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Chronological Bible Plan

June



JUNE

**“Every day I will bless you and praise
your name forever and ever” (Ps 145:2)**

June 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
June 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
June 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
June 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
June 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
June 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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June 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer
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June 30	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Reading	<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer

Solomon Asks Hiram for Help with Building the Temple (c. 968t BC)

1 Kings 5; 7:13–14

2 Chronicles 2

Solomon Sends Hiram a Message

5:1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram had always been a friend of David.

2 Then Solomon sent *word* to Hiram, saying,

3 “You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the wars which surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet.

4 But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune.

5 Behold, I intend to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spoke to David my father, saying, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he will build the house for My name.’

6 Now therefore, command that they cut for me cedars from Lebanon,

and my servants will be with your servants;

and I will give you wages for your servants

according to all that you say,

for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.”

Hiram Agrees to Help Solomon

7 When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly

and said, “Blessed be the LORD today,

1 Now Solomon decided to build a house for the name of the LORD and a royal palace for himself.

2 So Solomon assigned 70,000 men to carry loads and 80,000 men to quarry *stone* in the mountains and 3,600 to supervise them.

3 Then Solomon sent *word* to Hiram the king of Tyre, saying,

“As you dealt with David my father and sent him cedars to build him a house to dwell in, so do for me.

4 Behold, I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God,

dedicating it to Him, to burn fragrant incense before Him and to *set out* the showbread continually, and to offer burnt offerings morning and evening, on sabbaths and on new moons and on the appointed feasts of the LORD our God, this *being required* forever in Israel.

5 The house which I am about to build *will be* great, for greater is our God than all the gods.

6 But who is able to build a house for Him, for the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain Him? So who am I, that I should build a house for Him, except to burn *incense* before Him?

7 Now send me a skilled man to work in gold, silver, brass and iron, and in purple, crimson and violet *fabrics*, and who knows how to make engravings, to *work* with the skilled men whom I have in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided.

8 Send me also cedar, cypress and algum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants know how to cut timber of Lebanon;

and indeed my servants *will work* with your servants,

9 to prepare timber in abundance for me, for the house which I am about to build *will be* great and wonderful.

10 Now behold, I will give to your servants,

the woodsmen who cut the timber,

20,000 kors of crushed wheat and 20,000 kors of barley, and 20,000 baths of wine and 20,000 baths of oil.”

11 Then Hiram, king of Tyre, answered in a letter sent to Solomon: “Because the LORD loves His people, He has made you king over them.”

12 Then Hiram continued, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of

who has given to David a wise son over this great people.”

8 So Hiram sent *word* to Solomon, saying, “I have heard *the message* which you have sent me; I will do what you desire concerning the cedar and cypress timber.

7:13 Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre.

14 He was a widow’s son from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in bronze; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill for doing any work in bronze.

So he came to King Solomon and performed all his work.

5:9 My servants will bring *them* down from Lebanon to the sea; and I will make them into rafts *to go* by sea to the place where you direct me, and I will have them broken up there, and you shall carry *them* away.

Then you shall accomplish my desire by giving food to my household.”

10 So Hiram gave Solomon as much as he desired of the cedar and cypress timber.

11 Solomon then gave Hiram 20,000 kors of wheat as food for his household, and twenty kors of beaten oil; thus Solomon would give Hiram year by year.

12 The LORD gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a covenant.

Solomon Organizes the Labor

13 Now King Solomon levied forced laborers from all Israel; and the forced laborers numbered 30,000 men.

14 He sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in relays; they were in Lebanon a month *and* two months at home. And Adoniram *was* over the forced laborers.

15 Now Solomon had 70,000 transporters, and 80,000 hewers *of stone* in the mountains,

16 besides Solomon’s 3,300 chief deputies who *were* over the project

and who ruled over the people who were doing the work.

17 Then the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house with cut stones.

18 So Solomon’s builders and Hiram’s builders and the Gebalites cut them, and prepared the timbers and the stones to build the house.

Israel, who has made heaven and earth, who has given King David a wise son, endowed with discretion and understanding, who will build a house for the LORD and a royal palace for himself.

13 “Now I am sending

Huram-abi, a skilled man, endowed with understanding,

14 the son of a Danite woman

and a Tyrian father,

who knows how to work in

gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone and wood, *and* in purple, violet, linen and crimson fabrics, and *who knows how* to make all kinds of engravings and to execute any design which may be assigned to him, *to work* with your skilled men and with those of my lord David your father.

15 Now then, let my lord send to his servants wheat and barley, oil and wine, of which he has spoken.

16 We will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon and bring it to you on rafts by sea to Joppa,

so that you may carry it up to Jerusalem.”

17 Solomon numbered all the aliens who *were* in the land of Israel, following the census which his father David had taken; and 153,600 were found.

18 He appointed 70,000 of them to carry loads and 80,000 to quarry *stones* in the mountains and 3,600 supervisors

to make the people work.

The Construction of the Temple (April 18/19, 967 BC)

1 Kings 6:1–10, 15–37

2 Chronicles 3:1–14

Timing and Location

1 Now it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

37 In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv.

The Exterior of the Temple

2 As for the house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length was sixty cubits and its width twenty cubits and its height thirty cubits.

3 The porch in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits in length, corresponding to the width of the house, and its depth along the front of the house was ten cubits.

4 Also for the house he made windows with artistic frames.

5 Against the wall of the house he built stories encompassing the walls of the house around both the nave and the inner sanctuary; thus he made side chambers all around.

6 The lowest story was five cubits wide, and the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for on the outside he made offsets in the wall of the house all around in order that the beams would not be inserted in the walls of the house.

7 The house, while it was being built, was built of stone prepared at the quarry, and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any iron tool heard in the house while it was being built.

8 The doorway for the lowest side chamber was on the right side of the house; and they would go up by winding stairs to the middle story, and from the middle to the third.

9 So he built the house and finished it; and he covered the house with beams and planks of cedar.

10 He also built the stories against the whole house, each five cubits high; and they were fastened to the house with timbers of cedar.

The Interior of the Temple

15 Then he built the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the ceiling he overlaid the walls on the inside with wood, and he overlaid the floor of the house with boards of cypress.

16 He built twenty cubits on the rear part of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the ceiling; he built them for it on the inside as an inner sanctuary, even as the most holy place.

17 The house, that is, the nave in front of the inner sanctuary, was forty cubits long.

18 There was cedar on the house within, carved in the shape of gourds and open flowers; all was cedar, there was no stone seen.

1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

2 He began to build on the second day in the second month of the fourth year of his reign.

3 Now these are the foundations which Solomon laid for building the house of God. The length in cubits, according to the old standard was sixty cubits, and the width twenty cubits.

4a The porch which was in front of the house was as long as the width of the house, twenty cubits,

and the height 120;

The Most Holy Place

19 Then he prepared an inner sanctuary within the house in order to place there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

20 The inner sanctuary *was* twenty cubits in length, twenty cubits in width, and twenty cubits in height, and he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid the altar with cedar.

23 Also in the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high.

24 Five cubits *was* the one wing of the cherub and five cubits the other wing of the cherub; from the end of one wing to the end of the other wing *were* ten cubits.

25 The other cherub *was* ten cubits; both the cherubim were of the same measure and the same form.

26 The height of the one cherub *was* ten cubits, and so *was* the other cherub.

27 He placed the cherubim in the midst of the inner house, and the wings of the cherubim were spread out, so that the wing of the one was touching the *one* wall, and the wing of the other cherub was touching the other wall. So their wings were touching each other in the center of the house.

28 He also overlaid the cherubim with gold.

Gold Plating

21 So Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold. And he drew chains of gold across the front of the inner sanctuary, and he overlaid it with gold.

22 He overlaid the whole house with gold, until all the house was finished.

Also the whole altar which was by the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold.

30 He overlaid the floor of the house with gold, inner and outer *sanctuaries*.

Decorative Artistry

29 Then he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, inner and outer *sanctuaries*.

The Temple Doors

31 For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood, the lintel *and* five-sided doorposts.

32 So *he made* two doors of olive wood, and he carved on them carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread the gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

33 So also he made for the entrance of the nave four-sided doorposts of olive wood

34 and two doors of cypress wood; the two leaves of the one

8 Now he made the room of the holy of holies:

its length across the width of the house *was* twenty cubits, and its width *was* twenty cubits;

and he overlaid it with fine gold, *amounting* to 600 talents.

9 The weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold.

He also overlaid the upper rooms with gold.

10 Then he made two sculptured cherubim in the room of the holy of holies and overlaid them with gold.

11 The wingspan of the cherubim *was* twenty cubits; the wing of one, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and *its* other wing, of five cubits, touched the wing of the other cherub.

12 The wing of the other cherub, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house; and *its* other wing of five cubits was attached to the wing of the first cherub.

13 The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits, and they stood on their feet facing the *main* room.

14 He made the veil of violet, purple, crimson and fine linen, and he worked cherubim on it.

4b and inside he overlaid it with pure gold.

5a He overlaid the main room with cypress wood and overlaid it with fine gold,

7 He also overlaid the house with gold—the beams, the thresholds and its walls and its doors;

and he carved cherubim on the walls.

5b and ornamented it with palm trees and chains.

6 Further, he adorned the house with precious stones; and the gold was gold from Parvaim.

door turned on pivots, and the two leaves of the other door turned on pivots.
 35 He carved *on it* cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers; and he overlaid *them* with gold evenly applied on the engraved work.

The Inner Courtyard

36 He built the inner court with three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams.

Incidents During Temple Construction (c. 966t/965t BC)

1 Kings 2:39–46; 6:11–13

Shimei's Fatal Mistake

2:39 But it came about at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away to Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, "Behold, your servants are in Gath."

40 Then Shimei arose and saddled his donkey, and went to Gath to Achish to look for his servants. And Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath.

41 It was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and had returned.

42 So the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by the LORD and solemnly warn you, saying, 'You will know for certain that on the day you depart and go anywhere, you shall surely die'? And you said to me, 'The word which I have heard is good.'

43 Why then have you not kept the oath of the LORD, and the command which I have laid on you?"

44 The king also said to Shimei, "You know all the evil which you acknowledge in your heart, which you did to my father David; therefore the LORD shall return your evil on your own head.

45 But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever."

46 So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and fell upon him so that he died. Thus the kingdom was established in the hands of Solomon.

God Reminds Solomon that Obeying Him is More Important than Building Him a Temple

6:11 Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon saying,

12 "*Concerning* this house which you are building, if you will walk in My statutes and execute My ordinances and keep all My commandments by walking in them, then I will carry out My word with you which I spoke to David your father.

13 I will dwell among the sons of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel."

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The Temple Furnishings (966t–961t BC)

1 Kings 7:15–51

2 Chronicles 3:15–5:1

The Temple Pillars

15 He fashioned the two pillars of bronze; eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar, and a line of twelve cubits measured the circumference of both.

16 He also made two capitals of molten bronze to set on the tops of the pillars; the height of the one capital was five cubits and the height of the other capital was five cubits.

17 *There were* nets of network and twisted threads of chainwork for the capitals which were on the top of the pillars; seven for the one capital and seven for the other capital.

18 So he made the pillars, and two rows around on the one network to cover the capitals which were on the top of the pomegranates; and so he did for the other capital.

19 The capitals which *were* on the top of the pillars in the porch were of lily design, four cubits.

20 *There were* capitals on the two pillars, even above *and* close to the rounded projection which was beside the network; and the pomegranates *numbered* two hundred in rows around both capitals.

21 Thus he set up the pillars at the porch of the nave;

and he set up the right pillar and named it Jachin, and he set up the left pillar and named it Boaz.

22 On the top of the pillars was lily design. So the work of the pillars was finished.

The Bronze Altar

The Bronze Basin—“The Sea”

23 Now he made the sea of cast *metal* ten cubits from brim to brim, circular in form, and its height was five cubits, and thirty cubits in circumference.

24 Under its brim gourds went around encircling it ten to a cubit, completely surrounding the sea; the gourds were in two rows, cast with the rest.

25 It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east; and the sea *was set* on top of them, and all their rear parts *turned* inward.

26 It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, *as* a lily blossom; it could hold two thousand baths.

The Ten Movable Bronze Basins

27 Then he made the ten stands of bronze; the length of each stand was four cubits and its width four cubits and its height three cubits.

28 This was the design of the stands: they had borders, even borders between the frames,

29 and on the borders which were between the frames *were* lions, oxen and cherubim; and on the frames there *was* a pedestal above, and beneath the lions and oxen *were* wreaths of hanging work.

3:15 He also made two pillars for the front of the house, thirty-five cubits high,

and the capital on the top of each *was* five cubits.

16 He made chains in the inner sanctuary and placed *them* on the tops of the pillars;

and he made

one hundred pomegranates and placed *them* on the chains.

17 He erected the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right and the other on the left, and named the one on the right Jachin and the one on the left Boaz.

4:1 Then he made a bronze altar, twenty cubits in length and twenty cubits in width and ten cubits in height.

2 Also he made the cast *metal* sea, ten cubits from brim to brim, circular in form, and its height *was* five cubits and its circumference thirty cubits.

3 Now figures like oxen *were* under it *and* all around it, ten cubits, entirely encircling the sea.

The oxen *were* in two rows, cast in one piece.

4 It stood on twelve oxen, three facing the north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east; and the sea *was set* on top of them and all their hindquarters turned inwards.

5 It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, *like* a lily blossom; it could hold 3,000 baths.

30 Now each stand had four bronze wheels with bronze axles, and its four feet had supports; beneath the basin *were* cast supports with wreaths at each side.

31 Its opening inside the crown at the top *was* a cubit, and its opening *was* round like the design of a pedestal, a cubit and a half; and also on its opening *there were* engravings, and their borders were square, not round.

32 The four wheels *were* underneath the borders, and the axles of the wheels *were* on the stand. And the height of a wheel *was* a cubit and a half.

33 The workmanship of the wheels *was* like the workmanship of a chariot wheel. Their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs *were* all cast.

34 Now *there were* four supports at the four corners of each stand; its supports *were* part of the stand itself.

35 On the top of the stand *there was* a circular form half a cubit high, and on the top of the stand its stays and its borders *were* part of it.

36 He engraved on the plates of its stays and on its borders, cherubim, lions and palm trees, according to the clear space on each, with wreaths *all* around.

37 He made the ten stands like this: all of them had one casting, one measure and one form.

38 He made ten basins of bronze, one basin held forty baths; each basin *was* four cubits, *and* on each of the ten stands *was* one basin.

39a Then he set the stands, five on the right side of the house and five on the left side of the house;

The Golden Lampstands, Tables and Bowls

The Courtyard

39b and he set the sea *of cast metal* on the right side of the house eastward toward the south.

