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## Israel and Judah: 19. Solomon's Glory and Death

by David Sielaff, August 2016

Read the accompanying [Newsletter for August 2016](#)

Israel and Judah: 19

Solomon's  
 Glory and  
 Death

**THE SITUATION:** Solomon's sole reign is progressing. Temple construction was completed, the Ark of the Covenant installed, and the Temple dedicated. YHWH accepted the dedication prayer of Solomon for the Temple by bringing fire down upon the altar and the sacrifices. The glory of YHWH filled the Temple (2 Chronicles 7:1–3). After a great celebration of 7 days, Solomon dismissed the people and all returned home filled with awe of God's power and love for His people. YHWH remained active in the affairs of Solomon.

After the celebration ended YHWH visited Solomon a second time (according to the sequence in 1 Kings chapters 8 and 9) to warn him again to be true to the Davidic covenant YHWH renewed with him.<sup>a</sup>

**TEXT: YHWH Appears a Second Time in Response to Solomon's Prayer**

### 1 Kings 9:1–9

<sup>1</sup> It came to be as soon as Solomon had finished building the House of Yahweh and the house of the king and all of Solomon's attachments which he desired to make,

<sup>2</sup> that Yahweh appeared to Solomon a second time, just as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. <sup>3</sup> And Yahweh said to him:

**"I have heard your prayer and your supplication with which you supplicated before Me. I**

### 2 Chronicles 7:11–22

<sup>11</sup> Thus Solomon finished the House of Yahweh and the house of the king, and *he prospered in everything that had come into Solomon's heart to accomplish in the House of Yahweh and in his own house.* <sup>12</sup> Then Yahweh appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him:

**"I have heard your prayer**

<sup>a</sup> YHWH does not speak directly to Solomon's son, Rehoboam, nor does He speak through a prophet, to renew the covenant with him when he ascended the throne of Israel. That was because God had other plans for Israel.

have done for you according to all your prayer.

I have sanctified this House that you have built by placing My Name there unto the eon; and My eyes and My heart will be there all the days.

<sup>4</sup> As for you, if you should walk before Me, just as your father David walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness by doing according to all that I have instructed you, and if you should keep My statutes and My ordinances, <sup>5</sup> then I will confirm the throne of your kingship over Israel for the eon, just as I spoke to your father David, saying, 'There shall not be cut off a man of yours from being on the throne of Israel.'

<sup>6</sup> But if you should turn away, yea turn away from following Me, you or your sons, and should not keep My instructions and My statutes that I have set before you, so that you go and serve other elohim and bow down to them, <sup>7</sup> then I will cut Israel off the surface of the ground that I have given to them, and I shall cast out from My face this House that I have sanctified for My Name; and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all the peoples.

<sup>8</sup> This House, it shall become rubbish heaps. Everyone passing by it shall be appalled, and they will hiss. When they ask, 'On what grounds did Yahweh thus to this land and to this House?'

<sup>9</sup> people will answer, 'Because they forsook Yahweh their Elohim Who brought their fathers forth from the land of Egypt, and they held fast on other elohim and worshipped them and served them. Therefore Yahweh brought all this evil on them.'"

and have chosen this place as Mine as a House of sacrifice. <sup>13</sup> If I restrain the heavens and there is no rain, or if I instruct the grasshopper to devour the land, or if I send a plague among My people, <sup>14</sup> when My people upon whom My Name has been called, are submissive and pray and seek My face and turn back from their evil ways, then I shall hear from the heavens, I shall pardon their sin, and I shall heal their land. <sup>15</sup> Now My eyes shall be open and My ears attentive to the prayer of this place.

<sup>16</sup> Now I have *chosen and* sanctified this House for My Name to be there unto the eon. My eyes and My heart will be there all the days.

<sup>17</sup> As for you, if you should walk before Me, just as your father David walked, by doing according to all that I have instructed you, and if you should keep My statutes and My ordinances, <sup>18</sup> then I will confirm the throne of your kingship just as I *contracted with* your father David, saying, 'There shall not be cut off a man of yours from *ruling over* Israel.'

<sup>19</sup> But if you *yourselves* should turn away and *forsake* My statutes and My instructions that I have set before you, so that you go and serve other elohim and bow down to them, <sup>20</sup> then I will *pluck them up off My* ground that I have given to them, and I shall *fling away* from My face this House that I have sanctified for My Name, and I shall *make it* a proverb and a byword among all the peoples.

<sup>21</sup> This House, it shall become rubbish heaps. Everyone passing by it shall be appalled. When *he* asks, 'On what grounds did Yahweh thus to this land and to this House?'

<sup>22</sup> people will answer, 'Because they forsook Yahweh the Elohim *of their fathers* Who brought *them* forth from the land of Egypt, and they held fast on other elohim and worshipped them and served them. Therefore He brought all this evil on them.'"

[end text]

**Verses 2 and 12.** YHWH communicated directly with Solomon a second time at night after his dedicatory prayer, as before at Gibeon. We do not know how YHWH appeared to Solomon or what Solomon saw. The text does say Solomon heard YHWH speak. It may have been Christ speaking to Solomon as YHWH or

it may have been the Angel of YHWH, both have authority to do so. God makes the following points:

**Verses 3 and 12–15.** YHWH says He has done what Solomon requested in his prayer to Him. Then He warns Solomon about potential future problems. YHWH assumes the people will disobey and makes provision for their return to His favor. Whatever happens He will continue to love them. He reminds Solomon about His promise to David.

**Verses 4–5 and 17–18.** YHWH encourages Solomon to emulate his father David. If Solomon does this, then the throne of Israel will continue for the eon.

**Verses 6–7 and 19–20.** In verses 6–7 God uses the singular personal pronoun you, meaning Solomon. In verses 19–21 the writer uses the plural personal pronoun meaning the people of Israel. In each situation the problem is the same: going and serving other elohim other than YHWH, bowing down to them. This means they would worship other gods.

