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Dear Associates and Friends,

June 2017

Events of this month's article occurred in the ancient Middle East of northern Syria. Today, battles are fought in the same locations spoken of in these Scriptures. One such event was a major battle that took place in the territory of modern northern Syria with a coalition of nations (kingdoms in ancient times) fighting against the brutal expansive Assyrian empire. One of its capitals was the city of Nineveh, one of the greatest cities in the ancient world's. Nineveh, now a wasteland and archaeological site, lies across the Tigris River from the modern city of Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq.

The June 2017 article is "[Israel and Judah: 24. Jehoshaphat and Ahab's Death](#)." The action revolves around two leaders of Israelite people, contrasting an evil ruler, King Ahab of Israel, and a good ruler, King Jehoshaphat of Judah.

### *Cast of Characters:*

1. King Ahab nears the end of his eventful 22 year rule. Still a murderous idolater, Ahab aligns himself with a former enemy, Ben-hadad of Syria (who had invaded Israel twice) to fight a greater and more dangerous enemy. God continues to bless Ahab with victories until pronouncing his doom as an enemy of YHWH. (His lovely and murderous wife Jezebel is not mentioned in this article.)
2. King Jehoshaphat is a good and industrious ruler who is faithful to YHWH. He works hard to remove idolatry from his kingdom, teach his people about the Law of God, and establish religious and secular courts.
3. Ben-hadad, King of Syria, invades Israel twice. At peace with Israel, he makes an alliance and gets Ahab to help confront the army of Shalmanezar of Assyria. Later he again fights Ahab and Israel.
4. King Shalmanezar battles a coalition of armies, including Ahab and Ben-hadad, who are identified in an Assyrian monument memorializing the "victory" of Shalmanezar over the coalition.
5. Micaiah, a prophet of God who announces YHWH's doom and death upon Ahab.
6. The host of heaven who gather with YHWH to decide who will lie to Ahab.
7. Zedekiah, a false prophet in Ahab's employ, interacts with a lying spirit.
8. A group of 399 other false prophets kept by Ahab. None are named. With Zedekiah they number 400 total false prophets, the same number killed at Mount Carmel.

This month's article tells of great battles involving thousands of troops. High casualty numbers in biblical and secular records indicate a period of great prosperity. Large armies require the gathering and constant supply of enormous amounts of food for men, forage for animals, and large number of weapons, all while traveling hundreds of miles on foot to fight battles with mass casualties. This all indicates a time of prosperity in the Middle East and Mediterranean coast, prosperity able to sustain warfare on a grand scale.

Proverbs 22:4 says, "**By humility and the fear of YHWH are riches, and honor, and life.**" Judah had decades of peace, and two good kings, Asa and his son Jehoshaphat. They taught worship of YHWH as the only God. Asa in particular was rewarded with wealth and glory (2 Chronicles 17:5). (There were 3½ years of drought and famine in Israel during the time of King Ahab and the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 18:2). There is no mention in Scripture of the famine affecting Judah to the south or Syria to the north to the extent it did in Israel.)

## *The Kings of Judah – Chart of Their 393 Years*

The Kingdom of Judah began after Solomon’s death when, after three years, a civil war split the kingdom into two: the northern Kingdom of Israel and the southern Kingdom of Judah. The 19 kings of Judah were all descended from King David and his successor Solomon. Most of the kings were ancestors of Jesus in His legal lineage. (None of the kings of Israel in the north had any relationship to David.) Judah lasted as an independent kingdom for 393 years until 524 BC, a date based on Scripture as explained in the “[ELM Timeline Project](#)” and in Dr. Martin’s chronological writings.

One assumption of the project differs from several traditional chronologies primarily because of an essential understanding of an important biblical benchmark. That benchmark is that the 70-year exile actually occurred. However, the understanding of the “ELM Timeline Project” will be flexible as we progress toward Christ’s return, and biblical information of the past, present, and future increases and becomes clearer.

Tim Parrott continues the work based on the chronological information of Dr. Ernest Martin. The late Henry Dye and Tim were energized and together organized the research and design of the Timeline. The graphic chart of the “Kingdom of Judah” (Chart TL-4g) is one example of the continuing *work in progress* relevant to the “Israel and Judah” series. I included that chart at the end of this month’s article. Look at the notes on the chart.

## *Thank You*

The purpose of the narrative historical writings in the Old Testament are for us to learn by the examples of people of ancient times, and how they reacted to various events of life — whether good, bad, joyful or horrific. All their life events eventually ended in their death, as ours will lead to our death. The Old Testament personalities had genuine and profound human experiences that communicate across cultures, languages, as well as across time and space, all through the medium of the written Word of God. The experiences presented in Scripture are for our edification, for us to learn from them as if they were nearby telling us their stories:

**“For whatever was written before, was written for this teaching of ours, that through the endurance and the consolation of the scriptures we may have expectation [hope].**

**Now may the God of endurance and consolation grant you to be mutually disposed [likeminded] to one another, according to Christ Jesus, that, with one accord, with one mouth, you may be glorifying the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

• *Romans 15:4–6, Concordant Literal Version*

We have examples of endurance and consolation in the Old Testament so we may avoid the bad examples of faithlessness, and hold to the good examples of faithfulness with the help of God’s Spirit working through us to improve our character:

**“Now all this befalls them typically. Yet it was written for our admonition, to whom the consummations of the eons have attained.”**

• *1 Corinthians 10:11, CLV*

While this Corinthians passage is specifically about the Exodus, it is not stretching the point Paul makes to apply it to all the Old Testament. The events in the books of Kings and Chronicles tell of the need of a Savior to come to save us (as He did do) and later to come again to glorify us (as He will do). We are to inherit “**the consummations of the eons,**” as all human beings will eventually experience the glory Christ experiences now (1 John 3:1–3).

Our task and joy at ASK is to help you learn such important things. Thank you for helping us do so.

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