Miscellaneous Instruments

40 Now Hiram made the basins and the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram finished doing all the work which he performed for King Solomon *in* the house of the LORD:

A Summary of Hiram's Craftsmanship

41 the two pillars and the *two* bowls of the capitals which *were* on the top of the two pillars, and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals which *were* on the top of the pillars;
42 and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network to cover the two bowls of the capitals which *were* on the tops of the pillars;
43 and the ten stands with the ten basins on the stands;

6 He also made ten basins in which to wash,

and he set five on the right side and five on the left to rinse things for the burnt offering; but the sea *was* for the priests to wash in.

7 Then he made the ten golden lampstands in the way prescribed for them and he set them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left.

8 He also made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. And he made one hundred golden bowls.

9 Then he made the court of the priests and the great court and doors for the court, and overlaid their doors with bronze.

10 He set the sea on the right side *of the house* toward the southeast.

11 Hiram also made the pails, the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram finished doing the work which he performed for King Solomon in the house of God:

12 the two pillars, the bowls and the two capitals on top of the pillars, and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals which *were* on top of the pillars,
13 and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network to cover the two bowls of the capitals which *were* on the pillars.

14 He also made the stands and he made the basins on the stands,

<p>44 and the one sea and the twelve oxen under the sea; 45 and the pails and the shovels and the bowls; even all these utensils which Hiram made for King Solomon <i>in</i> the house of the LORD <i>were</i> of polished bronze. 46 In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan. 47 Solomon left all the utensils <i>unweighed</i>, because <i>they were</i> too many; the weight of the bronze could not be ascertained.</p>	<p>15 <i>and</i> the one sea with the twelve oxen under it. 16 The pails, the shovels, the forks and all its utensils, Hiram-abi made of polished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the LORD. 17 On the plain of the Jordan the king cast them in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah. 18 Thus Solomon made all these utensils in great quantities, for the weight of the bronze could not be found out.</p>
<p>The Final Furnishings 48 Solomon made all the furniture which <i>was in</i> the house of the LORD: the golden altar and the golden table on which <i>was</i> the bread of the Presence; 49 and the lampstands, five on the right side and five on the left, in front of the inner sanctuary, of pure gold; and the flowers and the lamps and the tongs, of gold; 50 and the cups and the snuffers and the bowls and the spoons and the firepans, of pure gold; and the hinges both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, <i>and</i> for the doors of the house, <i>that is</i>, of the nave, of gold. 51 Thus all the work that King Solomon performed <i>in</i> the house of the LORD was finished. And Solomon brought in the things dedicated by his father David, the silver and the gold and the utensils, <i>and</i> he put them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.</p>	<p>19 Solomon also made all the things that <i>were</i> in the house of God: even the golden altar, the tables with the bread of the Presence on them, 20 the lampstands with their lamps of pure gold, to burn in front of the inner sanctuary in the way prescribed; 21 the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs of gold, of purest gold; 22 and the snuffers, the bowls, the spoons and the firepans of pure gold; and the entrance of the house, its inner doors for the holy of holies and the doors of the house, <i>that is</i>, of the nave, of gold. 5:1 Thus all the work that Solomon performed for the house of the LORD was finished. And Solomon brought in the things that David his father had dedicated, even the silver and the gold and all the utensils, <i>and</i> put <i>them</i> in the treasuries of the house of God.</p>

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Solomon Finishes Building the Temple (Bul [November] 961 BC)

1 Kings 6:14, 38

14 So Solomon built the house and finished it.

38 In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished throughout all its parts and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.

The Ark Is Moved Into the Temple (Tishri [October] 960 BC)

1 Kings 8:1–11

2 Chronicles 5:2–14

1 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' *households* of the sons of Israel, to King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the city of David, which is Zion.

2 All the men of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon at the feast, in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

3 Then all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark.

4 They brought up the ark of the LORD and the tent of meeting and all the holy utensils, which were in the tent, and the priests and the Levites brought them up.

5 And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who were assembled to him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen they could not be counted or numbered.

6 Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the house, to the most holy place, under the wings of the cherubim.

7 For the cherubim spread *their* wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim made a covering over the ark and its poles from above.

8 But the poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen from the holy place before the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen outside; they are there to this day.

9 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the sons of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

10 It happened that when the priests came from the holy place,

the cloud filled the house of the LORD,

11 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

2 Then Solomon assembled to Jerusalem the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' *households* of the sons of Israel, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.

3 All the men of Israel assembled themselves to the king at the feast, that is *in* the seventh month.

4 Then all the elders of Israel came, and the Levites took up the ark.

5 They brought up the ark and the tent of meeting and all the holy utensils which *were* in the tent; the Levitical priests brought them up.

6 And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him before the ark, were sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered.

7 Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the house, to the holy of holies, under the wings of the cherubim.

8 For the cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim made a covering over the ark and its poles.

9 The poles were so long that the ends of the poles of the ark could be seen in front of the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen outside; and they are there to this day.

10 There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets which Moses put *there* at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the sons of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

11 When the priests came forth from the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to divisions),

12 and all the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and their sons and kinsmen, clothed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps and lyres, standing east of the altar, and with them one hundred and twenty priests blowing trumpets

13 in unison when the trumpeters and the singers were to make themselves heard with one voice to praise and to glorify the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice accompanied by trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and when they praised the LORD *saying*, "He indeed is good for His lovingkindness is everlasting," then the house,

the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud,

14 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

Solomon Praises God For Keeping His Promise (Tishri [October] 960 BC)

1 Kings 8:12–21	2 Chronicles 6:1–11
<p>12 Then Solomon said, “The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud. [cf. Exod 19:9]</p> <p>13 “I have surely built You a lofty house, A place for Your dwelling forever.”</p> <p>14 Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing.</p> <p>15 He said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled <i>it</i> with His hand, saying,</p> <p>16 ‘Since the day that I brought My people Israel from Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel <i>in which</i> to build a house that My name might be there,</p> <p>but I chose David to be over My people Israel.’</p> <p>17 Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.</p> <p>18 But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was in your heart.</p> <p>19 Nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who will be born to you, he will build the house for My name.’</p> <p>20 Now the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.</p> <p>21 There I have set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with our fathers when He brought them from the land of Egypt.”</p>	<p>1 Then Solomon said, “The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud.</p> <p>2 “I have built You a lofty house, And a place for Your dwelling forever.”</p> <p>3 Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing.</p> <p>4 He said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled <i>it</i> with His hands, saying,</p> <p>5 ‘Since the day that I brought My people from the land of Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel <i>in which</i> to build a house that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man for a leader over My people Israel; 6 but I have chosen Jerusalem that My name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.’</p> <p>7 Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.</p> <p>8 But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was in your heart.</p> <p>9 Nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who will be born to you, he shall build the house for My name.’</p> <p>10 Now the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in the place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.</p> <p>11 There I have set the ark in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with the sons of Israel.”</p>

Solomon’s Dedicatory Prayer (Tishri [October] 960 BC)

1 Kings 8:22–53	2 Chronicles 6:12–42
<p>22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel</p> <p>and spread out his hands toward heaven.</p> <p>23 He said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and <i>showing</i> lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart,</p> <p>24 who have kept with Your servant, my father David, that which You have promised him; indeed, You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand as it is this day.</p> <p>25 Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David my father that which You have promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way to walk before Me as you have walked.’</p> <p>26 Now therefore, O God of Israel, let Your word, I pray, be confirmed which You have spoken to Your servant, my father David.</p> <p>27 But will God indeed dwell on the earth?</p>	<p>12 Then he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands.</p> <p>13 Now Solomon had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven.</p> <p>14 He said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and <i>showing</i> lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart;</p> <p>15 who has kept with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him; indeed You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day.</p> <p>16 Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way, to walk in My law as you have walked before Me.’</p> <p>17 Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, let Your word be confirmed which You have spoken to Your servant David.</p> <p>18 But will God indeed dwell with mankind on the earth?</p>

Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!

28 Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You today;

29 that Your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, toward the place of which You have said, 'My name shall be there,' to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place.

30 Listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; hear in heaven Your dwelling place; hear and forgive.

31 If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes *and* takes an oath before Your altar in this house,

32 then hear in heaven and act and judge Your servants, condemning the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

33 When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy, because they have sinned against You, if they turn to You again and confess Your name and pray and make supplication to You in this house,

34 then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their fathers.

35 When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain, because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name and turn from their sin when You afflict them,

36 then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land, which You have given Your people for an inheritance.

37 If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight *or* mildew, locust *or* grasshopper, if their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities, whatever plague, whatever sickness *there is*,

38 whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man *or* by all Your people Israel, each knowing the affliction of his own heart, and spreading his hands toward this house;

39 then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know, for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men,

40 that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You have given to our fathers.

41 Also concerning the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your name's sake

42 (for they will hear of Your great name and Your mighty hand, and of Your outstretched arm); when he comes and prays toward this house,

43 hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, to fear You, as *do* Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name.

44 When Your people go out to battle against their enemy,

Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house which I have built.

19 Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You;

20 that Your eye may be open toward this house day and night, toward the place of which You have said that *You would* put Your name there, to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place.

21 Listen to the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray toward this place; hear from Your dwelling place, from heaven; hear and forgive.

22 If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes *and* takes an oath before Your altar in this house,

23 then hear from heaven and act and judge Your servants, punishing the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

24 If Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and they return *to You* and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this house,

25 then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You have given to them and to their fathers.

26 When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin when You afflict them;

27 then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people for an inheritance.

28 If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight *or* mildew, if there is locust *or* grasshopper, if their enemies besiege them in the land of their cities, whatever plague *or* whatever sickness *there is*,

29 whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man *or* by all Your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own pain, and spreading his hands toward this house,

30 then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know for You alone know the hearts of the sons of men,

31 that they may fear You, to walk in Your ways as long as they live in the land which You have given to our fathers.

32 Also concerning the foreigner who is not from Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your great name's sake and

Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house,

33 then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, and fear You as *do* Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name.

34 When Your people go out to battle against their enemies,

<p>by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to the LORD toward the city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, 45 then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.</p> <p>46 When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near;</p> <p>47 if they take thought in the land where they have been taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of those who have taken them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly';</p> <p>48 if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name;</p> <p>49 then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Your dwelling place, and maintain their cause,</p> <p>50 and forgive Your people who have sinned against You and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You, and make them <i>objects of</i> compassion before those who have taken them captive, that they may have compassion on them</p> <p>51 (for they are Your people and Your inheritance which You have brought forth from Egypt, from the midst of the iron furnace),</p> <p>52 that Your eyes may be open to the supplication of Your servant and to the supplication of Your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they call to You.</p> <p>53 For You have separated them from all the peoples of the earth as Your inheritance, as You spoke through Moses Your servant, when You brought our fathers forth from Egypt, O Lord God."</p>	<p>by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to You toward this city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, 35 then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.</p> <p>36 When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to a land far off or near,</p> <p>37 if they take thought in the land where they are taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, 'We have sinned, we have committed iniquity and have acted wickedly';</p> <p>38 if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been taken captive, and pray toward their land which You have given to their fathers and the city which You have chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Your name, 39 then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, their prayer and supplications, and maintain their cause and forgive Your people who have sinned against You.</p> <p>40 Now, O my God, I pray, let Your eyes be open and Your ears attentive to the prayer <i>offered</i> in this place.</p> <p>41 Now therefore arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your might; let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation and let Your godly ones rejoice in what is good.</p> <p>42 O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed; remember <i>Your</i> lovingkindness to Your servant David."</p>
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Chronological Notes

- 1) Concerning the date of the dedication of the Temple, I follow House in understanding that "Solomon dedicated the temple eleven months after it was constructed."¹ He simply waited until the symbolic Feast of Booths occurred and used the extra months to furnish the worship center and allow the priests to make necessary arrangements.²

¹ Paul R. House, "1, 2 Kings," NAC, 137.

² John Gray, "I and II Kings: A Commentary," *The Old Testament Library*, 193.

God's Approval of His Temple (Tishri [October] 960 BC)

1 Kings 8:54–66

2 Chronicles 7:1–10

Solomon's Blessing

54 When Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread toward heaven.

55 And he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying:

56 "Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.

57 May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us,

58 that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers.

59 And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day requires,

60 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no one else.

61 Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the LORD our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day."

God's Visible Sign of Approval

Sacrifices and Celebration

62 Now the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifice before the LORD.

63 Solomon offered for the sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the LORD, 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the sons of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.

64 On the same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD, because there he offered the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat of the peace offerings; for the bronze altar that *was* before the LORD *was* too small to hold the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat of the peace offerings.

1 Now when Solomon had finished praying,

fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house.

2 The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house.

3 All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, *saying*, "Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD.

5 King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. Thus the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

6 The priests stood at their posts, and the Levites also, with the instruments of music to the LORD, which King David had made for giving praise to the LORD—"for His lovingkindness is everlasting"—whenever he gave praise by their means, while the priests on the other side blew trumpets; and all Israel was standing.

7 Then Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that *was* before the house of the LORD, for there he offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the peace offerings because the bronze altar which Solomon had made was not able to contain the burnt offering, the grain offering and the fat.

<p>The Dedication Festival (from the 8th to the 14th) 65 So Solomon observed the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, for seven days and seven <i>more</i> days, <i>even</i> fourteen days.</p> <p>The Feast of Tabernacles (from the 15th to the 22nd)</p> <p>Solomon Dismisses the People (23rd) 66 On the eighth day [23rd] he sent the people away and they blessed the king. Then they went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had shown to David His servant and to Israel His people.</p>	<p>8 So Solomon observed the feast at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly <i>who came</i> from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt.</p> <p>9 On the eighth day [22nd] they held a solemn assembly, for the dedication of the altar they observed seven days and the feast seven days.</p> <p>10 Then on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people to their tents, rejoicing and happy of heart because of the goodness that the LORD had shown to David and to Solomon and to His people Israel.</p>
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Solomon's Palace (960t–948t BC)

1 Kings 7:1–12

- 1 Now Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.
- 2 He built the house of the forest of Lebanon; its length was 100 cubits and its width 50 cubits and its height 30 cubits, on four rows of cedar pillars with cedar beams on the pillars.
- 3 It was paneled with cedar above the side chambers which were on the 45 pillars, 15 in each row.
- 4 *There were artistic window* frames in three rows, and window was opposite window in three ranks.
- 5 All the doorways and doorposts *had squared artistic* frames, and window was opposite window in three ranks.
- 6 Then he made the hall of pillars; its length was 50 cubits and its width 30 cubits, and a porch *was* in front of them and pillars and a threshold in front of them.
- 7 He made the hall of the throne where he was to judge, the hall of judgment, and it was paneled with cedar from floor to floor.
- 8 His house where he was to live, the other court inward from the hall, was of the same workmanship. He also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom Solomon had married.
- 9 All these were of costly stones, of stone cut according to measure, sawed with saws, inside and outside; even from the foundation to the coping, and so on the outside to the great court.
- 10 The foundation was of costly stones, *even* large stones, stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits.
- 11 And above were costly stones, stone cut according to measure, and cedar.
- 12 So the great court all around *had* three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams even as the inner court of the house of the LORD, and the porch of the house.