**Verses 8–9 and 21–22.** God gives a future scenario in which the land is devastated due to Israel breaking basic provisions of YHWH's covenant with His people. The causes listed are fourfold: the people of Israel [1] **“forsook YHWH, their Elohim”**; [2] **“held fast”** to elohim (gods) other than YHWH; [3] worshipped those gods; and [4] served them instead of exclusively holding fast, worshipping and serving YHWH. He warned Solomon who warned the people. Solomon and the people both failed to heed YHWH's warning.

### *TEXT: Solomon's International Relations and Building Enterprises*

#### **1 Kings 9:10–25**

<sup>10</sup> It came to be at the end of twenty years when Solomon had built the two houses, the House of Yahweh and the house of the king, <sup>11</sup> — Hiram king of Tyre had assisted Solomon with timber of cedars and timber of firs and gold according to all his desire — then king Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.

<sup>12</sup> Yet when Hiram came forth from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, they were not equitable in his eyes. <sup>13</sup> So he said, **“What sort of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?”** And one called them the Cabul area unto this day.

<sup>14</sup> Hiram had been sending to the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold. <sup>15</sup> This is the tally of the tributary service that king Solomon brought up to build the House of Yahweh and his own house, the Millo bulwark and the wall of Jerusalem, and to fortify Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer.

<sup>16</sup> (Pharaoh king of Egypt, he had gone up and seized Gezer; he burned it with fire, killed the Canaanite dwelling in the city and gave it as a dismissal gift to his daughter, Solomon's wife.) <sup>17</sup> So Solomon rebuilt Gezer and Lower Beth-horon, <sup>18</sup> Baalath and Tadmor in the wilderness, within the

#### **2 Chronicles 8:1–12**

<sup>1</sup> It came to be at the end of twenty years when Solomon had built the House of Yahweh and *his own* house,

<sup>2</sup> that, as for the cities which Hiram returned to Solomon, Solomon rebuilt them and settled the sons of Israel there.

<sup>3</sup> *Furthermore Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and fastened a hold on it.*

<sup>4</sup> *He rebuilt Tadmor in the wilderness and all the provision cities that he had built in Hamath.*

<sup>5</sup> *He rebuilt Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon as fortified cities with walls, double doors and bars, <sup>6</sup> also Baalath and*

land,<sup>19</sup> also all the provision cities that had become Solomon's, the chariot cities and the cities for horsemen and all Solomon's attachments which he wished to build in Jerusalem, in the Lebanon and in all the land under his rule.

<sup>20</sup> — All the people left of the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, those who were not of the sons of Israel,<sup>21</sup> — their sons who had been left after them in the land, whom the sons of Israel were not able to doom — Solomon brought them up for tributary service unto this day.

<sup>22</sup> Yet Solomon did not make conscript servants of the sons of Israel; for they were the men of military age and his officials, his chiefs, his adjutants and the chiefs of his chariotry and his horsemen.

<sup>23</sup> These were the chiefs of the deputies who were holding sway over Solomon's work: 550 over the people who were doing the work.

<sup>24</sup> Then Solomon led up Pharaoh's daughter from the City of David to her own house that he had built for her.

It was then that he built the Millo bulwark.

<sup>25</sup> Three times in a year, Solomon offered up ascent offerings and peace offerings on the altar that he had built for Yahweh, fuming incense along with it before Yahweh. Thus he finished up the House.

all the provision cities that had become Solomon's, *all* the chariot cities and the cities for horsemen, *and all his attachments which Solomon* wished to build in Jerusalem, in the Lebanon and in all the land under his rule.

<sup>7</sup> All the people left of the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, those who were not of Israel,<sup>8</sup> — *from* their sons who had been left after them in the land, whom the sons of Israel *had not destroyed* — Solomon brought them up for tributary service unto this day.

<sup>9</sup> Yet *there were none of* the sons of Israel whom Solomon *made conscript servants for his work force*, for they were men of military age, his chiefs, his adjutants and the chiefs of his chariotry and his horsemen.

<sup>10</sup> These were the chiefs of the deputies *king Solomon had*, 250, *who were* holding sway over the people.

<sup>11</sup> Solomon led up Pharaoh's daughter from the city of David to *the* house that he had built for her; *for he said*,

**"Though a wife of mine, she should not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, since they are holy to which the coffer [ark] of Yahweh has come."**

<sup>12</sup> Then Solomon offered up ascent offerings *to Yahweh* on the altar of Yahweh that he had built *before the portico*, ...

[end text]

**1 Kings 9:11–13.** This portion is not presented in Chronicles. It begins a narrative of Solomon's relationship with Hiram and how the Tyrian king helped Solomon and Israel with the timber. The value of the 20 cities paid by Solomon to Hiram was not equitable. The text seems to indicate tension between the two rulers in verse 13. Hiram was apparently generous and Solomon was not equally generous in return.

**2 Chronicles 8:2.** Nevertheless, Hiram's return of the cities to Solomon would have been a great insult to a superior king. Wars were likely fought over lesser offenses. Somehow Hiram and Solomon worked through this problem. There is no evidence of further dispute. On the other hand there is much further cooperation between the two powerful kings.

**1 Kings 9:14–15.** Hiram paid the gold bullion to Solomon as "**tributary service**" which generally indicates a vassal-master relationship common throughout ancient times. Other vassal kingdoms gave their manpower to Israel to help with construction of the Temple and other projects as we read below.

The Millo was a space between Solomon's palace and the Templ. Solomon filled in the depression and it became a bulwark known as the Millo, which means "bulwark" or "mound."

