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Dear Associates and Friends,

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This month's article is the sixth installment of the biblical history of Israel and Judah, titled "[Israel and Judah: 6. David's Foreign Wars](#)." The kingdom is united under King David and God chose to covenant with David as an individual. David begins military campaigns, taking Israelite armies outside its immediate borders to expand control of Israel to the limits declared by God to Abraham and Moses. When Israel expands its range of control, it does not mean it will occupy that entire area, but the people of Israel will eventually control all that territory.

From here on to the account of the final destruction and dissolution of the Kingdom of Judah in about 586 BC, the concepts of covenant and treaty formulas with other nations become very important to understanding the histories of Israel and Judah. It also helps us understand Israel's relationship with God and with other nations. The Old Covenant that God contracted with Israel is **very similar** to treaties between nations. This similarity with the structures of treaty obligations made it easy for the children of Israel to understand the concepts, rewards, and punishments of their subservient relationship with their protecting God, YHWH, the creator of heaven and earth.

Using the Concordant Literal Version, I want to read three passages that you are probably familiar with already. They indicate the boundaries of Israel's future area of control. The first statement was given to Abraham. The last two statements were made to Moses, one a concise version of the borders, the second a detailed description. Both were given after Israel publicly and enthusiastically agreed to the covenant:

**"On that day Yahweh contracted a covenant with Abram, saying: To your seed I give this land, from the stream of Egypt as far as the Great Stream, the stream Euphrates: the Kenite, the Kenezite, the Kadmonite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Rephaim, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Girgashite and the Jebusite."**

• *Genesis 15:18–21, CLV*

**"And I will set your boundary from the Sea of Weeds unto the sea of the Philistines and from the wilderness unto the Stream, for I shall give into your hand the dwellers of the land, and you will drive them out from your presence."**

• *Exodus 23:31, CLV*

**"Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying: Instruct the sons of Israel, and you will say to them:**

**'When you are coming into the land of Canaan, this is the land which shall fall to you in allotment, the land of Canaan to its boundaries.**

Your **SOUTHERN EDGE** will be from the wilderness of Zin along the sides of Edom, and your southern boundary will be from the end of the Salt Sea eastward; your boundary will turn around from the Negeb to the ascent of Akrabbim, and it will pass toward Zin (and its border-area will be from the Negeb to Kadash-barnea), and it will go forth to Hazar-addar and pass toward Azmon. The boundary will turn around from Azmon toward the Wadi of Egypt, and its border-area will be toward the sea.

As for the **WESTERN BOUNDARY**, you will come to have the Great Sea and its coastline. This shall be your western boundary.

And this shall be your **NORTHERN BOUNDARY**: From the Great Sea you shall mark out your line to Mount Hor; from Mount Hor you shall mark it out to Lebo-hamath, and the border-area of the territory will be at Zedad; then the boundary will go forth toward Ziphron,

and its border-area will be at Hazar-enen. This shall be your northern boundary.

You will mark out for yourselves as an **EASTWARD BOUNDARY** a line from Hazar-enen toward Shepham. The boundary will go down from Shepham toward Riblah on the east side of Ain; the boundary will also go down and abut on the shoulder of the lake of Chinnereth, eastward. Then the boundary will go down along the Jordan, and its border-area will be at the Salt Sea. This shall be your land as to its boundaries round about.”

• *Numbers 34:1–12, CLV*

This seems simple to understand. All we need to do is to identify the geographical locations indicated by YHWH. Israel understood these locations, even if they had not visited them before. These descriptions were easy — for them — to locate, identify, and mark the boundaries for future reference. It is difficult for us.

King David understood where those boundaries were. He intended to expand his kingdom, under God’s guidance, to the limits indicated. Of course, other nations disagreed. They did not want to be subservient vassals to Israel. However, God would be with Israel only if they worship YHWH alone, and no other gods (who are real creatures, real beings created by YHWH, but as nothing in power compared to Him). If Israel does perform that condition, then YHWH says He will do the following on Israel’s behalf:

**“In case you should hearken, yea hearken to his voice and do all that I am speaking, then I will be Enemy of your enemies, and I will be Foe of your foes. For My messenger shall go before you, and he will bring you to the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Canaanite, the Gergashite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, and I will suppress them.”**

• *Exodus 23:22–23, CLV*

Read, or reread, Dr. Martin’s short but controversial article, [“How Israel Will Conquer the Middle East.”](#)

As we explore more of the intricacies and details of the histories of Israel and Judah, we will begin to see how the Old Testament books are intricately and intertextually connected with and woven into each other. The books of history link to and comment on each other. The Book of Deuteronomy is a recapitulation, a commentary, and an expanded update on much in the first four books of the Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Some books are even self-reverential; that is, later passages refer to and comment on earlier passages. The historical books of Samuel-Kings refer back to the rise and reign of King David.

The books of writings, such as Psalms and Lamentations, comment on and allude to the history books. The books of the prophets presuppose knowledge by the reader of the books of the Law as well as Israel’s history. We will understand prophecy better if we can increase our understanding of the sacred history of God’s people, with all their failings as well as their triumphs. The story is fascinating.

**“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [eons] are come.”**

• *1 Corinthians 10:11, KJV*

### ***End-of-Year Receipts***

Some of you already requested receipts for your contributions through 2014. If you have not done so, this is your second reminder to make your request so we can send your contribution receipts to you in a timely manner.

### ***Thank You***

The more you study the sacred history of the Bible, the more it becomes part of you, and part of your personal history. And it is great fun. It is all there in the pages of your Bible. Thank you for letting me communicate these things to you. We teach, you learn; we plow, you reap. Thank you for providing for ASK as together we learn the “open secrets” of God’s written word. Thank you all. God bless you all.

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