God's Second Personal Appearance to Solomon (c. 948t BC)

1 Kings 9:1–9

2 Chronicles 7:11–22

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Now it came about when Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all that Solomon desired to do, 2 that the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. 3 The LORD said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your supplication, which you have made before Me; | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11 Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's palace, and successfully completed all that he had planned on doing in the house of the LORD and in his palace. 12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. 13 If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, 14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land. |
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<p>I have consecrated this house which you have built by putting My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.</p> <p>4 As for you, if you will walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you <i>and</i> will keep My statutes and My ordinances,</p> <p>5 then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, just as I promised to your father David, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’</p> <p>6 But if you or your sons indeed turn away from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,</p> <p>7 then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and the house which I have consecrated for My name, I will cast out of My sight. So Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.</p> <p>8 And this house will become a heap of ruins; everyone who passes by will be astonished and hiss and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’</p> <p>9 And they will say, ‘Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them, therefore the LORD has brought all this adversity on them.’”</p>	<p>15 Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer <i>offered</i> in this place.</p> <p>16 For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.</p> <p>17 As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, even to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep My statutes and My ordinances,</p> <p>18 then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man <i>to be</i> ruler in Israel.’</p> <p>19 But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,</p> <p>20 then I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.</p> <p>21 As for this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’</p> <p>22 And they will say, ‘Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers who brought them from the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this adversity on them.’”</p>
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Solomon Begins the Second Half of His Reign (c. 948t BC)

1 Kings 9:10–15, 17–28

10 It came about at the end of twenty years in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king's house

11 (Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold according to all his desire), then King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.

12 So Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, and they did not please him.

13 He said, "What are these cities which you have given me, my brother?" So they were called the land of Cabul to this day.

14 And Hiram sent to the king 120 talents of gold.

15 Now this is the account of the forced labor which King Solomon levied to build the house of the LORD, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer.

17a So Solomon rebuilt Gezer

18b and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land of Judah,

17b and the lower Beth-horon

18a and Baalath

19 and all the storage cities which Solomon had, even the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen, and all that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land under his rule.

20 As for all the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who were not of the sons of Israel,

21 their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel were unable to destroy utterly, from them Solomon levied forced laborers, even to this day.

22 But Solomon did not make slaves of the sons of Israel; for they were men of war, his servants, his princes, his captains, his chariot commanders, and his horsemen.

23 These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, who ruled over the people doing the work.

24 As soon as Pharaoh's daughter came up from the city of David to her house which Solomon had built for her,

then he built the Millo.

25 Now three times in a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar which he built to the LORD, burning incense with them on the altar which was before the LORD.

2 Chronicles 8

1 Now it came about at the end of the twenty years in which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house

2 that he built the cities which Hiram had given to him, and settled the sons of Israel there.

3 Then Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and captured it.

4 He built Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage cities which he had built in Hamath.

5 He also built upper Beth-horon and lower Beth-horon, fortified cities with walls, gates and bars; 6 and Baalath

and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the cities for his chariots and cities for his horsemen, and all that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land under his rule.

7 All of the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel,

8 namely, from their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel had not destroyed, them Solomon raised as forced laborers to this day.

9 But Solomon did not make slaves for his work from the sons of Israel; they were men of war, his chief captains and commanders of his chariots and his horsemen.

10 These were the chief officers of King Solomon, two hundred and fifty who ruled over the people.

11 Then Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house which he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy where the ark of the LORD has entered."

12 Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built before the porch;

13 and did so according to the daily rule, offering them up according to the commandment of Moses, for the sabbaths, the new moons and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths.

14 Now according to the ordinance of his father David, he

<p>So he finished the house. 26 King Solomon also built a fleet of ships in Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. 27 And Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, sailors who knew the sea, along with the servants of Solomon. 28 They went to Ophir and took four hundred and twenty talents of gold from there, and brought <i>it</i> to King Solomon.</p>	<p>appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their duties of praise and ministering before the priests according to the daily rule, and the gatekeepers by their divisions at every gate; for David the man of God had so commanded. 15 And they did not depart from the commandment of the king to the priests and Levites in any manner or concerning the storehouses. 16 Thus all the work of Solomon was carried out from the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed. 17 Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Eloth on the seashore in the land of Edom. 18 And Hiram by his servants sent him ships and servants who knew the sea; and they went with Solomon's servants to Ophir, and took from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon.</p>
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The Queen of Sheba Challenges Solomon (c. 948t BC)

1 Kings 10:1–13	2 Chronicles 9:1–12
<p>1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with difficult questions. 2 So she came to Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. 3 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her. 4 When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 5 the food of his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his waiters and their attire, his cupbearers, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. 6 Then she said to the king, "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 7 Nevertheless I did not believe the reports, until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. You exceed <i>in</i> wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard. 8 How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually <i>and</i> hear your wisdom. 9 Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the LORD loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness." 10 She gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and a very great <i>amount</i> of spices and precious stones. Never again did such abundance of spices come in as that which the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon. 11 Also the ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir a very great <i>number of</i> alnum trees and precious stones.</p>	<p>1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with difficult questions. She had a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and a large amount of gold and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was on her heart. 2 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from Solomon which he did not explain to her. 3 When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house which he had built, 4 the food at his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his ministers and their attire, his cupbearers and their attire, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, she was breathless. 5 Then she said to the king, "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 6 "Nevertheless I did not believe their reports until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You surpass the report that I heard. 7 How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom. 8 Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you, setting you on His throne as king for the LORD your God; because your God loved Israel establishing them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness." 9 Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold and a very great <i>amount of</i> spices and precious stones; there had never been spice like that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. 10 The servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir, also brought alnum trees and precious stones.</p>

<p>12 The king made of the almug trees supports for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also lyres and harps for the singers; such almug trees have not come in <i>again</i> nor have they been seen to this day.</p> <p>13 King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she requested, besides what he gave her according to his royal bounty. Then she turned and went to her own land together with her servants.</p>	<p>11 From the algum trees the king made steps for the house of the LORD and for the king's palace, and lyres and harps for the singers; and none like that was seen before in the land of Judah.</p> <p>12 King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she requested besides <i>a return</i> for what she had brought to the king. Then she turned and went to her own land with her servants.</p>
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Solomon—Israel's Greatest King (c. 969t – 932t BC)

1 Kings 4:20–34; 10:14–29	2 Chronicles 1:14–17; 9:13–28
<p>Solomon's Kingdom</p> <p>4:20 Judah and Israel <i>were</i> as numerous as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance; <i>they were</i> eating and drinking and rejoicing.</p> <p>21 Now Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt; <i>they</i> brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.</p> <p>22 Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour and sixty kors of meal,</p> <p>23 ten fat oxen, twenty pasture-fed oxen, a hundred sheep besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl.</p> <p>24 For he had dominion over everything west of the River, from Tiphseh even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had peace on all sides around about him.</p> <p>25 So Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.</p> <p>26 Solomon had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen.</p> <p>27 Those deputies provided for King Solomon and all who came to King Solomon's table, each in his month; they left nothing lacking.</p> <p>28 They also brought barley and straw for the horses and swift steeds to the place where it should be, each according to his charge.</p> <p>Solomon's Wealth</p> <p>10:14 Now the weight of gold which came in to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,</p> <p>15 besides <i>that</i> from the traders and the wares of the merchants and all the kings of the Arabs and the governors of the country.</p> <p>16 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 <i>shekels of</i> gold on each large shield.</p> <p>17 <i>He made</i> 300 shields of beaten gold, using three minas of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.</p> <p>18 Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with refined gold.</p> <p>19 <i>There were</i> six steps to the throne and a round top to the throne at its rear,</p> <p>and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms.</p> <p>20 Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like <i>it</i> was made for any other</p>	<p>9:26 He was the ruler over all the kings from the Euphrates River even to the land of the Philistines, and as far as the border of Egypt.</p> <p>13 Now the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,</p> <p>14 besides that which the traders and merchants brought; and all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.</p> <p>15 King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 <i>shekels of</i> beaten gold on each large shield.</p> <p>16 <i>He made</i> 300 shields of beaten gold, using three hundred shekels of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.</p> <p>17 Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with pure gold.</p> <p>18 <i>There were</i> six steps to the throne</p> <p>and a footstool in gold attached to the throne, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms.</p> <p>19 Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like <i>it</i> was made for any <i>other</i></p>

kingdom.

21 All King Solomon's drinking vessels *were* of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon *were* of pure gold. None was of silver; it was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon.

27 The king made silver *as common* as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland.

22 For the king had at sea the ships of Tarshish with the ships of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.

Solomon's Horses

26 Now Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

28 Also Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's merchants procured *them* from Kue for a price.

29 A chariot was imported from Egypt for 600 *shekels* of silver, and a horse for 150; and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of the Arameans.

Solomon's Wisdom

4:29 Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore.

30 Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt.

31 For he was wiser than all men, than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was *known* in all the surrounding nations.

32 He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005.

33 He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even to the hyssop that grows on the wall; he spoke also of animals and birds and creeping things and fish.

34 Men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

10:23 So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

24 All the earth was seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart.

25 They brought every man his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, weapons, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

kingdom.

20 All King Solomon's drinking vessels *were* of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon *were* of pure gold; silver was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon.

27 The king made silver *as common* as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland.

1:15 The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the lowland.

9:21 For the king had ships which went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.

1:14 Solomon amassed chariots and horsemen.

He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.

9:25 Now Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

28 And they were bringing horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all countries.

1:16 Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue; the king's traders procured them from Kue for a price.

17 They imported chariots from Egypt for 600 *shekels* of silver apiece and horses for 150 apiece, and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

9:22 So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

23 And all the kings of the earth were seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart.

24 They brought every man his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, weapons, spices, horses and mules, so much year by year.

Proverbs Collection I: A Father's Instruction – Part 1 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 1–3

Title

1:1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

Preamble

- 2 To know wisdom and instruction,
To discern the sayings of understanding,
3 To receive instruction in wise behavior,
Righteousness, justice and equity;
4 To give prudence to the naive,
To the youth knowledge and discretion,
5 A wise man will hear and increase in learning,
And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel,
6 To understand a proverb and a figure,
The words of the wise and their riddles.
7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;
Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

A Call to Listen and Obey

- 8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction
And do not forsake your mother's teaching;
9 Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head
And ornaments about your neck.

Resist the Invitation of the Gang

- 10 My son, if sinners entice you,
Do not consent.
11 If they say, "Come with us,
Let us lie in wait for blood,
Let us ambush the innocent without cause;
12 Let us swallow them alive like Sheol,
Even whole, as those who go down to the pit;
13 We will find all *kinds* of precious wealth,
We will fill our houses with spoil;
14 Throw in your lot with us,
We shall all have one purse,"
15 My son, do not walk in the way with them.
Keep your feet from their path,
16 For their feet run to evil
And they hasten to shed blood.
17 Indeed, it is useless to spread the *baited* net
In the sight of any bird;
18 But they lie in wait for their own blood;
They ambush their own lives.
19 So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence;
It takes away the life of its possessors.

Wisdom Will Mock Those Who Mocked Her

- 20 Wisdom shouts in the street,
She lifts her voice in the square;
21 At the head of the noisy *streets* she cries out;
At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings:
22 "How long, O naive ones, will you love being simple-minded?
And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing
And fools hate knowledge?
23 "Turn to my reproof,
Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you;

- I will make my words known to you.
24 “Because I called and you refused,
I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention;
25 And you neglected all my counsel
And did not want my reproof;
26 I will also laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your dread comes,
27 When your dread comes like a storm
And your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
When distress and anguish come upon you.
28 “Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;
They will seek me diligently but they will not find me,
29 Because they hated knowledge
And did not choose the fear of the LORD.
30 “They would not accept my counsel,
They spurned all my reproof.
31 “So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way
And be satiated with their own devices.
32 “For the waywardness of the naive will kill them,
And the complacency of fools will destroy them.
33 “But he who listens to me shall live securely
And will be at ease from the dread of evil.”

A Call to Seek Wisdom

- 2:1 My son, if you will receive my words
And treasure my commandments within you,
2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom,
Incline your heart to understanding;
3 For if you cry for discernment,
Lift your voice for understanding;
4 If you seek her as silver
And search for her as for hidden treasures;

Wisdom Will Give You Knowledge of God

- 5 Then you will discern the fear of the LORD
And discover the knowledge of God.
6 For the LORD gives wisdom;
From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding.
7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
8 Guarding the paths of justice,
And He preserves the way of His godly ones.

Wisdom Will Give You Discernment for Living

- 9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice
And equity *and* every good course.
10 For wisdom will enter your heart
And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
11 Discretion will guard you,
Understanding will watch over you,

Wisdom Will Guard You from the Wicked

- 12 To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things;
13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To walk in the ways of darkness;
14 Who delight in doing evil
And rejoice in the perversity of evil;

- 15 Whose paths are crooked,
And who are devious in their ways;

Wisdom Will Protect You from the Adulteress

- 16 To deliver you from the strange woman,
From the adulteress who flatters with her words;
17 That leaves the companion of her youth
And forgets the covenant of her God;
18 For her house sinks down to death
And her tracks *lead* to the dead;
19 None who go to her return again,
Nor do they reach the paths of life.

Wisdom Will Enable You to Live Righteously

- 20 So you will walk in the way of good men
And keep to the paths of the righteous.
21 For the upright will live in the land
And the blameless will remain in it;
22 But the wicked will be cut off from the land
And the treacherous will be uprooted from it.

God Addresses You as His Child

- 3:1 My son, do not forget my teaching,
But let your heart keep my commandments;
2 For length of days and years of life
And peace they will add to you.
3 Do not let kindness and truth leave you;
Bind them around your neck,
Write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 So you will find favor and good repute
In the sight of God and man.
5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart
And do not lean on your own understanding.
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He will make your paths straight.
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes;
Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.
8 It will be healing to your body
And refreshment to your bones.
9 Honor the LORD from your wealth
And from the first of all your produce;
10 So your barns will be filled with plenty
And your vats will overflow with new wine.
11 My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD
Or loathe His reproof,
12 For whom the LORD loves He reproves,
Even as a father *corrects* the son in whom he delights. [[Heb 12:5-11](#)]

The Many Benefits of Wisdom

- 13 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom
And the man who gains understanding.
14 For her profit is better than the profit of silver
And her gain better than fine gold.
15 She is more precious than jewels;
And nothing you desire compares with her.
16 Long life is in her right hand;
In her left hand are riches and honor.
17 Her ways are pleasant ways

- And all her paths are peace.
18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her,
And happy are all who hold her fast.
19 The LORD by wisdom founded the earth,
By understanding He established the heavens.
20 By His knowledge the deeps were broken up
And the skies drip with dew.
21 My son, let them not vanish from your sight;
Keep sound wisdom and discretion,
22 So they will be life to your soul
And adornment to your neck.
23 Then you will walk in your way securely
And your foot will not stumble.
24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.
25 Do not be afraid of sudden fear
Nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes;
26 For the LORD will be your confidence
And will keep your foot from being caught.