**2 Chronicles 8:3–5.** These verses contain similar information in a different order from 1 King 9:16–18.

**Verses 15–16.** Pharaoh seized Gezer, burned it, killed all Canaanites in it, and gave it as a gift to his daughter who married Solomon. Josephus gave us similar information about the city of Gezer:

“[Solomon] also built cities which might be counted among the strongest, Hazor and Megiddo, and the third Gezer, which had indeed belonged to the Philistines; but Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had made an expedition against it, and besieged it, and taken it by force; and when he had slain all its inhabitants, he utterly overthrew it, and gave it as a present to his daughter, who had been married to Solomon: for which reason the king rebuilt it, as a city that was naturally strong, and might be useful in wars, and the change of affairs that sometimes happen. Moreover, he built two other cities not far from it, Bethhoron was the name of one of them, and Baalath the other.”

• *Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 8:151–152*

Ancient Pharaohs were as vicious as other kings. “He utterly overthrew it” means that Pharaoh razed the city to the ground, demolished every building after slaughtering everyone. What a nice present to his daughter — a burnt hilltop city with no buildings and dead people! She apparently gave it to Solomon, as intended, the biblical text and Josephus both say he fortified it.

**Verses 19 and 6.** Solomon’s construction projects throughout the land of Israel are presented. Some are built for defensive purposes, others are improved to sustain the royal administrative center of Jerusalem.

**Verses 20–21 and 7–8.** Solomon received tribute from other vassal kingdoms in the form of conscript labor, which cost Solomon little for the work done.

**Verses 22 and 9.** Specific mention is made that no Israelites were conscript laborers. They were paid for their work.

**Verses 23 and 10.** Mention is made of the chiefs over the laborers: 550 in verse 23 and 250 in verse 10. This might indicate two different levels of responsibility, 550 total supervisors, with 250 being responsible to Solomon. It is easy to forget the tens of thousands of people working on the various projects noted earlier in 1 Kings 5:13–17 and 2 Chronicles 2:18 just on the Temple project alone (see “[Israel and Judah: 17. Solomon’s Early Reign](#)”).

**Verses 24 and 11.** Solomon makes special provision for the living arrangements of Pharaoh’s daughter. She did not live in Solomon’s palace, but she had “her own house.” His marriage to Pharaoh’s daughter was, like most of Solomon’s marriages, a political marriage which advanced the interests of Israel and her king. In verse 11, Solomon says that “she should not dwell in the house of David,” which meant David’s palace. Solomon built his own larger palace (1 Kings 7:1–12), yet she did not move into that either. No one knows where her house was located. Some speculate it was on the Mount of Olives.

### *TEXT: Solomon’s Temple Administrative Appointments*

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#### **2 Chronicles 8:13–16**

[Solomon’s ascent offerings were] ... <sup>13</sup> as a day by day requirement to offer up according to the instruction of Moses for the sabbaths, for the new moons and for the appointed festivals three times in the year: at the festival of unleavened bread, at the festival of weeks, and at the festival of booths.

<sup>14</sup> According to the custom of his father David, he [Solomon] made stand the apportionments of the priests over their service, and the Levites over their charges, to praise and to minister in front of the priests, as required day in, day out, and the gatekeepers by their apportionments, gate by gate, for such was the instruction of David the man of Elohim. <sup>15</sup> They did not withdraw from the instruction of the king as to the priests and the Levites in regard to any matter, and to the treasuries.

<sup>16</sup> And all of Solomon’s work was well prepared, at the day of the foundation of the House of Yahweh, until he finished it; thus was the finishing up of the House of Yahweh. [end text]

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**Verse 13.** The instructions of Moses regarding celestial observations of times and seasons are said to have been maintained so that religious, secular, and agricultural times could be determined.

**Verses 14–15.** David’s customs and appointments for the Temple administration were maintained by Solomon, although personnel changed due to attrition over time. It is unclear who is instructing whom. Are

the priests and Levites continuing to instruct Solomon about the Law of Moses? Or, is Solomon instructing the priests and Levites regarding religious administration of the Mosaic Law in ritual practice? Also, it is unclear what is meant by “treasuries.” Were they the king’s treasuries, the Temple treasuries, or both?

**Verse 16.** Everything Solomon did with regard to the construction of the Temple was done well. Restating 1 Kings 9:25, one final aspect of the House of YHWH needed to be finished, Solomon’s completion and continuance of David’s arrangements for Temple operations and administration.

### *TEXT: Solomon’s Commercial Enterprises*

#### **1 Kings 9:26–28**

<sup>26</sup> King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, near Elath on the shore of the Sea of Weeds, in the land of Edom. <sup>27</sup> Hiram sent crews of his, seamen who knew the sea, to serve in the fleet together with Solomon’s servants. <sup>28</sup> They came to Ophir, procured from there 420 talents of gold and brought it to king Solomon.

#### **2 Chronicles 8:17–18**

<sup>17</sup> Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Elath on the shore of the sea in the land of Edom. <sup>18</sup> Hiram sent to him ships, under the hand of his officials, along with crews who knew the sea; and they came with Solomon’s servants to Ophir and procured from there 450 talents of gold and brought it to king Solomon. [end text]

History tells us there was an “[Ancient Canal in Egypt](#)” connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Gulf of Suez. However, there is no historical evidence that the passage was open during Solomon’s reign.<sup>b</sup> Whatever the case, Solomon and Hiram built their fleet to increase trade with Africa, Arabia, and India, operating ships from the port city of Elath, today at the northern point of the Gulf of Aqaba.

**Verses 28 and 18.** There is no explanation for the difference of 420 and 450 talents. “**Gold of Ophir**” was famous from the time of Job (other verses: Job 22:24, 28:16; 1 Chronicles 29:4; Psalm 45:9; Isaiah 13:12).

