*

JOSIAH'S ERROR IN ENGAGING NECHO 20-24

After all this when Josiah had established the house (of God) Necho king of Egypt went up to war at Carchemish against the Euphrates and Josiah went up to encounter him. But he sent envoys with a message to him saying “What common interest is there between me and you O king of Judah? Do not come up! Today is about the house I am at war with and God spoke to me to hasten me. You must leave off from against God who is with me and not cause your ruin. But Josiah would not turn his face from going to war with him. He had disguised himself and he did not obey the words of Necho from the mouth of God and went to war in the valley of Megiddo. Then the archers fired at king Josiah and the king said to his servants ‘Cause me to be taken away for I am seriously wounded.’ So his servants took him out of his chariot and caused him to ride on his second chariot and they brought him to Jerusalem and he died and he was buried in the tombs of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem were numbered in mourning for Josiah.

JOSIAH IS LAMENTED BY JEREMIAH 25-27

And Jeremiah made a lament for Josiah and all the male and female singers speak in their lamentations over Josiah till this day and gave them for an historic annal for Israel and behold they are written in the “Lamentations”. And the remainder of the acts or words of Josiah and his covenant love and faithfulness in accord with what is written in the law of the LORD and his actions first and last behold they are written in the books of the kings of Israel and Judah. *This task of Jeremiah and the pall of sadness that passed over Israel was deeply to be regretted. This dear saint did not recognise that God sometimes speaks to others and their vision relates to us. Josiah's safety and the future of a region hung in the balance of his wise discernment. He did not call the one man who as prophet of the nations would have dug him out of this hole. We too should learn to confide in those who have vision when vital matters of the future and of those for whom we are responsible are in the balance.*

CHAPTER 36

JEHOAHAZ UNSEATED BY NECHO 1-4

Then the people of the land [*A term first for “commoners” and then for “all Israel” since the northern leaders had gone into captivity Judah essentially was delivered the rule of the land*] took Jehoahaz (*The Lord keeps hold*) son of Josiah and made him king in Jerusalem in place of his father. Jehoahaz was twenty three at the inception of his rule and he was king for three months in Jerusalem. At that time the king of Egypt made a deflective move in Jerusalem and made (exact tax) from the land one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother to reign over Judah and Jerusalem and changed his name to Jehoiakim (*‘may the LORD establish him’*). Then Necho took Jehoahaz his brother and caused him to

be brought to Egypt. *Two things become clear. First Necho had a ready appreciation of things Jewish and of the Hebrew language. Second he was very astute and quickly moved to undermine the will of the people and the unity of the land of Israel whilst the new king was hardly settled to govern. This pre-emptive move seriously weakened Judah and hastened her final decline.*

ENTER NEBUCHADNEZZAR 5-8

Jehoiakim was twenty five when he became king and he ruled eleven years in Jerusalem but he did evil in the eyes of the LORD his God. Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against him and put him in brass fetters to “walk” or lead him [Jl h] to Babylon (700 miles). Nebuchadnezzar also brought vessels from the house of the LORD to Babylon and offered them as a gift to his temple in Babylon. *[These vessels were later taken and used in the sacrilegious feast of Belshazzar and later returned to Jerusalem]* And the remainder of the acts of Jehoiakim and his abominations that he created and that which was discovered in him behold they are written in the book of the the kings of Israel and Judah and Jehoiachin his son became king in place of him *[This name is virtually identical with that of his father. He received it from his father and it differs in one point –the *ny* (yakin) termination is a Hiphil **future** applied to express the hope of a “future” lengthy reign]*

JEHOIACHIN DISAPPOINTS THE PATERNAL HOPE 9-10

And Jehoiachin was eight when he became king and he ruled three months and ten days in Jerusalem but he did evil in the eyes of the LORD. And at the turning of the year (year’s end) King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon with the precious desirable vessels of the house of the LORD. *Nebuchadnezzar had left some beautiful vessels which he remembered and now wished to recover for his God or his own use. He also did precisely as Necho had done and took the new king to Babylon at the tender age of eight.* And he (Nebuchadnezzar) made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem. *This promotion of family division and power play was the direct result of Josiah’s meddling in affairs which were none of his business and for years when Babylon and Egypt jockeyed for world dominion. Judah was piggy-in-the-middle and her rulers were puppets of one or other of these great powers. Essentially Jewish independence was at an end and the theocracy had all but disappeared. Jeremiah’s sorrows were heightened by these tragic developments.*

ZEDEKIAH THE STIFF-NECKED REFUSES JEREMIAH’S REBUKE 11-13

Zedekiah (“righteousness of the LORD”) was twenty one when he became king and he ruled eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did evil in the eyes of the LORD his God. He did not humble himself at the appearances of Jeremiah the prophet (**speaking**) from the mouth of the LORD. And he also mounted sedition against king Nebuchadnezzar who had occasioned him to give an oath in God’s name but hardened his neck (was unyielding) and confirmed [*xma* – “made vigorous” or “restored”] his heart against turning from the LORD God of Israel.