Heed the Commands of Wisdom

- 27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
When it is in your power to do *it*.
28 Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come back,
And tomorrow I will give *it*,”
When you have it with you.
29 Do not devise harm against your neighbor,
While he lives securely beside you.
30 Do not contend with a man without cause,
If he has done you no harm.
31 Do not envy a man of violence
And do not choose any of his ways.
32 For the devious are an abomination to the LORD;
But He is intimate with the upright.

Humility and Submission—the Prerequisites of Wisdom

- 33 The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked,
But He blesses the dwelling of the righteous.
34 Though He scoffs at the scoffers,
Yet He gives grace to the afflicted. [[Jam 4:6](#); [1 Pet 5:5](#)]
35 The wise will inherit honor,
But fools display dishonor.

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Proverbs Collection I: A Father's Instruction – Part 2 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 4–6

A Heritage of Wisdom

- 4:1 Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father,
And give attention that you may gain understanding,
2 For I give you sound teaching;
Do not abandon my instruction.
3 When I was a son to my father,
Tender and the only son in the sight of my mother,
4 Then he taught me and said to me,
“Let your heart hold fast my words;
Keep my commandments and live;
5 Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding!
Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth.
6 “Do not forsake her, and she will guard you;
Love her, and she will watch over you.
7 “The beginning of wisdom *is*: Acquire wisdom;
And with all your acquiring, get understanding.
8 “Prize her, and she will exalt you;
She will honor you if you embrace her.
9 “She will place on your head a garland of grace;
She will present you with a crown of beauty.”

Avoid the Path of the Wicked

- 10 Hear, my son, and accept my sayings
And the years of your life will be many.
11 I have directed you in the way of wisdom;
I have led you in upright paths.
12 When you walk, your steps will not be impeded;
And if you run, you will not stumble.
13 Take hold of instruction; do not let go.
Guard her, for she is your life.
14 Do not enter the path of the wicked
And do not proceed in the way of evil men.
15 Avoid it, do not pass by it;
Turn away from it and pass on.
16 For they cannot sleep unless they do evil;
And they are robbed of sleep unless they make *someone* stumble.
17 For they eat the bread of wickedness
And drink the wine of violence.
18 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn,
That shines brighter and brighter until the full day.
19 The way of the wicked is like darkness;
They do not know over what they stumble.

Never Turn from the Right Path

- 20 My son, give attention to my words;
Incline your ear to my sayings.
21 Do not let them depart from your sight;
Keep them in the midst of your heart.
22 For they are life to those who find them
And health to all their body.
23 Watch over your heart with all diligence,
For from it *flow* the springs of life.
24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth
And put devious speech far from you.
25 Let your eyes look directly ahead
And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.

- 26 Watch the path of your feet
And all your ways will be established.
- 27 Do not turn to the right nor to the left;
Turn your foot from evil.

Do Not Lust after the Adulterous Woman

- 5:1 My son, give attention to my wisdom,
Incline your ear to my understanding;
- 2 That you may observe discretion
And your lips may reserve knowledge.
- 3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey
And smoother than oil is her speech;
- 4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.
- 5 Her feet go down to death,
Her steps take hold of Sheol.
- 6 She does not ponder the path of life;
Her ways are unstable, she does not know *it*.
- 7 Now then, *my sons*, listen to me
And do not depart from the words of my mouth.
- 8 Keep your way far from her
And do not go near the door of her house,
- 9 Or you will give your vigor to others
And your years to the cruel one;
- 10 And strangers will be filled with your strength
And your hard-earned goods *will go* to the house of an alien;
- 11 And you groan at your final end,
When your flesh and your body are consumed;
- 12 And you say, "How I have hated instruction!
And my heart spurned reproof!
- 13 "I have not listened to the voice of my teachers,
Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!
- 14 "I was almost in utter ruin
In the midst of the assembly and congregation."

Be Captivated with Your Own Wife

- 15 Drink water from your own cistern
And fresh water from your own well.
- 16 Should your springs be dispersed abroad,
Streams of water in the streets?
- 17 Let them be yours alone
And not for strangers with you.
- 18 Let your fountain be blessed,
And rejoice in the wife of your youth.
- 19 As a loving hind and a graceful doe,
Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;
Be exhilarated always with her love.
- 20 For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress
And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?
- 21 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD,
And He watches all his paths.
- 22 His own iniquities will capture the wicked,
And he will be held with the cords of his sin.
- 23 He will die for lack of instruction,
And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.

Do Not Guarantee Another's Debts

- 6:1 My son, if you have become surety for your neighbor,
Have given a pledge for a stranger,
2 *If* you have been snared with the words of your mouth,
Have been caught with the words of your mouth,
3 Do this then, my son, and deliver yourself;
Since you have come into the hand of your neighbor,
Go, humble yourself, and importune your neighbor.
4 Give no sleep to your eyes,
Nor slumber to your eyelids;
5 Deliver yourself like a gazelle from *the hunter's* hand
And like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

Do Not Give in to Laziness

- 6 Go to the ant, O sluggard,
Observe her ways and be wise,
7 Which, having no chief,
Officer or ruler,
8 Prepares her food in the summer
And gathers her provision in the harvest.
9 How long will you lie down, O sluggard?
When will you arise from your sleep?
10 "A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to rest"—
11 Your poverty will come in like a vagabond
And your need like an armed man.

Warning Against Deviousness

- 12 A worthless person, a wicked man,
Is the one who walks with a perverse mouth,
13 Who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet,
Who points with his fingers;
14 Who *with* perversity in his heart continually devises evil,
Who spreads strife.
15 Therefore his calamity will come suddenly;
Instantly he will be broken and there will be no healing.

Conduct God Hates

- 16 There are six things which the LORD hates,
Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:
17 Haughty eyes, a lying tongue,
And hands that shed innocent blood,
18 A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that run rapidly to evil,
19 A false witness *who* utters lies,
And one who spreads strife among brothers.

Guard Your Heart Against the Adulterous Woman

- 20 My son, observe the commandment of your father
And do not forsake the teaching of your mother;
21 Bind them continually on your heart;
Tie them around your neck.
22 When you walk about, they will guide you;
When you sleep, they will watch over you;
And when you awake, they will talk to you.
23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light;
And reproofs for discipline are the way of life
24 To keep you from the evil woman,

- From the smooth tongue of the adulteress.
- 25 Do not desire her beauty in your heart,
Nor let her capture you with her eyelids.
- 26 For on account of a harlot *one is reduced* to a loaf of bread,
And an adulteress hunts for the precious life.
- 27 Can a man take fire in his bosom
And his clothes not be burned?
- 28 Or can a man walk on hot coals
And his feet not be scorched?
- 29 So is the one who goes in to his neighbor's wife;
Whoever touches her will not go unpunished.
- 30 Men do not despise a thief if he steals
To satisfy himself when he is hungry;
- 31 But when he is found, he must repay sevenfold;
He must give all the substance of his house.
- 32 The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense;
He who would destroy himself does it.
- 33 Wounds and disgrace he will find,
And his reproach will not be blotted out.
- 34 For jealousy enrages a man,
And he will not spare in the day of vengeance.
- 35 He will not accept any ransom,
Nor will he be satisfied though you give many gifts.

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Proverbs Collection I: A Father's Instruction – Part 3 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 7–9

Wisdom Will Guard You Against the Seduction of the Adulterous Woman

- 7:1 My son, keep my words
And treasure my commandments within you.
- 2 Keep my commandments and live,
And my teaching as the apple of your eye.
- 3 Bind them on your fingers;
Write them on the tablet of your heart.
- 4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"
And call understanding *your* intimate friend;
- 5 That they may keep you from an adulteress,
From the foreigner who flatters with her words.
- 6 For at the window of my house
I looked out through my lattice,
- 7 And I saw among the naive,
And discerned among the youths
A young man lacking sense,
- 8 Passing through the street near her corner;
And he takes the way to her house,
- 9 In the twilight, in the evening,
In the middle of the night and *in* the darkness.
- 10 And behold, a woman *comes* to meet him,
Dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart.
- 11 She is boisterous and rebellious,
Her feet do not remain at home;
- 12 *She is* now in the streets, now in the squares,
And lurks by every corner.
- 13 So she seizes him and kisses him
And with a brazen face she says to him:
- 14 "I was due to offer peace offerings;
Today I have paid my vows.
- 15 "Therefore I have come out to meet you,
To seek your presence earnestly, and I have found you.
- 16 "I have spread my couch with coverings,
With colored linens of Egypt.
- 17 "I have sprinkled my bed
With myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.
- 18 "Come, let us drink our fill of love until morning;
Let us delight ourselves with caresses.
- 19 "For my husband is not at home,
He has gone on a long journey;
- 20 He has taken a bag of money with him,
At the full moon he will come home."
- 21 With her many persuasions she entices him;
With her flattering lips she seduces him.
- 22 Suddenly he follows her
As an ox goes to the slaughter,
Or as *one in* fetters to the discipline of a fool,
- 23 Until an arrow pierces through his liver;
As a bird hastens to the snare,
So he does not know that it *will cost him* his life.
- 24 Now therefore, *my* sons, listen to me,
And pay attention to the words of my mouth.
- 25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways,
Do not stray into her paths.
- 26 For many are the victims she has cast down,
And numerous are all her slain.

27 Her house is the way to Sheol,
Descending to the chambers of death.

Lady Wisdom—Who She Is and What She Offers

8:1 Does not wisdom call,
And understanding lift up her voice?
2 On top of the heights beside the way,
Where the paths meet, she takes her stand;
3 Beside the gates, at the opening to the city,
At the entrance of the doors, she cries out:
4 “To you, O men, I call,
And my voice is to the sons of men.
5 “O naive ones, understand prudence;
And, O fools, understand wisdom.
6 “Listen, for I will speak noble things;
And the opening of my lips *will reveal* right things.
7 “For my mouth will utter truth;
And wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
8 “All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness;
There is nothing crooked or perverted in them.
9 “They are all straightforward to him who understands,
And right to those who find knowledge.
10 “Take my instruction and not silver,
And knowledge rather than choicest gold.
11 “For wisdom is better than jewels;
And all desirable things cannot compare with her.
12 “I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
And I find knowledge *and* discretion.
13 “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil;
Pride and arrogance and the evil way
And the perverted mouth, I hate.
14 “Counsel is mine and sound wisdom;
I am understanding, power is mine.
15 “By me kings reign,
And rulers decree justice.
16 “By me princes rule, and nobles,
All who judge rightly.
17 “I love those who love me;
And those who diligently seek me will find me.
18 “Riches and honor are with me,
Enduring wealth and righteousness.
19 “My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold,
And my yield *better* than choicest silver.
20 “I walk in the way of righteousness,
In the midst of the paths of justice,
21 To endow those who love me with wealth,
That I may fill their treasuries.
22 “The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way,
Before His works of old.
23 “From everlasting I was established,
From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth.
24 “When there were no depths I was brought forth,
When there were no springs abounding with water.
25 “Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills I was brought forth;
26 While He had not yet made the earth and the fields,
Nor the first dust of the world.
27 “When He established the heavens, I was there,

- When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep,
28 When He made firm the skies above,
When the springs of the deep became fixed,
29 When He set for the sea its boundary
So that the water would not transgress His command,
When He marked out the foundations of the earth;
30 Then I was beside Him, *as* a master workman;
And I was daily *His* delight,
Rejoicing always before Him,
31 Rejoicing in the world, His earth,
And *having* my delight in the sons of men.
32 “Now therefore, *O* sons, listen to me,
For blessed are they who keep my ways.
33 “Heed instruction and be wise,
And do not neglect *it*.
34 “Blessed is the man who listens to me,
Watching daily at my gates,
Waiting at my doorposts.
35 “For he who finds me finds life
And obtains favor from the LORD.
36 “But he who sins against me injures himself;
All those who hate me love death.”

Wisdom and Folly—Rivals for Your Heart

- 9:1 Wisdom has built her house,
She has hewn out her seven pillars;
2 She has prepared her food, she has mixed her wine;
She has also set her table;
3 She has sent out her maidens, she calls
From the tops of the heights of the city:
4 “Whoever is naive, let him turn in here!”
To him who lacks understanding she says,
5 “Come, eat of my food
And drink of the wine I have mixed.
6 “Forsake *your* folly and live,
And proceed in the way of understanding.”
7 He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself,
And he who reproves a wicked man *gets* insults for himself.
8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you,
Reprove a wise man and he will love you.
9 Give *instruction* to a wise man and he will be still wiser,
Teach a righteous man and he will increase *his* learning.
10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
11 For by me your days will be multiplied,
And years of life will be added to you.
12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself,
And if you scoff, you alone will bear it.
13 The woman of folly is boisterous,
She is naive and knows nothing.
14 She sits at the doorway of her house,
On a seat by the high places of the city,
15 Calling to those who pass by,
Who are making their paths straight:
16 “Whoever is naive, let him turn in here,”
And to him who lacks understanding she says,
17 “Stolen water is sweet;
And bread *eaten* in secret is pleasant.”

18 But he does not know that the dead are there,
That her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

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Proverbs Collection II: Solomon's Proverbs – Part 1 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 10–11

Wisdom and Wealth

10:1 The proverbs of Solomon.

- A wise son makes a father glad,
But a foolish son is a grief to his mother.
- 2 Ill-gotten gains do not profit,
But righteousness delivers from death.
- 3 The LORD will not allow the righteous to hunger,
But He will reject the craving of the wicked.
- 4 Poor is he who works with a negligent hand,
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
- 5 He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely,
But he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.

The Effects of Speech on Self and Others

- 6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous,
But the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
- 7 The memory of the righteous is blessed,
But the name of the wicked will rot.
- 8 The wise of heart will receive commands,
But a babbling fool will be ruined.
- 9 He who walks in integrity walks securely,
But he who perverts his ways will be found out.
- 10 He who winks the eye causes trouble,
And a babbling fool will be ruined.
- 11 The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,
But the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
- 12 Hatred stirs up strife,
But love covers all transgressions. [[1 Pet 4:8](#); [Jam 5:20b](#)]
- 13 On the lips of the discerning, wisdom is found,
But a rod is for the back of him who lacks understanding.
- 14 Wise men store up knowledge,
But with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand.