### *TEXT: The Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon*

#### **1 Kings 10:1–13**

<sup>1</sup> When the queen of Sheba was hearing of Solomon’s fame concerning the Name of Yahweh, she came to probe him with dark enigmas. <sup>2</sup> She came to Jerusalem with a very illustrious retinue, camels carrying aromatics, very much gold and precious stones. When she came to king Solomon, she spoke to him all that was on her mind, <sup>3</sup> while Solomon told her all her matters. There was no matter too obscure for the king that he could not tell her.

<sup>4</sup> When the queen of Sheba had discerned all the wisdom of Solomon and had seen the house that he had built, <sup>5</sup> the food of his table, the seating of his officials, the standing of those ministering to him and their clothing, and his cupbearers,

#### **2 Chronicles 9:1–12**

<sup>1</sup> When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon’s fame, she came to probe *Solomon* with dark enigmas. She came to Jerusalem *to Solomon* with a very illustrious retinue, camels carrying aromatics, gold *in abundance* and precious stones, *and* she spoke *with* him all that was on her mind, <sup>2</sup> while Solomon told her all her matters. There was no matter too obscure for Solomon that he could not tell her.

<sup>3</sup> When the queen of Sheba had discerned the wisdom of Solomon and had seen the house that he had built, <sup>4</sup> the food of his table, the seating of his officials, the standing of those ministering to him and their clothing, and his cupbearers *and their*

<sup>b</sup> If it was operating, perhaps the Egyptians did not allow Hiram’s Phoenician ships to pass through or because tolls charged to pass through the canal cost too much.

as well as his ascent offering that he was offering up in the House of Yahweh, then there was no more spirit in her. <sup>6</sup> So she said to the king,

**“True was the word that I heard in my land about your affairs and about your wisdom. <sup>7</sup>Yet I did not believe the words until I came and my eyes had seen it; and behold, not half was told to me. You have added wisdom and well-being beyond the report that I heard. <sup>8</sup>Happy are your wives; happy are these officials of yours who are continually standing before you and hearkening to your wisdom. <sup>9</sup>May Yahweh your Elohim be blessed, Who delights in you so as to put you on the throne of Israel. Because of Yahweh’s love for Israel to make it stand for the eon, He has constituted you as king over them to execute right judgment and justice.”**

<sup>10</sup> Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, a very great quantity of aromatics and precious stones. At no time did an abundance of aromatics like these come in again which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

<sup>11</sup> Hiram’s fleet which carried gold from Ophir, brought also almug wood in very great quantity from Ophir and precious stones. <sup>12</sup> The king used the almug wood for inlay work in the House of Yahweh and in the house of the king, also for harps and zithers for the singers. So much almug wood has not come into the land, nor has it been seen unto this day.

<sup>13</sup> King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire for which she asked, aside from what he had given her according to the open hand of king Solomon. Then she turned around and went to her own land, she and her servants.

*clothing*, as well as his ascent offering that he was offering up in the House of Yahweh, then there was no more spirit in her. <sup>5</sup> So she said to the king,

**“True was the word that I heard in my land about your affairs and about your wisdom. <sup>6</sup>Yet I did not believe *their* words until I came and my eyes had seen it; and behold, not half of the magnitude of your wisdom was told to me. You have added beyond the report that I heard. <sup>7</sup>Happy are your *men*; happy are these officials of yours who are continually standing before you and hearkening to your wisdom. <sup>8</sup>May Yahweh your Elohim be blessed, Who delights in you so as to put you on *His* throne as *king for Yahweh your Elohim*. Because of your *Elohim’s* love for Israel to make it stand for the eon, He has constituted you as king over them to execute right judgment and justice.”**

<sup>9</sup> Then she gave the king 120 talents of gold, a very great quantity of aromatics and precious stones. *There has not been any such aromatic like this* which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

<sup>10</sup> *Besides, Hiram’s officials and Solomon’s servants who brought gold from Ophir, also brought almug wood and precious stones. <sup>11</sup> The king used the almug wood for *entranceways* in the House of Yahweh and in the house of the king, also for harps and zithers for the singers; *none like them* had been seen *before in the land of Judah*.*

<sup>12</sup> King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire for which she asked, *more than all she had brought to the king*. Then she turned and went to her own land, she and her servants. [end text]

**Verses 4–5 and 3–4.** The Queen of Sheba was awed by the spectacle of Solomon’s court, his table, all his officials, the Temple, the ceremony, the worship, and the offerings to YHWH.

**Verses 6 and 5.** She was so impressed, **“there was no more spirit in her,”** indicating that Solomon’s administrative machine “works” like clockwork, as she explains in the next three verses.

**Verses 10 and 9.** The gold she brought is a tribute payment, meaning she and her kingdom are vassals of Solomon and Israel.

**Verses 11–12 and 10–11.** Almug wood (spelled Algum in Chronicles) was highly prized. The identification of this wood is uncertain, but some think it was sandalwood. The fleet that Hiram and Solomon organized brought the gold from Ophir. This is the beginning of the legendary “King Solomon’s Mines” of literary and movie fame.

**Verses 13 and 12.** The exchange of expensive gifts was expected, apparently, in ancient times with each one trying to outdo the other. **“The open hand of King Solomon”** meant he was extremely generous.

### **TEXT: The Wealth of Solomon**

#### **1 Kings 10:14–25**

<sup>14</sup> The weight of the gold that came to Solomon in each year was 666 talents of gold, <sup>15</sup> besides that from the exploring men and the merchandise of traders, and all the kings of Arabia and the viceroys of the land.

<sup>16</sup> King Solomon made 200 large shields of ductile gold — 600 shekels of gold he brought up on each large shield — <sup>17</sup> and 300 shields of ductile gold — three minas of gold he brought up on each shield — and the king put them in the Lebanon wildwood house.

<sup>18</sup> The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with glittering gold. <sup>19</sup> The throne had six steps, and as a cover a rounded top on its back, also armrests on this side and on that side of the place of the seat, and two lions standing beside the armrests. <sup>20</sup> Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps, on this side and on that side; such a thing had not been made for any other kingdom.