PRIESTS AND PEOPLE REVOLT AGAINST THE LORD-THE SEVENTY YEARS OF CAPTIVITY JEREMIAH PROPHESED 14-21

Also all the princes of the priests and the people made massive [wbrh] treacherous turning aside after the fashion of all the abominations of the heathen nations and they contaminated the house of the LORD that He consecrated in Jerusalem. *The sacred writer speaks plainly of “huge” sinful departure from God. He also reminds his*

readers that the LORD by his Shekinah presence originally hallowed the house. But the LORD God of their fathers sent speedily over them (i.e. through the land) by the hand of his messengers – rising up in the morning without delay and sending because he had **pity** or **compassion** or **withholding** or **clemency** or **would spare**[l mj] His people and his dwelling place[“*maon* *m*[*m* speaks of a place where one lives with a wife. It is also used of a den where wild beasts live as a family. The LORD was very loathe to finally annul the marriage with his people-indeed even the apparent dissolution for 70 years of the captivity is but a seriously extended separation as indeed is the long period from AD 70 to the present when we await the return of the glorious LORD]. But they were mockers or people of derision against the messengers of God and they were contemptuous of his oracles and they had been scoffers or men of delusion and scoffing against his prophets until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people and there was no healing or healing went for nothing. Then he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans and he slaughtered their young men with the sword in the house of their holy place and had no compassion[l mj] on young men or young women or old man or one of hoary head[vv]; he gave the whole lot into his hand. Then all the vessels of the house of God – great and small – and the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king and princes – he brought the lot to Babylon. Then he burned the house of God and tore down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all the lofty castles or palaces with fire and all the desirable vessels went to destruction. And those that remained from the sword were taken as exiles to Babylon and they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia. To fulfil the oracle of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land enjoyed her Sabbaths every day of seventy years to fulfil seventy years.

CYRUS OF PERSIA COMES ON THE SCENE 22-23

And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia to accomplish and complete the oracle of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah the LORD caused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to awaken or be aroused and he caused a proclamation to pass through his entire kingdom and it was also in writing to say “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia ‘All kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given to me and He has visited and enjoined on me [dqp] to build Him a house in Jerusalem which is in Judah. Whoever is among you from all His people the LORD his God be with him and let him go up’” *This rendering of Cyrus decree demonstrates a personal deep experience of God’s call on his life – and remember he is noted in the scriptures of truth in the prophecy of Isaiah (a scripture that he was shown which quickened his resolve). At a time when most of the world’s Jews save a remnant were in the Persian Empire he gave them all opportunity to return to their roots and essentially as in the case of the Balfour Declaration and subsequent modern settlement of Israel afforded all Jews the right of return. So with the end of the Old Testament scripture the sacred writer heralds the dawn of a bright new day in which Ezra and Nehemiah and the kingly leader Jerubbabel of the royal seed were among the returnees. The last words of Chronicles match the opening words of Ezra and fit like a hand into a glove within the record of the next era of divine providence in preparation for the gospel dispensation.*

**JEREMIAH’S WORDS WERE FULFILLED:
SO BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE THIS COMMENTARY IS FINISHED
TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN EXPECTATION
OF CHRIST’S COMING WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO RULE.
MAY 18 THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 2012.**

“TO GOD BE THE GLORY AND TO HIS PEOPLE BLESSING”

RABBINIC POSTSCRIPT

Containing not repairing what will have been retained of what is written

The portion early fitted to [loaded on] the open lips on account of all the Acts of the days *of the kings* is 1765. They will also see the ark [containing the scrolls] and be constantly overjoyed or gladdened to see them placed there or established or set in order. Also *they will delight to see the two parts* [First and second Chronicles] and at the dawn over [*/ /*] the treasures of **the king** [David] was Azmaveth (prevailing strength of death) son of Adiel (ornament of God) [cf 1Chronicles 27.25]. There are 25 sederim [this includes both books]. **Hitherto he who has overflowed has blessed me.** [cf Joshua 17.14]

The LORD establishes

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