Wealth and Security

- 15 The rich man's wealth is his fortress,
The ruin of the poor is their poverty.
- 16 The wages of the righteous is life,
The income of the wicked, punishment.

Speech and Expectations of the Righteous and the Wicked Contrasted

- 17 He is *on* the path of life who heeds instruction,
But he who ignores reproof goes astray.
- 18 He who conceals hatred *has* lying lips,
And he who spreads slander is a fool.
- 19 When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable,
But he who restrains his lips is wise.
- 20 The tongue of the righteous is *as* choice silver,
The heart of the wicked is *worth* little.
- 21 The lips of the righteous feed many,
But fools die for lack of understanding.
- 22 It is the blessing of the LORD that makes rich,
And He adds no sorrow to it.
- 23 Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool,
And *so is* wisdom to a man of understanding.
- 24 What the wicked fears will come upon him,

- But the desire of the righteous will be granted.
25 When the whirlwind passes, the wicked is no more,
But the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation.
26 Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,
So is the lazy one to those who send him.
27 The fear of the LORD prolongs life,
But the years of the wicked will be shortened.
28 The hope of the righteous is gladness,
But the expectation of the wicked perishes.
29 The way of the LORD is a stronghold to the upright,
But ruin to the workers of iniquity.
30 The righteous will never be shaken,
But the wicked will not dwell in the land.
31 The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom,
But the perverted tongue will be cut out.
32 The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable,
But the mouth of the wicked what is perverted.

Security Through Honesty and Righteousness

- 11:1 A false balance is an abomination to the LORD,
But a just weight is His delight.
2 When pride comes, then comes dishonor,
But with the humble is wisdom.
3 The integrity of the upright will guide them,
But the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them.
4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,
But righteousness delivers from death.
5 The righteousness of the blameless will smooth his way,
But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.
6 The righteousness of the upright will deliver them,
But the treacherous will be caught by *their own* greed.
7 When a wicked man dies, *his* expectation will perish,
And the hope of strong men perishes.
8 The righteous is delivered from trouble,
But the wicked takes his place.

The Benefits of the Righteous to Society

- 9 With *his* mouth the godless man destroys his neighbor,
But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices,
And when the wicked perish, there is joyful shouting.
11 By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted,
But by the mouth of the wicked it is torn down.
12 He who despises his neighbor lacks sense,
But a man of understanding keeps silent.
13 He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets,
But he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.
14 Where there is no guidance the people fall,
But in abundance of counselors there is victory.
15 He who is guarantor for a stranger will surely suffer for it,
But he who hates being a guarantor is secure.

Benevolence and Community

- 16 A gracious woman attains honor,
And ruthless men attain riches.
17 The merciful man does himself good,
But the cruel man does himself harm.
18 The wicked earns deceptive wages,

- But he who sows righteousness *gets* a true reward.
19 He who is steadfast in righteousness *will attain* to life,
And he who pursues evil *will bring about* his own death.
20 The perverse in heart are an abomination to the LORD,
But the blameless in *their* walk are His delight.
21 Assuredly, the evil man will not go unpunished,
But the descendants of the righteous will be delivered.
22 As a ring of gold in a swine's snout
So is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion.

Desires and Paradoxical Fulfillment

- 23 The desire of the righteous is only good,
But the expectation of the wicked is wrath.
24 There is one who scatters, and *yet* increases all the more,
And there is one who withholds what is justly due, *and yet it results* only in want.
25 The generous man will be prosperous,
And he who waters will himself be watered.
26 He who withholds grain, the people will curse him,
But blessing will be on the head of him who sells *it*.
27 He who diligently seeks good seeks favor,
But he who seeks evil, evil will come to him.
28 He who trusts in his riches will fall,
But the righteous will flourish like the *green* leaf.
29 He who troubles his own house will inherit wind,
And the foolish will be servant to the wisehearted.
30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
And he who is wise wins souls.
31 If the righteous will be rewarded in the earth, [or "If the righteous scarcely be saved" – LXX]
How much more the wicked and the sinner! [[1 Pet 4:18](#)]

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Proverbs Collection II: Solomon's Proverbs – Part 2 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 12–14

Speech and Deeds—Part 1

- 12:1 Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,
But he who hates reproof is stupid.
- 2 A good man will obtain favor from the LORD,
But He will condemn a man who devises evil.
- 3 A man will not be established by wickedness,
But the root of the righteous will not be moved.
- 4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband,
But she who shames *him* is like rottenness in his bones.
- 5 The thoughts of the righteous are just,
But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.
- 6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood,
But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.
- 7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more,
But the house of the righteous will stand.
- 8 A man will be praised according to his insight,
But one of perverse mind will be despised.
- 9 Better is he who is lightly esteemed and has a servant
Than he who honors himself and lacks bread.
- 10 A righteous man has regard for the life of his animal,
But *even* the compassion of the wicked is cruel.
- 11 He who tills his land will have plenty of bread,
But he who pursues worthless *things* lacks sense.
- 12 The wicked man desires the booty of evil men,
But the root of the righteous yields *fruit*.
- 13 An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips,
But the righteous will escape from trouble.
- 14 A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his words,
And the deeds of a man's hands will return to him.

Speech and Deeds—Part 2

- 15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,
But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.
- 16 A fool's anger is known at once,
But a prudent man conceals dishonor.
- 17 He who speaks truth tells what is right,
But a false witness, deceit.
- 18 There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword,
But the tongue of the wise brings healing.
- 19 Truthful lips will be established forever,
But a lying tongue is only for a moment.
- 20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil,
But counselors of peace have joy.
- 21 No harm befalls the righteous,
But the wicked are filled with trouble.
- 22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD,
But those who deal faithfully are His delight.
- 23 A prudent man conceals knowledge,
But the heart of fools proclaims folly.
- 24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
But the slack *hand* will be put to forced labor.
- 25 Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down,
But a good word makes it glad.
- 26 The righteous is a guide to his neighbor,
But the way of the wicked leads them astray.
- 27 A lazy man does not roast his prey,

But the precious possession of a man *is* diligence.

- 28 In the way of righteousness is life,
And in *its* pathway there is no death.

Speech and Ethics

- 13:1 A wise son *accepts his* father's discipline,
But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.
2 From the fruit of a man's mouth he enjoys good,
But the desire of the treacherous is violence.
3 The one who guards his mouth preserves his life;
The one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.
4 The soul of the sluggard craves and *gets* nothing,
But the soul of the diligent is made fat.
5 A righteous man hates falsehood,
But a wicked man acts disgustingly and shamefully.
6 Righteousness guards the one whose way is blameless,
But wickedness subverts the sinner.

Wealth and Ethics

- 7 There is one who pretends to be rich, but has nothing;
Another pretends to be poor, but has great wealth.
8 The ransom of a man's life is his wealth,
But the poor hears no rebuke.
9 The light of the righteous rejoices,
But the lamp of the wicked goes out.
10 Through insolence comes nothing but strife,
But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.
11 Wealth *obtained* by fraud dwindles,
But the one who gathers by labor increases *it*.

Fulfillment through Wisdom versus Frustration through Folly

- 12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
But desire fulfilled is a tree of life.
13 The one who despises the word will be in debt to it,
But the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded.
14 The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life,
To turn aside from the snares of death.
15 Good understanding produces favor,
But the way of the treacherous is hard.
16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge,
But a fool displays folly.
17 A wicked messenger falls into adversity,
But a faithful envoy *brings* healing.
18 Poverty and shame *will come* to him who neglects discipline,
But he who regards reproof will be honored.
19 Desire realized is sweet to the soul,
But it is an abomination to fools to turn away from evil.

The Blessed Future of a Wise Son versus the Calamity that Awaits the Wicked

- 20 He who walks with wise men will be wise,
But the companion of fools will suffer harm.
21 Adversity pursues sinners,
But the righteous will be rewarded with prosperity.
22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children,
And the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.
23 Abundant food *is in* the fallow ground of the poor,
But it is swept away by injustice.
24 He who withholds his rod hates his son,

- But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.
25 The righteous has enough to satisfy his appetite,
But the stomach of the wicked is in need.

Walking in Wisdom

- 14:1 The wise woman builds her house,
But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.
2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD,
But he who is devious in his ways despises Him.
3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for *his* back,
But the lips of the wise will protect them.
4 Where no oxen are, the manger is clean,
But much revenue *comes* by the strength of the ox.
5 A trustworthy witness will not lie,
But a false witness utters lies.
6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and *finds* none,
But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.
7 Leave the presence of a fool,
Or you will not discern words of knowledge.

Not Walking by Sight

- 8 The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way,
But the foolishness of fools is deceit.
9 Fools mock at sin,
But among the upright there is good will.
10 The heart knows its own bitterness,
And a stranger does not share its joy.
11 The house of the wicked will be destroyed,
But the tent of the upright will flourish.
12 There is a way *which seems* right to a man,
But its end is the way of death.
13 Even in laughter the heart may be in pain,
And the end of joy may be grief.
14 The backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways,
But a good man will *be satisfied* with his.

Contrasting Social Characterizations and Consequences

- 15 The naive believes everything,
But the sensible man considers his steps.
16 A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil,
But a fool is arrogant and careless.
17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly,
And a man of evil devices is hated.
18 The naive inherit foolishness,
But the sensible are crowned with knowledge.
19 The evil will bow down before the good,
And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.
20 The poor is hated even by his neighbor,
But those who love the rich are many.
21 He who despises his neighbor sins,
But happy is he who is gracious to the poor.
22 Will they not go astray who devise evil?
But kindness and truth *will be to* those who devise good.
23 In all labor there is profit,
But mere talk *leads* only to poverty.
24 The crown of the wise is their riches,
But the folly of fools is foolishness.
25 A truthful witness saves lives,

- But he who utters lies is treacherous.
- 26 In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence,
And his children will have refuge.
- 27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life,
That one may avoid the snares of death.
- 28 In a multitude of people is a king's glory,
But in the dearth of people is a prince's ruin.
- 29 He who is slow to anger has great understanding,
But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly.
- 30 A tranquil heart is life to the body,
But passion is rotteness to the bones.
- 31 He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker,
But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.
- 32 The wicked is thrust down by his wrongdoing,
But the righteous has a refuge when he dies.
- 33 Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding,
But in the hearts of fools it is made known.
- 34 Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin is a disgrace to *any* people.
- 35 The king's favor is toward a servant who acts wisely,
But his anger is toward him who acts shamefully.

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Proverbs Collection II: Solomon's Proverbs – Part 3 (c. 969t – 932t BC)**Proverbs 15–17****Upholding Righteousness with a Gentle Tongue**

- 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath,
But a harsh word stirs up anger.
- 2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable,
But the mouth of fools spouts folly.
- 3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place,
Watching the evil and the good.
- 4 A soothing tongue is a tree of life,
But perversion in it crushes the spirit.

The Importance of Instruction

- 5 A fool rejects his father's discipline,
But he who regards reproof is sensible.
- 6 Great wealth is *in* the house of the righteous,
But trouble is in the income of the wicked.
- 7 The lips of the wise spread knowledge,
But the hearts of fools are not so.
- 8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD,
But the prayer of the upright is His delight.
- 9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD,
But He loves one who pursues righteousness.
- 10 Grievous punishment is for him who forsakes the way;
He who hates reproof will die.
- 11 Sheol and Abaddon *lie open* before the LORD,
How much more the hearts of men!
- 12 A scoffer does not love one who reproves him,
He will not go to the wise.
- 13 A joyful heart makes a cheerful face,
But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.
- 14 The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge,
But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.
- 15 All the days of the afflicted are bad,
But a cheerful heart *has* a continual feast.
- 16 Better is a little with the fear of the LORD
Than great treasure and turmoil with it.
- 17 Better is a dish of vegetables where love is
Than a fattened ox *served* with hatred.
- 18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife,
But the slow to anger calms a dispute.
- 19 The way of the lazy is as a hedge of thorns,
But the path of the upright is a highway.

Consequences of Righteousness and Wickedness

- 20 A wise son makes a father glad,
But a foolish man despises his mother.
- 21 Folly is joy to him who lacks sense,
But a man of understanding walks straight.
- 22 Without consultation, plans are frustrated,
But with many counselors they succeed.
- 23 A man has joy in an apt answer,
And how delightful is a timely word!
- 24 The path of life *leads* upward for the wise
That he may keep away from Sheol below.
- 25 The LORD will tear down the house of the proud,
But He will establish the boundary of the widow.
- 26 Evil plans are an abomination to the LORD,

- But pleasant words are pure.
27 He who profits illicitly troubles his own house,
But he who hates bribes will live.
28 The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer,
But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.
29 The LORD is far from the wicked,
But He hears the prayer of the righteous.
30 Bright eyes gladden the heart;
Good news puts fat on the bones.

The Importance of Being Teachable

- 31 He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof
Will dwell among the wise.
32 He who neglects discipline despises himself,
But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.
33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom,
And before honor *comes* humility.

The Sovereignty of the LORD

- 16:1 The plans of the heart belong to man,
But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.
2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight,
But the LORD weighs the motives.
3 Commit your works to the LORD
And your plans will be established.
4 The LORD has made everything for its own purpose,
Even the wicked for the day of evil.
5 Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD;
Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.
6 By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for,
And by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.
7 When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD,
He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.
8 Better is a little with righteousness
Than great income with injustice.
9 The mind of man plans his way,
But the LORD directs his steps.

The King

- 10 A divine decision is in the lips of the king;
His mouth should not err in judgment.
11 A just balance and scales belong to the LORD;
All the weights of the bag are His concern.
12 It is an abomination for kings to commit wicked acts,
For a throne is established on righteousness.
13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings,
And he who speaks right is loved.
14 The fury of a king is *like* messengers of death,
But a wise man will appease it.
15 In the light of a king's face is life,
And his favor is like a cloud with the spring rain.

Good and Bad Speech

- 16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold!
And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver.
17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil;
He who watches his way preserves his life.
18 Pride *goes* before destruction,

- And a haughty spirit before stumbling.
- 19 It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly
Than to divide the spoil with the proud.
- 20 He who gives attention to the word will find good,
And blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.
- 21 The wise in heart will be called understanding,
And sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.
- 22 Understanding is a fountain of life to one who has it,
But the discipline of fools is folly.
- 23 The heart of the wise instructs his mouth
And adds persuasiveness to his lips.
- 24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb,
Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.
- 25 There is a way *which seems* right to a man,
But its end is the way of death.
- 26 A worker's appetite works for him,
For his hunger urges him *on*.
- 27 A worthless man digs up evil,
While his words are like scorching fire.
- 28 A perverse man spreads strife,
And a slanderer separates intimate friends.
- 29 A man of violence entices his neighbor
And leads him in a way that is not good.
- 30 He who winks his eyes *does so* to devise perverse things;
He who compresses his lips brings evil to pass.