<sup>21</sup> All king Solomon’s drinking vessels were gold, and all the vessels of the Lebanon wildwood house were plated gold. Nothing was of silver; it was not reckoned as anything in Solomon’s days.

<sup>22</sup> For the king had a Tarshish fleet at sea, along with Hiram’s fleet. Once in three years the Tarshish fleet would come carrying gold, silver, elephant tusks, also apes and peacocks.

<sup>23</sup> Thus king Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth.

<sup>24</sup> And all the kings of the earth were seeking the face of Solomon to hear his wisdom that Elohim had bestowed in his heart.

<sup>25</sup> They were bringing each his approach present, articles of silver and articles of gold and raiments, stacte and aromatics, also horses and mules, a rate year by year.

#### **2 Chronicles 9:13–24**

<sup>13</sup> The weight of the gold that came to Solomon in each year was 666 talents of gold, <sup>14</sup> besides that from the exploring men and what the *merchants* were bringing. Also all the kings of Arabia and the viceroys of the land *were bringing gold and silver to Solomon*.

<sup>15</sup> King Solomon made 200 large shields of ductile gold — 600 shekels of ductile gold he brought up on each large shield — <sup>16</sup> and 300 shields of ductile gold — *300 shekels* of gold he brought up on each shield — and the king put them in the Lebanon wildwood house.

<sup>17</sup> The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with *pure* gold. <sup>18</sup> The throne had six steps *and a footrest of gold, kept bolted to the throne*, also armrests on this side and on that side of the place of the seat, and two lions standing beside the armrests. <sup>19</sup> Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps, on this side and on that side; such a thing had not been made for any other kingdom.

<sup>20</sup> All king Solomon’s drinking vessels were gold, and all the vessels of the Lebanon wildwood house were plated gold. Silver was not reckoned as anything in Solomon’s days.

<sup>21</sup> For the king had ships going to Tarshish with Hiram’s officials. Once in three years the Tarshish ships would come carrying gold, silver, elephant tusks, also apes and peacocks.

<sup>22</sup> Thus king Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth.

<sup>23</sup> And all the kings of the earth were seeking the face of Solomon to hear his wisdom that *the One*, Elohim, had bestowed in his heart.

<sup>24</sup> They were bringing each his approach present, articles of silver and articles of gold and raiments, stacte and aromatics, also horses and mules, a rate year by year. **[end text]**

**Verses 14–15 and 13–14.** Solomon was a mercantile entrepreneur. While all kings seek to do some trading, Solomon carried his commercial activities to a new level. He dealt successfully with other traders, explorers, merchants, kings and viceroys. **“Ductile gold”** means gold of such quality that it can be worked to a very thin sheet, to place over such surfaces as shields.

The yearly take of gold from Solomon's various commercial enterprises was 666 talents. At roughly 48 pounds per talent, 666 talents equals 31,968 pounds or almost 16 tons of gold per year, being brought into Jerusalem. Most all derived from buying and selling. Gold from tribute, such as that from the Queen of Sheba, the King of Tyre, and other vassal kings, would increase that total substantially in some years. One wonders if there was enough gold in the entire world at that time (or at any time) to justify such a number. The number 666 is an ominous one to later readers who would immediately identify it with the number of the beast in Revelation 13:17–18. There the 666 number also has to do with buying and selling.

**Verses 18–20 and 17–19.** Solomon's throne is described. This was not simply Solomon's throne, but it was in fact the throne of YHWH as we are told in 1 Chronicles 29:23: "**So Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh as king instead of his father David and prospered; and all Israel hearkened to him.**" The throne Solomon sat upon was his to rule Israel with, so long as he obeyed YHWH. We read earlier in 1 Kings that Solomon placed his throne in his palace and built a raised porch to put the throne upon it (1 Kings 7:1–7). This put Solomon, physically and symbolically, above anyone who comes before him. It is my belief that King David's throne was placed in his tomb when Solomon's new throne was constructed. David's throne is still there today. I discuss it in "The Location and Future Discovery of King David's Tomb."

**Verses 24 and 23.** "**Greater in riches and wisdom ...**" than all the kings of the world together.

**Verses 25 and 24.** Stacte is a component of incense, but what it was is uncertain.

Next comes a triple statement about Solomon's horses, the range of his direct rule, the great wealth that came to Jerusalem, the cost of the horses and chariots in Jerusalem. The statement made in the first chapter of Second Chronicles is largely repeated in the ninth chapter.

### ***TEXT: The Wealth of Solomon (continued)***

#### **1 Kings 10:26**

<sup>26</sup> Solomon was gathering chariots and steeds; Solomon had 4,000 stalls of horses for his chariots; he came to have 1,400 chariots and 12,000 steeds. He had them stabled in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

#### **1 Kings 4:21**

<sup>21</sup> As for Solomon, he came to be the ruler over all the kingdoms from the Stream as far as the land of the Philistines unto the boundary of Egypt; they brought close approach presents and were serving Solomon all the days of his life.

#### **1 Kings 10:27–29**

<sup>27</sup> The king made the silver in Jerusalem as common as stones, and he made the cedars as abundant as mulberry trees that are in the low foothills. <sup>28</sup> The

#### **2 Chronicles 1:14–17**

<sup>14</sup> Solomon was gathering chariots and steeds; and he came to have 1,400 chariots and 12,000 steeds. He had them stabled in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup> The king made the silver *and the gold* in Jerusalem as common as stones, and he made the cedars as abundant as mulberry trees that are in the low foothills. <sup>16</sup> The

#### **2 Chronicles 9:25–28**

<sup>25</sup> Solomon *came to have* 4,000 stalls of horses and chariots, and 12,000 steeds. He had them stabled in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

<sup>26</sup> *He* came to be ruler over all the *kings* from the stream *unto* the land of the Philistines *and* unto the boundary of Egypt.

<sup>27</sup> The king made the silver in Jerusalem as common as stones, and he made the cedars as abundant as mulberry trees that are in the low foothills. <sup>28</sup> The

horses that Solomon had were imports from Egypt and from Kue; and the royal merchants took them from Kue at a price.

<sup>29</sup> A chariot coming up from Egypt was sold forth for 600 shekels of silver; a horse went for 150. So they brought them forth by their hand to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Syria.

horses that Solomon had were imports from Egypt and from Kue; and the royal merchants took them from Kue at a price.

<sup>17</sup> A chariot coming up from Egypt was sold forth for 600 shekels of silver; a horse went for 150. So they brought them forth by their hand to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Syria.

horses that Solomon had were *brought forth* from Egypt and

from *all the lands*. [end text]

These passages begin with the number of Solomon's horses and chariots, and end with the cost of horses and chariots in Jerusalem. All these statements are another indication of Solomon's wealth and greatness. Horses need training, which is very time consuming and expensive. Note the four warnings in Deuteronomy about kings, particularly horses and wives. Solomon seems to have ignored all four warnings.

**“But he shall [1] neither increase horses for himself [2] nor cause his people to return to Egypt in order to get many more horses, for Yahweh, He has said to you: “You should not again return in this way further.” He shall [3] neither increase wives for himself, that his heart may not withdraw, [4] nor increase silver and gold for himself to excess.”**

• Deuteronomy 17:16–17

### **TEXT: Solomon's Sins and God's Prophecy**

#### **1 Kings 11:1–13**

<sup>1</sup> As for king Solomon, he loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian and Hittite women, <sup>2</sup> from the nations of which Yahweh had said to the sons of Israel, **“You shall not enter among them, and they shall not enter among you. Surely they will turn aside your heart after their elohim.”** To those women Solomon clung in love. <sup>3</sup> He came to have as wives 700 chief princesses, and 300 concubines; and his wives turned his heart aside.

<sup>4</sup> It came to be at the time of Solomon's old age that his wives turned his heart aside after other elohim; and he was not as wholehearted with Yahweh his Elohim as his father David had been in his heart.

<sup>5</sup> Solomon went after Ashtoreth, elohim of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. <sup>6</sup> Thus Solomon did what was evil in the eyes of Yahweh and did not fully follow after Yahweh like his father David. <sup>7</sup> Then Solomon built a high-place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, on the mountain adjoining Jerusalem, and for Moloch, the abomination of the sons of Ammon. <sup>8</sup> Thus he did for all his foreign wives who were fuming incense and sacrificing to their elohim.

<sup>9</sup> So Yahweh showed Himself angered with Solomon because he had turned aside his heart from Yahweh Elohim of Israel Who had appeared **twice** to him, <sup>10</sup> and **had instructed him** in this matter, so as not to go after other elohim; yet he did not keep what Yahweh had enjoined on him. <sup>11</sup> Hence Yahweh said to Solomon,

**“Because this has occurred with you, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes that I enjoined on you, I shall tear, yea tear the kingdom away from your hand and will give it to your servant. <sup>12</sup> However, I shall not do it in your days on account of your father David. I shall tear it away from the hand of your son. <sup>13</sup> But I shall not tear away the entire kingdom; I shall give one tribe to your son on account of David My servant and on account of Jerusalem that I have chosen.”**

[end text]

**Verses 4–8.** The wisest man acted foolishly, in the worst way possible. Why? His wives, **“all his foreign wives”** who cared about religion told Solomon that these **“other elohim”** were also creations of God, they had their realms and responsibilities, and they deserved worship just like YHWH. This would be a situation similar to great kings having vassal kings beneath them, all of whom deserve their proper respect. Perhaps they told him something like this,

“Solomon, all we are doing is acknowledging the existence of our gods, their reality, and their right to rule the domains that YHWH gave to them. They are the gods responsible for the nations outside of Israel. After all, cannot your wives worship their own national gods that YHWH placed to control the nations we were born in? You, yourself, O great king, can always worship YHWH.”

Such is the temptation of idolatry. Solomon did continue to worship YHWH, but **“he was not as whole-hearted with Yahweh his Elohim as his father David had been in his heart”** (verse 4). Worse, he foolishly built high places where his wives worshipped, but these high places were in Israel, the land God chose for Himself and His people. YHWH demanded exclusive worship in the land of Israel as part of His covenant with His people Israel. Obviously Solomon’s actions as king influenced the actions of Israel’s people. They could say, “Look what Solomon has done for his wives, and he is the wisest man ever. YHWH speaks to him! If it is okay for him to do ...”

Solomon is the definitive example of a person being without excuse for committing grievous sins. No one knew better what he did, and why, and what the consequences would be. YHWH Himself reminded Solomon personally — twice — what He required of Solomon in His covenant with Israel back at the time of Moses! Solomon knew full well the requirements of YHWH’s Covenant Laws.

Adam and Eve had better excuses than Solomon. They never encountered evil before they were tempted by the serpent. Solomon grew up at David’s feet with full access to the Levites and the priests. He committed his iniquity knowingly and with malice toward YHWH. Yes, malice! The God He knew personally was the supreme El, the creator of all things, the God among many other gods (Deuteronomy 10:17). There was no ambiguity about the reality of inferior gods, or the danger of worshipping them<sup>c</sup> as Moses wrote:

**“I YHWH am your Elohim ...**

**There shall not come to be other elohim for you in preference to Me.  
You shall not make for yourself**

**a carving [of Elohim (implied)],  
nor any physical representation  
of that in the heavens above,  
or that on the earth beneath,  
or that in the waters beneath the earth**

**You shall not bow yourself down to them,  
nor be made to serve them: for**

**I, YHWH your Elohim, am a jealous El,  
visiting the depravity of the fathers on the sons,  
on the third and on the fourth generation, to those hating Me ...”**

**• Deuteronomy 5:6–9**

This Mosaic passage is one basic feature of the Covenant YHWH contracted with Israel. With clear and simple words YHWH, speaks through Moses (read Deuteronomy 5:1–5 for context). It plainly says there are other gods. They exist **“in the heaven above,” “on the earth beneath”** heaven, and **“in the waters beneath the earth,”** and these gods can receive worship from people because they are real personalities.