The Splendid Crown of Old Age through Righteousness

- 31 A gray head is a crown of glory;
It is found in the way of righteousness.
- 32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,
And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.
- 33 The lot is cast into the lap,
But its every decision is from the LORD.
- 17:1 Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it
Than a house full of feasting with strife.
- 2 A servant who acts wisely will rule over a son who acts shamefully,
And will share in the inheritance among brothers.
- 3 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,
But the LORD tests hearts.
- 4 An evildoer listens to wicked lips;
A liar pays attention to a destructive tongue.
- 5 He who mocks the poor taunts his Maker;
He who rejoices at calamity will not go unpunished.
- 6 Grandchildren are the crown of old men,
And the glory of sons is their fathers.

A Collection of Proverbs on Fools

- 7 Excellent speech is not fitting for a fool,
Much less are lying lips to a prince.
- 8 A bribe is a charm in the sight of its owner;
Wherever he turns, he prospers.
- 9 He who conceals a transgression seeks love,
But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.
- 10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding
Than a hundred blows into a fool.
- 11 A rebellious man seeks only evil,
So a cruel messenger will be sent against him.
- 12 Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs,

- Rather than a fool in his folly.
- 13 He who returns evil for good,
Evil will not depart from his house.
- 14 The beginning of strife is *like* letting out water,
So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.
- 15 He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous,
Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.
- 16 Why is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom,
When he has no sense?
- 17 A friend loves at all times,
And a brother is born for adversity.
- 18 A man lacking in sense pledges
And becomes guarantor in the presence of his neighbor.
- 19 He who loves transgression loves strife;
He who raises his door seeks destruction.
- 20 He who has a crooked mind finds no good,
And he who is perverted in his language falls into evil.
- 21 He who sires a fool *does so* to his sorrow,
And the father of a fool has no joy.
- 22 A joyful heart is good medicine,
But a broken spirit dries up the bones.
- 23 A wicked man receives a bribe from the bosom
To pervert the ways of justice.
- 24 Wisdom is in the presence of the one who has understanding,
But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.
- 25 A foolish son is a grief to his father
And bitterness to her who bore him.
- 26 It is also not good to fine the righteous,
Nor to strike the noble for *their* uprightness.
- 27 He who restrains his words has knowledge,
And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.
- 28 Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise;
When he closes his lips, he is *considered* prudent.

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Proverbs Collection II: Solomon's Proverbs – Part 4 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 18–20

The Speech of Fools versus the Speech of the Wise

- 18:1 He who separates himself seeks *his own* desire,
He quarrels against all sound wisdom.
- 2 A fool does not delight in understanding,
But only in revealing his own mind.
- 3 When a wicked man comes, contempt also comes,
And with dishonor *comes* scorn.
- 4 The words of a man's mouth are deep waters;
The fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.
- 5 To show partiality to the wicked is not good,
Nor to thrust aside the righteous in judgment.
- 6 A fool's lips bring strife,
And his mouth calls for blows.
- 7 A fool's mouth is his ruin,
And his lips are the snare of his soul.
- 8 The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels,
And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.
- 9 He also who is slack in his work
Is brother to him who destroys.
- 10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower;
The righteous runs into it and is safe.
- 11 A rich man's wealth is his strong city,
And like a high wall in his own imagination.
- 12 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty,
But humility *goes* before honor.
- 13 He who gives an answer before he hears,
It is folly and shame to him.
- 14 The spirit of a man can endure his sickness,
But *as for* a broken spirit who can bear it?
- 15 The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge,
And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.
- 16 A man's gift makes room for him
And brings him before great men.
- 17 The first to plead his case *seems* right,
Until another comes and examines him.
- 18 The *cast* lot puts an end to strife
And decides between the mighty ones.
- 19 A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city,
And contentions are like the bars of a citadel.
- 20 With the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach will be satisfied;
He will be satisfied *with* the product of his lips.
- 21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Wealth and Wisdom in the Court and in the Home

- 22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing
And obtains favor from the LORD.
- 23 The poor man utters supplications,
But the rich man answers roughly.
- 24 A man of *too many* friends *comes* to ruin,
But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
- 19:1 Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity
Than he who is perverse in speech and is a fool.
- 2 Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge,
And he who hurries his footsteps errs.
- 3 The foolishness of man ruins his way,

- And his heart rages against the LORD.
- 4 Wealth adds many friends,
But a poor man is separated from his friend.
- 5 A false witness will not go unpunished,
And he who tells lies will not escape.
- 6 Many will seek the favor of a generous man,
And every man is a friend to him who gives gifts.
- 7 All the brothers of a poor man hate him;
How much more do his friends abandon him!
He pursues *them with words, but* they are gone.
- 8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul;
He who keeps understanding will find good.
- 9 A false witness will not go unpunished,
And he who tells lies will perish.
- 10 Luxury is not fitting for a fool;
Much less for a slave to rule over princes.
- 11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger,
And it is his glory to overlook a transgression.
- 12 The king's wrath is like the roaring of a lion,
But his favor is like dew on the grass.
- 13 A foolish son is destruction to his father,
And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.
- 14 House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers,
But a prudent wife is from the LORD.
- 15 Laziness casts into a deep sleep,
And an idle man will suffer hunger.
- 16 He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul,
But he who is careless of conduct will die.
- 17 One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD,
And He will repay him for his good deed.
- 18 Discipline your son while there is hope,
And do not desire his death.
- 19 *A man of great anger* will bear the penalty,
For if you rescue *him*, you will only have to do it again.
- 20 Listen to counsel and accept discipline,
That you may be wise the rest of your days.
- 21 Many plans are in a man's heart,
But the counsel of the LORD will stand.
- 22 What is desirable in a man is his kindness,
And *it is* better to be a poor man than a liar.

The Pedagogue and Punishment of Fools

- 23 The fear of the LORD *leads* to life,
So that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil.
- 24 The sluggard buries his hand in the dish,
But will not even bring it back to his mouth.
- 25 Strike a scoffer and the naive may become shrewd,
But reprove one who has understanding and he will gain knowledge.
- 26 He who assaults *his* father *and* drives *his* mother away
Is a shameful and disgraceful son.
- 27 Cease listening, my son, to discipline,
And you will stray from the words of knowledge.
- 28 A rascally witness makes a mockery of justice,
And the mouth of the wicked spreads iniquity.
- 29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers,
And blows for the back of fools.
- 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler,
And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.

- 2 The terror of a king is like the growling of a lion;
He who provokes him to anger forfeits his own life.
- 3 Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man,
But any fool will quarrel.
- 4 The sluggard does not plow after the autumn,
So he begs during the harvest and has nothing.
- 5 A plan in the heart of a man is *like* deep water,
But a man of understanding draws it out.
- 6 Many a man proclaims his own loyalty,
But who can find a trustworthy man?
- 7 A righteous man who walks in his integrity—
How blessed are his sons after him.
- 8 A king who sits on the throne of justice
Disperses all evil with his eyes.
- 9 Who can say, “I have cleansed my heart,
I am pure from my sin”?
- 10 Differing weights and differing measures,
Both of them are abominable to the LORD.
- 11 It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself
If his conduct is pure and right.

Speech and Commerce

- 12 The hearing ear and the seeing eye,
The LORD has made both of them.
- 13 Do not love sleep, or you will become poor;
Open your eyes, *and* you will be satisfied with food.
- 14 “Bad, bad,” says the buyer,
But when he goes his way, then he boasts.
- 15 There is gold, and an abundance of jewels;
But the lips of knowledge are a more precious thing.
- 16 Take his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger;
And for foreigners, hold him in pledge.
- 17 Bread obtained by falsehood is sweet to a man,
But afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.
- 18 Prepare plans by consultation,
And make war by wise guidance.
- 19 He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets,
Therefore do not associate with a gossip.

Honoring Parents

- 20 He who curses his father or his mother,
His lamp will go out in time of darkness.
- 21 An inheritance gained hurriedly at the beginning
Will not be blessed in the end.

Trust God to Avenge Wrong

- 22 Do not say, “I will repay evil”;
Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.
- 23 Differing weights are an abomination to the LORD,
And a false scale is not good.
- 24 Man’s steps are *ordained* by the LORD,
How then can man understand his way?
- 25 It is a trap for a man to say rashly, “It is holy!”
And after the vows to make inquiry.

A Wise King

- 26 A wise king winnows the wicked,
And drives the *threshing* wheel over them.

- 27 The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD,
Searching all the innermost parts of his being.
- 28 Loyalty and truth preserve the king,
And he upholds his throne by righteousness.
- 29 The glory of young men is their strength,
And the honor of old men is their gray hair.
- 30 Stripes that wound scour away evil,
And strokes *reach* the innermost parts.

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Proverbs Collection II: Solomon's Proverbs – Part 5 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 21:1–22:16

Doing Righteousness and Justice

- 21:1 The king's heart is *like* channels of water in the hand of the LORD;
He turns it wherever He wishes.
- 2 Every man's way is right in his own eyes,
But the LORD weighs the hearts.
- 3 To do righteousness and justice
Is desired by the LORD more than sacrifice.
- 4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart,
The lamp of the wicked, is sin.
- 5 The plans of the diligent *lead* surely to advantage,
But everyone who is hasty *comes* surely to poverty.
- 6 The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue
Is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death.
- 7 The violence of the wicked will drag them away,
Because they refuse to act with justice.
- 8 The way of a guilty man is crooked,
But as for the pure, his conduct is upright.
- 9 It is better to live in a corner of a roof
Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.
- 10 The soul of the wicked desires evil;
His neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.
- 11 When the scoffer is punished, the naive becomes wise;
But when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.
- 12 The righteous one considers the house of the wicked,
Turning the wicked to ruin.
- 13 He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor
Will also cry himself and not be answered.
- 14 A gift in secret subdues anger,
And a bribe in the bosom, strong wrath.
- 15 The exercise of justice is joy for the righteous,
But is terror to the workers of iniquity.
- 16 A man who wanders from the way of understanding
Will rest in the assembly of the dead.
- 17 He who loves pleasure *will become* a poor man;
He who loves wine and oil will not become rich.
- 18 The wicked is a ransom for the righteous,
And the treacherous is in the place of the upright.
- 19 It is better to live in a desert land
Than with a contentious and vexing woman.
- 20 There is precious treasure and oil in the dwelling of the wise,
But a foolish man swallows it up.
- 21 He who pursues righteousness and loyalty
Finds life, righteousness and honor.
- 22 A wise man scales the city of the mighty
And brings down the stronghold in which they trust.
- 23 He who guards his mouth and his tongue,
Guards his soul from troubles.
- 24 "Proud," "Haughty," "Scoffer," are his names,
Who acts with insolent pride.
- 25 The desire of the sluggard puts him to death,
For his hands refuse to work;
- 26 All day long he is craving,
While the righteous gives and does not hold back.
- 27 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination,
How much more when he brings it with evil intent!
- 28 A false witness will perish,

- But the man who listens *to the truth* will speak forever.
- 29 A wicked man displays a bold face,
But as for the upright, he makes his way sure.
- 30 There is no wisdom and no understanding
And no counsel against the LORD.
- 31 The horse is prepared for the day of battle,
But victory belongs to the LORD.

Wealth and Moral Instruction

- 22:1 A *good* name is to be more desired than great wealth,
Favor is better than silver and gold.
- 2 The rich and the poor have a common bond,
The LORD is the maker of them all.
- 3 The prudent sees the evil and hides himself,
But the naive go on, and are punished for it.
- 4 The reward of humility *and* the fear of the LORD
Are riches, honor and life.
- 5 Thorns *and* snares are in the way of the perverse;
He who guards himself will be far from them.
- 6 Train up a child in the way he should go,
Even when he is old he will not depart from it.
- 7 The rich rules over the poor,
And the borrower *becomes* the lender's slave.
- 8 He who sows iniquity will reap vanity,
And the rod of his fury will perish.
- 9 He who is generous will be blessed,
For he gives some of his food to the poor. [[2 Cor 9:7](#)]
- 10 Drive out the scoffer, and contention will go out,
Even strife and dishonor will cease.
- 11 He who loves purity of heart
And whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend.
- 12 The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge,
But He overthrows the words of the treacherous man.
- 13 The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside;
I will be killed in the streets!"
- 14 The mouth of an adulteress is a deep pit;
He who is cursed of the LORD will fall into it.
- 15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;
The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.
- 16 He who oppresses the poor to make more for himself
Or who gives to the rich, *will only come to poverty.*

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Proverbs Collection III: Thirty Sayings of the Wise (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 22:17–24:22

Saying 1

- 22:17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise,
And apply your mind to my knowledge;
18 For it will be pleasant if you keep them within you,
That they may be ready on your lips.
19 So that your trust may be in the LORD,
I have taught you today, even you.
20 Have I not written to you excellent things
Of counsels and knowledge,
21 To make you know the certainty of the words of truth
That you may correctly answer him who sent you?

Saying 2

- 22 Do not rob the poor because he is poor,
Or crush the afflicted at the gate;
23 For the LORD will plead their case
And take the life of those who rob them.

Saying 3

- 24 Do not associate with a man *given* to anger;
Or go with a hot-tempered man,
25 Or you will learn his ways
And find a snare for yourself.

Saying 4

- 26 Do not be among those who give pledges,
Among those who become guarantors for debts.
27 If you have nothing with which to pay,
Why should he take your bed from under you?

Saying 5

- 28 Do not move the ancient boundary
Which your fathers have set.

Saying 6

- 29 Do you see a man skilled in his work?
He will stand before kings;
He will not stand before obscure men.

Saying 7

- 23:1 When you sit down to dine with a ruler,
Consider carefully what is before you,
2 And put a knife to your throat
If you are a man of *great* appetite.
3 Do not desire his delicacies,
For it is deceptive food.

Saying 8

- 4 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth,
Cease from your consideration *of it*.
5 When you set your eyes on it, it is gone.
For *wealth* certainly makes itself wings
Like an eagle that flies *toward* the heavens.

Saying 9

- 6 Do not eat the bread of a selfish man,
Or desire his delicacies;
7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is.
He says to you, "Eat and drink!"
But his heart is not with you.
8 You will vomit up the morsel you have eaten,
And waste your compliments.

Saying 10

- 9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,
For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

Saying 11

- 10 Do not move the ancient boundary
Or go into the fields of the fatherless,
11 For their Redeemer is strong;
He will plead their case against you.

Saying 12

- 12 Apply your heart to discipline
And your ears to words of knowledge.

Saying 13

- 13 Do not hold back discipline from the child,
Although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.
14 You shall strike him with the rod
And rescue his soul from Sheol.

Saying 14

- 15 My son, if your heart is wise,
My own heart also will be glad;
16 And my inmost being will rejoice
When your lips speak what is right.

Saying 15

- 17 Do not let your heart envy sinners,
But *live* in the fear of the LORD always.
18 Surely there is a future,
And your hope will not be cut off.

Saying 16

- 19 Listen, my son, and be wise,
And direct your heart in the way.
20 Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine,
Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;
21 For the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty,
And drowsiness will clothe *one* with rags.

Saying 17

- 22 Listen to your father who begot you,
And do not despise your mother when she is old.
23 Buy truth, and do not sell *it*,
Get wisdom and instruction and understanding.
24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice,
And he who sires a wise son will be glad in him.
25 Let your father and your mother be glad,
And let her rejoice who gave birth to you.

Saying 18

- 26 Give me your heart, my son,
And let your eyes delight in my ways.
- 27 For a harlot is a deep pit
And an adulterous woman is a narrow well.
- 28 Surely she lurks as a robber,
And increases the faithless among men.

Saying 19

- 29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow?
Who has contentions? Who has complaining?
Who has wounds without cause?
Who has redness of eyes?
- 30 Those who linger long over wine,
Those who go to taste mixed wine.
- 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red,
When it sparkles in the cup,
When it goes down smoothly;
- 32 At the last it bites like a serpent
And stings like a viper.
- 33 Your eyes will see strange things
And your mind will utter perverse things.
- 34 And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea,
Or like one who lies down on the top of a mast.
- 35 "They struck me, *but* I did not become ill;
They beat me, *but* I did not know *it*.
When shall I awake?
I will seek another drink."

Saying 20

- 24:1 Do not be envious of evil men,
Nor desire to be with them;
- 2 For their minds devise violence,
And their lips talk of trouble.

Saying 21

- 3 By wisdom a house is built,
And by understanding it is established;
- 4 And by knowledge the rooms are filled
With all precious and pleasant riches.

Saying 22

- 5 A wise man is strong,
And a man of knowledge increases power.
- 6 For by wise guidance you will wage war,
And in abundance of counselors there is victory.

Saying 23

- 7 Wisdom is *too* exalted for a fool,
He does not open his mouth in the gate.

Saying 24

- 8 One who plans to do evil,
Men will call a schemer.
- 9 The devising of folly is sin,
And the scoffer is an abomination to men.

Saying 25

- 10 If you are slack in the day of distress,
Your strength is limited.
- 11 Deliver those who are being taken away to death,
And those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold *them* back.
- 12 If you say, "See, we did not know this,"
Does He not consider *it* who weighs the hearts?
And does He not know *it* who keeps your soul?
And will He not render to man according to his work? [[Matt 16:27](#); [Rom 2:6](#)]

Saying 26

- 13 My son, eat honey, for it is good,
Yes, the honey from the comb is sweet to your taste;
- 14 Know *that* wisdom is thus for your soul;
If you find *it*, then there will be a future,
And your hope will not be cut off.

Saying 27

- 15 Do not lie in wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous;
Do not destroy his resting place;
- 16 For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again,
But the wicked stumble in *time of* calamity.

Saying 28

- 17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls,
And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;
- 18 Or the LORD will see *it* and be displeased,
And turn His anger away from him.

Saying 29

- 19 Do not fret because of evildoers
Or be envious of the wicked;
- 20 For there will be no future for the evil man;
The lamp of the wicked will be put out.

Saying 30

- 21 My son, fear the LORD and the king;
Do not associate with those who are given to change,
- 22 For their calamity will rise suddenly,
And who knows the ruin *that comes* from both of them?

Proverbs Collection IV: Further Sayings of the Wise (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 24:23–34

23 These also are sayings of the wise.

- To show partiality in judgment is not good.
- 24 He who says to the wicked, "You are righteous,"
Peoples will curse him, nations will abhor him;
- 25 But to those who rebuke the *wicked* will be delight,
And a good blessing will come upon them.
- 26 He kisses the lips
Who gives a right answer.
- 27 Prepare your work outside
And make it ready for yourself in the field;
Afterwards, then, build your house.
- 28 Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause,
And do not deceive with your lips.

- 29 Do not say, "Thus I shall do to him as he has done to me;
I will render to the man according to his work."
30 I passed by the field of the sluggard
And by the vineyard of the man lacking sense,
31 And behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles;
Its surface was covered with nettles,
And its stone wall was broken down.
32 When I saw, I reflected upon it;
I looked, *and* received instruction.
33 "A little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to rest,"
34 Then your poverty will come *as* a robber
And your want like an armed man.

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Proverbs Collection V: More of Solomon's Proverbs (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 25–29

25:1 These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, transcribed.

Court Hierarchy and the Conflict of the Righteous and the Wicked

- 2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter,
But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.
- 3 As the heavens for height and the earth for depth,
So the heart of kings is unsearchable.
- 4 Take away the dross from the silver,
And there comes out a vessel for the smith;
5 Take away the wicked before the king,
And his throne will be established in righteousness.
- 6 Do not claim honor in the presence of the king,
And do not stand in the place of great men;
7 For it is better that it be said to you, "Come up here,"
Than for you to be placed lower in the presence of the prince,
Whom your eyes have seen.
- 8 Do not go out hastily to argue *your case*;
Otherwise, what will you do in the end,
When your neighbor humiliates you?
- 9 Argue your case with your neighbor,
And do not reveal the secret of another,
10 Or he who hears *it* will reproach you,
And the evil report about you will not pass away.
- 11 *Like* apples of gold in settings of silver
Is a word spoken in right circumstances.
- 12 *Like* an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold
Is a wise reprovee to a listening ear.
- 13 Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest
Is a faithful messenger to those who send him,
For he refreshes the soul of his masters.
- 14 *Like* clouds and wind without rain
Is a man who boasts of his gifts falsely.
- 15 By forbearance a ruler may be persuaded,
And a soft tongue breaks the bone.
- 16 Have you found honey? Eat *only* what you need,
That you not have it in excess and vomit it.
- 17 Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house,
Or he will become weary of you and hate you.
- 18 *Like* a club and a sword and a sharp arrow
Is a man who bears false witness against his neighbor.
- 19 *Like* a bad tooth and an unsteady foot
Is confidence in a faithless man in time of trouble.
- 20 *Like* one who takes off a garment on a cold day, *or like* vinegar on soda,
Is he who sings songs to a troubled heart.
- 21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat;
And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;
22 For you will heap burning coals on his head,
And the LORD will reward you. [[Rom 12:20](#)]
- 23 The north wind brings forth rain,
And a backbiting tongue, an angry countenance.
- 24 It is better to live in a corner of the roof
Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.
- 25 *Like* cold water to a weary soul,
So is good news from a distant land.
- 26 *Like* a trampled spring and a polluted well
Is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.

- 27 It is not good to eat much honey,
Nor is it glory to search out one's own glory.
- 28 *Like* a city that is broken into *and* without walls
Is a man who has no control over his spirit.

The Fool

- 26:1 Like snow in summer and like rain in harvest,
So honor is not fitting for a fool.
- 2 Like a sparrow in *its* flitting, like a swallow in *its* flying,
So a curse without cause does not alight.
- 3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey,
And a rod for the back of fools.
- 4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly,
Or you will also be like him.
- 5 Answer a fool as his folly *deserves*,
That he not be wise in his own eyes.
- 6 He cuts off *his own* feet *and* drinks violence
Who sends a message by the hand of a fool.
- 7 *Like* the legs *which* are useless to the lame,
So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- 8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling,
So is he who gives honor to a fool.
- 9 *Like* a thorn *which* falls into the hand of a drunkard,
So is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- 10 *Like* an archer who wounds everyone,
So is he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by.
- 11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit
Is a fool who repeats his folly.
- 12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.

The Sluggard

- 13 The sluggard says, "There is a lion in the road!
A lion is in the open square!"
- 14 As the door turns on its hinges,
So *does* the sluggard on his bed.
- 15 The sluggard buries his hand in the dish;
He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again.
- 16 The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes
Than seven men who can give a discreet answer.

Four Kinds of Trouble-makers

- 17 *Like* one who takes a dog by the ears
Is he who passes by *and* meddles with strife not belonging to him.
- 18 Like a madman who throws
Firebrands, arrows and death,
So is the man who deceives his neighbor,
And says, "Was I not joking?"
- 20 For lack of wood the fire goes out,
And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.
- 21 *Like* charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire,
So is a contentious man to kindle strife.
- 22 The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels,
And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.
- 23 *Like* an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross
Are burning lips and a wicked heart.
- 24 He who hates disguises *it* with his lips,
But he lays up deceit in his heart.

- 25 When he speaks graciously, do not believe him,
For there are seven abominations in his heart.
- 26 *Though his* hatred covers itself with guile,
His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.
- 27 He who digs a pit will fall into it,
And he who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.
- 28 A lying tongue hates those it crushes,
And a flattering mouth works ruin.

Of Friends and Friendships

- 27:1 Do not boast about tomorrow,
For you do not know what a day may bring forth.
- 2 Let another praise you, and not your own mouth;
A stranger, and not your own lips.
- 3 A stone is heavy and the sand weighty,
But the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them.
- 4 Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood,
But who can stand before jealousy?
- 5 Better is open rebuke
Than love that is concealed.
- 6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend,
But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.
- 7 A sated man loathes honey,
But to a famished man any bitter thing is sweet.
- 8 Like a bird that wanders from her nest,
So is a man who wanders from his home.
- 9 Oil and perfume make the heart glad,
So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend.
- 10 Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend,
And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity;
Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.
- 11 Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad,
That I may reply to him who reproaches me.
- 12 A prudent man sees evil *and* hides himself,
The naive proceed *and* pay the penalty.
- 13 Take his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger;
And for an adulterous woman hold him in pledge.
- 14 He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning,
It will be reckoned a curse to him.
- 15 A constant dripping on a day of steady rain
And a contentious woman are alike;
- 16 He who would restrain her restrains the wind,
And grasps oil with his right hand.
- 17 Iron sharpens iron,
So one man sharpens another.
- 18 He who tends the fig tree will eat its fruit,
And he who cares for his master will be honored.
- 19 As in water face *reflects* face,
So the heart of man *reflects* man.
- 20 Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,
Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied.
- 21 The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold,
And each *is tested* by the praise accorded him.
- 22 Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain,
Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.

A Wise Manager

- 23 Know well the condition of your flocks,
And pay attention to your herds;
- 24 For riches are not forever,
Nor does a crown *endure* to all generations.
- 25 *When* the grass disappears, the new growth is seen,
And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in,
- 26 The lambs *will be* for your clothing,
And the goats *will bring* the price of a field,
- 27 *And there will be* goats' milk enough for your food,
For the food of your household,
And sustenance for your maidens.

Law and Righteous Government

- 28:1 The wicked flee when no one is pursuing,
But the righteous are bold as a lion.
- 2 By the transgression of a land many are its princes,
But by a man of understanding *and* knowledge, so it endures.
- 3 A poor man who oppresses the lowly
Is *like* a driving rain which leaves no food.
- 4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked,
But those who keep the law strive with them.
- 5 Evil men do not understand justice,
But those who seek the LORD understand all things.
- 6 Better is the poor who walks in his integrity
Than he who is crooked though he be rich.
- 7 He who keeps the law is a discerning son,
But he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father.
- 8 He who increases his wealth by interest and usury
Gathers it for him who is gracious to the poor.
- 9 He who turns away his ear from listening to the law,
Even his prayer is an abomination.
- 10 He who leads the upright astray in an evil way
Will himself fall into his own pit,
But the blameless will inherit good.
- 11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes,
But the poor who has understanding sees through him.

Relationship with God for Ruling and Gaining Wealth

- 12 When the righteous triumph, there is great glory,
But when the wicked rise, men hide themselves.
- 13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.
- 14 How blessed is the man who fears always,
But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.
- 15 *Like* a roaring lion and a rushing bear
Is a wicked ruler over a poor people.
- 16 A leader who is a great oppressor lacks understanding,
But he who hates unjust gain will prolong *his* days.
- 17 A man who is laden with the guilt of human blood
Will be a fugitive until death; let no one support him.
- 18 He who walks blamelessly will be delivered,
But he who is crooked will fall all at once.
- 19 He who tills his land will have plenty of food,
But he who follows empty *pursuits* will have poverty in plenty.
- 20 A faithful man will abound with blessings,
But he who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished.
- 21 To show partiality is not good,

- Because for a piece of bread a man will transgress.
22 A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth
And does not know that want will come upon him.
23 He who rebukes a man will afterward find *more* favor
Than he who flatters with the tongue.
24 He who robs his father or his mother
And says, "It is not a transgression,"
Is the companion of a man who destroys.
25 An arrogant man stirs up strife,
But he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.
26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool,
But he who walks wisely will be delivered.
27 He who gives to the poor will never want,
But he who shuts his eyes will have many curses.
28 When the wicked rise, men hide themselves;
But when they perish, the righteous increase.

Joy and Stability through Righteousness

- 29:1 A man who hardens *his* neck after much reproof
Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.
2 When the righteous increase, the people rejoice,
But when a wicked man rules, people groan.
3 A man who loves wisdom makes his father glad,
But he who keeps company with harlots wastes *his* wealth.
4 The king gives stability to the land by justice,
But a man who takes bribes overthrows it.
5 A man who flatters his neighbor
Is spreading a net for his steps.
6 By transgression an evil man is ensnared,
But the righteous sings and rejoices.
7 The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor,
The wicked does not understand *such* concern.

Peace through Righteousness

- 8 Scorners set a city aflame,
But wise men turn away anger.
9 When a wise man has a controversy with a foolish man,
The foolish man either rages or laughs, and there is no rest.
10 Men of bloodshed hate the blameless,
But the upright are concerned for his life.
11 A fool always loses his temper,
But a wise man holds it back.
12 If a ruler pays attention to falsehood,
All his ministers *become* wicked.
13 The poor man and the oppressor have this in common:
The LORD gives light to the eyes of both.
14 If a king judges the poor with truth,
His throne will be established forever.

The Importance of Discipline

- 15 The rod and reproof give wisdom,
But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.
16 When the wicked increase, transgression increases;
But the righteous will see their fall.
17 Correct your son, and he will give you comfort;
He will also delight your soul.
18 Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained,
But happy is he who keeps the law.

- 19 A slave will not be instructed by words *alone*;
For though he understands, there will be no response.
- 20 Do you see a man who is hasty in his words?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.
- 21 He who pampers his slave from childhood
Will in the end find him to be a son.

Wrong Attitudes

- 22 An angry man stirs up strife,
And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.
- 23 A man's pride will bring him low,
But a humble spirit will obtain honor.
- 24 He who is a partner with a thief hates his own life;
He hears the oath but tells nothing.
- 25 The fear of man brings a snare,
But he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.
- 26 Many seek the ruler's favor,
But justice for man *comes* from the LORD.
- 27 An unjust man is abominable to the righteous,
And he who is upright in the way is abominable to the wicked.