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<sup>c</sup> In my articles [“Idolatry and God’s Punishment”](#) and [“Idolatry and the Sons of God”](#) I discuss the reality of other gods, and the rationale why some choose to worship these entities, these gods, who are so inferior to YHWH.

Back to Solomon. We do not know how he responded to God's charges in 1 Kings 11:11–13 of breaking the covenant with YHWH as Israel's representative. (Solomon also broke the royal covenant that YHWH contracted with David, which was also based on faithfulness to YHWH alone.) We know from Deuteronomy 5:9 that those who do such things are **"hating"** YHWH. True, that hatred is in a covenant context, but it is hatred nonetheless. Solomon's actions were done in public and they vilified YHWH. The rendering "hate" is used in most every English translation.<sup>d</sup> This indictment of **"hating"** God must apply to Solomon, or it cannot apply to anyone, and God's commands and judgments would have no meaning.

I wonder, did Solomon write Ecclesiastes before or after God declared His punishment upon Solomon's successors and upon Israel? We cannot know the answer from the text available to us.

**Verses 9 and 10.** For the third time (that we know of) YHWH communicated directly with Solomon. He does not warn the Israelite king, but He pronounces doom to the united kingdom of Israel, saying He will divide it into two kingdoms. The Davidic dynasty would continue but it would be greatly diminished.

Another punishment for Solomon was that YHWH raised up human adversaries to plague Solomon.

### ***TEXT: Adversaries of Solomon: Hadad and Rezon***

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#### **1 Kings 11:14–25**

<sup>14</sup> So Yahweh raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was from the seed of the king in Edom. <sup>15</sup> It came to be when David smote Edom, when Joab chief of the military host went up to entomb the slain, that he smote every male in Edom. <sup>16</sup> Joab and all Israel dwelt there for six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom.

<sup>17</sup> Yet Hadad fled away and came to Egypt, he and some Edomite men of his father's servants with him; Hadad was then a small lad. <sup>18</sup> They rose up out of Midian and came to Paran; then they took men from Paran with them and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt. He gave him a house and assigned bread to him; he also gave him land.

<sup>19</sup> Hadad found grace in Pharaoh's eyes especially so that he gave him as wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes, the queen-mother. <sup>20</sup> Then the sister of Tahpenes bore him his son, Genubath; and Tahpenes weaned him in the presence of Pharaoh's sons. Thus Genubath came to be in the house of Pharaoh in the presence of Pharaoh's sons.

<sup>21</sup> As for Hadad, he heard in Egypt that David had lain down with his fathers and that Joab chief of the military host had died. So Hadad said to Pharaoh, **"Let me go, that I may go to my land."** <sup>22</sup> Pharaoh asked him, **"What indeed are you lacking with me that you are now seeking to go back to your land?"** And he replied, **"Nothing, but let me go, yea go!"**

<sup>23</sup> Then Elohim raised up another adversary against him, Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled away from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah. <sup>24</sup> Then he convened men about himself and became chief of a raiding party, when David killed the Syrians. Later they went to Damascus and dwelt in it and reigned over Damascus. <sup>25</sup> He came to be an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon; adding to the evil that Hadad did, he was irritating Israel, and he reigned over Syria. **[end text]**

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**Verse 14.** This Hadad was a descendant of a former Hadad who warred against Israel during David's reign. Read the story of Hadad's ancestor in "[Israel and Judah: 6. David's Foreign Wars.](#)"

**Verses 17ff.** Servants of the King of Edom rescued and cared for the young heir of Edom, fleeing to Moab to escape the slaughter of Edomite males by Joab. They made their way to Egypt seeking asylum.

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<sup>d</sup> The Net Bible is the sole exception I can find. It renders the passage: **"You must not worship or serve them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God. I punish the sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons for the sin of the fathers who reject me."** (Deuteronomy 5:10). The word "reject" is used for the usual translation "hate" or "hating" God.

**Verses 19–20.** All these people: Tahpenes the queen mother, her sister who married Hadad and bore them a son named Genubath, and the Pharaoh — all those mentioned were known to the original readers. God willing, we will know someday who they are and how they fit into the chronology of Egypt, Edom, Syria, and the entire biblical chronology of Israel. See the “[ELM Timeline Project](#)” on the ASK website.

**Verse 21–23.** Josephus gives us additional information about both Hadad and Rezon:

**“Hadad, by Pharaoh’s permission, came to Edom; and when he was not able to make the people forsake Solomon, for it was kept under by many garrisons, and a sedition was not to be made with safety, he left there, and came into Syria; there he came upon one Rezon, who had run away from Hadadezer, king of Zobah, his master [during the reign of David], and was become a robber in that country, and joined friendship with him [Hadad], who had already a band of robbers about him.**

**So he [Hadad] went up, and seized upon that part of Syria, and was made king thereof. He also made incursions into the land of Israel, and did it no small mischief, and spoiled it, and that in the lifetime of Solomon. And this was the calamity which the Hebrews suffered by Hadad.”**

• *Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews 8:203–204*

Mention is made of “**Hadadezer king of Zobah**” in both 1 Kings 11:23 and in Josephus. We earlier read about Hadadezer and his servant Rezon in “[Israel and Judah: 6. David’s Foreign Wars](#).”

**Verse 24.** Rezon organizes a coup in Damascus and helps Hadad become King of Syria. The Greek translation, the Septuagint, translates the Hebrew “Edom” as “Aram,” so the English is “Syria.”

The next section tells of God’s promise to Jeroboam, a rebel against Solomon. God raised Jeroboam to be an adversary to Solomon. YHWH offered Jeroboam a perpetual dynasty like David’s, so long as he and his descendants remained faithful to YHWH alone, rejecting all other gods.

### ***TEXT: Another Adversary of Solomon: Jeroboam***

#### **1 Kings 11:26–40**

<sup>26</sup> Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite from Zeredah (the name of his mother, a widowed woman, being Zeruah), was an official of Solomon; he too raised his hand against the king.

<sup>27</sup> This was the reason why he raised his hand against the king: Solomon himself had built the Millo bulwark and had closed up the breach in the city of David his father. <sup>28</sup> Now the man Jeroboam was an able master. When Solomon saw the youth how well he was performing his work, he gave him supervision over the whole burden of the house of Joseph.

<sup>29</sup> It occurred at that time when Jeroboam went forth from Jerusalem that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. He had covered himself with new raiment; and the two of them, they were alone in the field. <sup>30</sup> Ahijah grasped the new raiment that was on him, and tore it into twelve torn pieces. <sup>31</sup> Then he said to Jeroboam,

**“Take for yourself ten torn pieces; for thus speaks Yahweh Elohim of Israel: Behold Me tearing the kingdom away from the hand of Solomon; I will give to you ten tribes <sup>32</sup> (yet the one tribe, it shall stay with him on account of My servant David and on account of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel) <sup>33</sup> because they have forsaken Me and [they] are worshipping Ashtoreth, elohim of the Sidonians, [they are worshipping] Chemosh, elohim of Moab, and [they are worshipping] Milcom, elohim of the sons of Ammon. They have not walked in My ways so as to do what is upright in My eyes and My statutes and My ordinances as his father David did.**

<sup>34</sup> **However, I shall not take the entire kingdom out of his hand, but shall set him as prince all the days of his life on account of David My servant whom I chose, who kept My instructions and My statutes.**

<sup>35</sup> **Yet I will take the kingship out of the hand of his son and give it to you — the ten tribes. <sup>36</sup> I shall give one tribe to his son, so that there may be a lamp for David My servant all the days**

before Me in Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen for Myself to place My Name there.

<sup>37</sup> Now I shall take you, and you will reign over all for which your soul is yearning, and you will become king over Israel.

<sup>38</sup> It will come to be, if you shall hearken to all that I instruct you, and you will walk in My ways and do what is upright in My eyes so as to keep My statutes and My instructions just as David My servant did, then I will be with you. I will build for you a sure house, just as I have built for David, and I will give you Israel. <sup>39</sup> Yet I shall humiliate the seed of David on account of this, though not all their days.”

<sup>40</sup> Solomon sought to put Jeroboam to death. But Jeroboam got up and fled away to Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt. He stayed in Egypt until the death of Solomon. [end text]

**Verse 27.** Regarding the Millo, see the comment on **1 Kings 9:14–15** above.

**Verse 29.** The prophet Ahijah the Shilonite gave Jeroboam, who was an effective administrator, an amazing message. YHWH offered to make Jeroboam king of ten of the northern tribes of Israel.

**Verses 32.** YHWH’s statement about the two tribes remaining under control of the seed of David is restated from His message to Solomon in 1 Kings 11:11–13. Rehoboam would continue to be the king of those two tribes. (Imagine Rehoboam’s regret — for the rest of his life — losing 10/12ths of the tribes of his kingdom because of one terribly bad decision, likely not knowing it was God’s will.)

**Verse 33.** YHWH tells why he is breaking up the Israelite kingdom into two — Israel’s idolatry. YHWH blames the people, not Solomon. They are making their own choices. Deuteronomy 30:17–18:

**“Yet should your heart turn around, and you are not hearkening, and you are induced to bow yourself down to other elohim and serve them, I tell you today that you shall perish.”**

**Verse 38.** YHWH offered Jeroboam a promise similar to that given to King David. The promise was conditional upon Jeroboam’s faithfulness to YHWH alone and to no other gods.

**Verse 40.** Solomon’s attempts to kill Jeroboam were ineffective. We know why; he did not know why.

### ***TEXT: Solomon’s Death***

#### **1 Kings 11:41–43**

<sup>41</sup> As for the rest of the affairs of Solomon, all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written on the scroll of the annals of Solomon?

<sup>42</sup> The days that Solomon had reigned in Jerusalem over all of Israel were forty years.

<sup>43</sup> Then Solomon lay down with his fathers and was entombed in the city of David, his father; his son Rehoboam reigned in his stead.

#### **2 Chronicles 9:29–31**

<sup>29</sup> As for the *remaining* affairs of Solomon, first and last, are they not written *in* the annals of *Nathan the prophet*, and *in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite*, and *in the visions of Iddo the vision seer concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat*?

<sup>30</sup> Solomon reigned forty years over all Israel in Jerusalem.

<sup>31</sup> Then Solomon lay down with his fathers, and *they* entombed *him* in the city of David his father; his son Rehoboam reigned in his stead. [end text]

**Verse 41.** This verse mentions one scroll that contains additional information (1) about Solomon, (2) his deeds, and (3) his wisdom. This was apparently the source about Solomon in the book of First Kings.

**2 Chronicles 9:29.** Three other sources of information about Solomon at one time existed and the authors are named. The first is Nathan the prophet who advised David, **“Ahijah the Shilonite”** is with Jeroboam in 1 Kings 11:29 and following. We will read more about this prophet later in Jeroboam’s reign. **“Iddo the vision seer”** is first introduced to us here.