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Proverbs Collection VI: The Sayings of Agur son of Jakeh (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 30

Agur's Autobiographical Confession

1 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, the oracle. The man declares to Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal:

- 2 Surely I am more stupid than any man,
And I do not have the understanding of a man.
- 3 Neither have I learned wisdom,
Nor do I have the knowledge of the Holy One.
- 4 Who has ascended into heaven and descended?
Who has gathered the wind in His fists?
Who has wrapped the waters in His garment?
Who has established all the ends of the earth?
What is His name or His son's name?
Surely you know!
- 5 Every word of God is tested;
He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.
- 6 Do not add to His words
Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.
- 7 Two things I asked of You,
Do not refuse me before I die:
- 8 Keep deception and lies far from me,
Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with the food that is my portion,
- 9 That I not be full and deny *You* and say, "Who is the LORD?"
Or that I not be in want and steal,
And profane the name of my God.

Agur's Evil Generations

- 10 Do not slander a slave to his master,
Or he will curse you and you will be found guilty.
- 11 There is a kind of *man* who curses his father
And does not bless his mother.
- 12 There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes,
Yet is not washed from his filthiness.
- 13 There is a kind—oh how lofty are his eyes!
And his eyelids are raised *in arrogance*.
- 14 There is a kind of *man* whose teeth are *like* swords
And his jaw teeth *like* knives,
To devour the afflicted from the earth
And the needy from among men.

Agur's Numerical Proverbs

- 15 The leech has two daughters,
"Give," "Give."
There are three things that will not be satisfied,
Four that will not say, "Enough":
- 16 Sheol, and the barren womb,
Earth that is never satisfied with water,
And fire that never says, "Enough."
- 17 The eye that mocks a father
And scorns a mother,
The ravens of the valley will pick it out,
And the young eagles will eat it.
- 18 There are three things which are too wonderful for me,
Four which I do not understand:
- 19 The way of an eagle in the sky,
The way of a serpent on a rock,

- The way of a ship in the middle of the sea,
And the way of a man with a maid.
- 20 This is the way of an adulterous woman:
She eats and wipes her mouth,
And says, "I have done no wrong."
- 21 Under three things the earth quakes,
And under four, it cannot bear up:
- 22 Under a slave when he becomes king,
And a fool when he is satisfied with food,
- 23 Under an unloved woman when she gets a husband,
And a maidservant when she supplants her mistress.
- 24 Four things are small on the earth,
But they are exceedingly wise:
- 25 The ants are not a strong people,
But they prepare their food in the summer;
- 26 The shephanim are not mighty people,
Yet they make their houses in the rocks;
- 27 The locusts have no king,
Yet all of them go out in ranks;
- 28 The lizard you may grasp with the hands,
Yet it is in kings' palaces.
- 29 There are three things which are stately in *their* march,
Even four which are stately when they walk:
- 30 The lion *which* is mighty among beasts
And does not retreat before any,
- 31 The strutting rooster, the male goat also,
And a king *when his* army is with him.
- 32 If you have been foolish in exalting yourself
Or if you have plotted *evil*, *put your* hand on your mouth.
- 33 For the churning of milk produces butter,
And pressing the nose brings forth blood;
So the churning of anger produces strife.

Proverbs Collection VII: The Sayings of Lemuel (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Proverbs 31

1 The words of King Lemuel, the oracle which his mother taught him:

The Noble King

- 2 What, O my son?
And what, O son of my womb?
And what, O son of my vows?
- 3 Do not give your strength to women,
Or your ways to that which destroys kings.
- 4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
It is not for kings to drink wine,
Or for rulers to desire strong drink,
- 5 For they will drink and forget what is decreed,
And pervert the rights of all the afflicted.
- 6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing,
And wine to him whose life is bitter.
- 7 Let him drink and forget his poverty
And remember his trouble no more.
- 8 Open your mouth for the mute,
For the rights of all the unfortunate.
- 9 Open your mouth, judge righteously,
And defend the rights of the afflicted and needy.

The Noble Wife

- 10 An excellent wife, who can find?
For her worth is far above jewels.
- 11 The heart of her husband trusts in her,
And he will have no lack of gain.
- 12 She does him good and not evil
All the days of her life.
- 13 She looks for wool and flax
And works with her hands in delight.
- 14 She is like merchant ships;
She brings her food from afar.
- 15 She rises also while it is still night
And gives food to her household
And portions to her maidens.
- 16 She considers a field and buys it;
From her earnings she plants a vineyard.
- 17 She girds herself with strength
And makes her arms strong.
- 18 She senses that her gain is good;
Her lamp does not go out at night.
- 19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff,
And her hands grasp the spindle.
- 20 She extends her hand to the poor,
And she stretches out her hands to the needy.
- 21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household,
For all her household are clothed with scarlet.
- 22 She makes coverings for herself;
Her clothing is fine linen and purple.
- 23 Her husband is known in the gates,
When he sits among the elders of the land.
- 24 She makes linen garments and sells *them*,
And supplies belts to the tradesmen.
- 25 Strength and dignity are her clothing,
And she smiles at the future.
- 26 She opens her mouth in wisdom,
And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
- 27 She looks well to the ways of her household,
And does not eat the bread of idleness.
- 28 Her children rise up and bless her;
Her husband *also*, and he praises her, *saying*:
- 29 "Many daughters have done nobly,
But you excel them all."
- 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,
But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
- 31 Give her the product of her hands,
And let her works praise her in the gates.

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Song of Songs – Part 1 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Song of Solomon 1–6

1:1 The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

Soprano

- 2 "May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!
For your love is better than wine.
- 3 "Your oils have a pleasing fragrance,
Your name is *like* purified oil;
Therefore the maidens love you.
- 4 "Draw me after you *and* let us run *together*!
The king has brought me into his chambers."

Chorus

"We will rejoice in you and be glad;
We will extol your love more than wine.

Soprano

- Rightly do they love you."
- 5 "I am black but lovely,
O daughters of Jerusalem,
Like the tents of Kedar,
Like the curtains of Solomon.
- 6 "Do not stare at me because I am swarthy,
For the sun has burned me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
They made me caretaker of the vineyards,
But I have not taken care of my own vineyard.
- 7 "Tell me, O you whom my soul loves,
Where do you pasture *your* flock,
Where do you make *it* lie down at noon?
For why should I be like one who veils herself
Beside the flocks of your companions?"

Chorus

- 8 "If you yourself do not know,
Most beautiful among women,
Go forth on the trail of the flock
And pasture your young goats
By the tents of the shepherds.

Tenor

- 9 "To me, my darling, you are like
My mare among the chariots of Pharaoh.
- 10 "Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
Your neck with strings of beads."
- 11 "We will make for you ornaments of gold
With beads of silver."

Soprano

- 12 "While the king was at his table,
My perfume gave forth its fragrance.
- 13 "My beloved is to me a pouch of myrrh
Which lies all night between my breasts.
- 14 "My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms
In the vineyards of Engedi."

Tenor

15 “How beautiful you are, my darling,
How beautiful you are!
Your eyes are *like* doves.”

Soprano

16 “How handsome you are, my beloved,
And so pleasant!
Indeed, our couch is luxuriant!
17 “The beams of our houses are cedars,
Our rafters, cypresses.
2:1 “I am the rose of Sharon,
The lily of the valleys.”

Tenor

2 “Like a lily among the thorns,
So is my darling among the maidens.”

Soprano

3 “Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest,
So is my beloved among the young men.
In his shade I took great delight and sat down,
And his fruit was sweet to my taste.
4 “He has brought me to *his* banquet hall,
And his banner over me is love.
5 “Sustain me with raisin cakes,
Refresh me with apples,
Because I am lovesick.
6 “Let his left hand be under my head
And his right hand embrace me.”
7 “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
That you do not arouse or awaken *my* love
Until she pleases.”
8 “Listen! My beloved!
Behold, he is coming,
Climbing on the mountains,
Leaping on the hills!
9 “My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.
Behold, he is standing behind our wall,
He is looking through the windows,
He is peering through the lattice.
10 “My beloved responded and said to me,

Tenor

‘Arise, my darling, my beautiful one,
And come along.
11 ‘For behold, the winter is past,
The rain is over *and* gone.
12 ‘The flowers have *already* appeared in the land;
The time has arrived for pruning *the vines*,
And the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land.
13 ‘The fig tree has ripened its figs,
And the vines in blossom have given forth *their* fragrance.
Arise, my darling, my beautiful one,
And come along!’”
14 “O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
In the secret place of the steep pathway,

Let me see your form,
Let me hear your voice;
For your voice is sweet,
And your form is lovely.”

- 15 “Catch the foxes for us,
The little foxes that are ruining the vineyards,
While our vineyards are in blossom.”

Soprano

- 16 “My beloved is mine, and I am his;
He pastures *his flock* among the lilies.
- 17 “Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle
Or a young stag on the mountains of Bethel.”
- 3:1 “On my bed night after night I sought him
Whom my soul loves;
I sought him but did not find him.
- 2 ‘I must arise now and go about the city;
In the streets and in the squares
I must seek him whom my soul loves.’
I sought him but did not find him.
- 3 “The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me,
And I said, ‘Have you seen him whom my soul loves?’
- 4 “Scarcely had I left them
When I found him whom my soul loves;
I held on to him and would not let him go
Until I had brought him to my mother’s house,
And into the room of her who conceived me.”
- 5 “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
That you will not arouse or awaken *my love*
Until she pleases.”

Chorus

- 6 “What is this coming up from the wilderness
Like columns of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all scented powders of the merchant?
- 7 “Behold, it is the *traveling couch* of Solomon;
Sixty mighty men around it,
Of the mighty men of Israel.
- 8 “All of them are wielders of the sword,
Expert in war;
Each man has his sword at his side,
Guarding against the terrors of the night.
- 9 “King Solomon has made for himself a sedan chair
From the timber of Lebanon.
- 10 “He made its posts of silver,
Its back of gold
And its seat of purple fabric,
With its interior lovingly fitted out
By the daughters of Jerusalem.
- 11 “Go forth, O daughters of Zion,
And gaze on King Solomon with the crown
With which his mother has crowned him
On the day of his wedding,
And on the day of his gladness of heart.”

Tenor

- 4:1 “How beautiful you are, my darling,
How beautiful you are!
Your eyes are *like* doves behind your veil;
Your hair is like a flock of goats
That have descended from Mount Gilead.
- 2 “Your teeth are like a flock of *newly* shorn ewes
Which have come up from *their* washing,
All of which bear twins,
And not one among them has lost her young.
- 3 “Your lips are like a scarlet thread,
And your mouth is lovely.
Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate
Behind your veil.
- 4 “Your neck is like the tower of David,
Built with rows of stones
On which are hung a thousand shields,
All the round shields of the mighty men.
- 5 “Your two breasts are like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle
Which feed among the lilies.
- 6 “Until the cool of the day
When the shadows flee away,
I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh
And to the hill of frankincense.
- 7 “You are altogether beautiful, my darling,
And there is no blemish in you.
- 8 “*Come* with me from Lebanon, *my* bride,
May you come with me from Lebanon.
Journey down from the summit of Amana,
From the summit of Senir and Hermon,
From the dens of lions,
From the mountains of leopards.
- 9 “You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, *my* bride;
You have made my heart beat faster with a single *glance* of your eyes,
With a single strand of your necklace.
- 10 “How beautiful is your love, my sister, *my* bride!
How much better is your love than wine,
And the fragrance of your oils
Than all *kinds* of spices!
- 11 “Your lips, *my* bride, drip honey;
Honey and milk are under your tongue,
And the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.
- 12 “A garden locked is my sister, *my* bride,
A rock garden locked, a spring sealed up.
- 13 “Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates
With choice fruits, henna with nard plants,
- 14 Nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon,
With all the trees of frankincense,
Myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices.
- 15 “*You are* a garden spring,
A well of fresh water,
And streams *flowing* from Lebanon.”

Soprano

- 16 “Awake, O north *wind*,
And come, *wind of* the south;
Make my garden breathe out *fragrance*,

Let its spices be wafted abroad.
May my beloved come into his garden
And eat its choice fruits!”

Tenor

5:1 “I have come into my garden, my sister, *my* bride;
I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam.
I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey;
I have drunk my wine and my milk.

Chorus

Eat, friends;
Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers.”

Soprano

2 “I was asleep but my heart was awake.
A voice! My beloved was knocking:

Tenor

‘Open to me, my sister, my darling,
My dove, my perfect one!
For my head is drenched with dew,
My locks with the damp of the night.’

Soprano

3 “I have taken off my dress,
How can I put it on *again*?
I have washed my feet,
How can I dirty them *again*?
4 “My beloved extended his hand through the opening,
And my feelings were aroused for him.
5 “I arose to open to my beloved;
And my hands dripped with myrrh,
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
On the handles of the bolt.
6 “I opened to my beloved,
But my beloved had turned away *and* had gone!
My heart went out *to him* as he spoke.
I searched for him but I did not find him;
I called him but he did not answer me.
7 “The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me,
They struck me *and* wounded me;
The guardsmen of the walls took away my shawl from me.
8 “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
If you find my beloved,
As to what you will tell him:
For I am lovesick.”

Chorus

9 “What kind of beloved is your beloved,
O most beautiful among women?
What kind of beloved is your beloved,
That thus you adjure us?”

Soprano

10 “My beloved is dazzling and ruddy,
Outstanding among ten thousand.
11 “His head is *like* gold, pure gold;

His locks are *like* clusters of dates
And black as a raven.

- 12 “His eyes are like doves
 Beside streams of water,
 Bathed in milk,
And reposed in *their* setting.
- 13 “His cheeks are like a bed of balsam,
 Banks of sweet-scented herbs;
 His lips are lilies
 Dripping with liquid myrrh.
- 14 “His hands are rods of gold
 Set with beryl;
 His abdomen is carved ivory
 Inlaid with sapphires.
- 15 “His legs are pillars of alabaster
 Set on pedestals of pure gold;
 His appearance is like Lebanon
 Choice as the cedars.
- 16 “His mouth is *full of* sweetness.
 And he is wholly desirable.
 This is my beloved and this is my friend,
 O daughters of Jerusalem.”

Chorus

- 6:1 “Where has your beloved gone,
 O most beautiful among women?
 Where has your beloved turned,
 That we may seek him with you?”

Soprano

- 2 “My beloved has gone down to his garden,
 To the beds of balsam,
 To pasture *his flock* in the gardens
 And gather lilies.
- 3 “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine,
 He who pastures *his flock* among the lilies.”

Tenor

- 4 “You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling,
 As lovely as Jerusalem,
 As awesome as an army with banners.
- 5 “Turn your eyes away from me,
 For they have confused me;
 Your hair is like a flock of goats
 That have descended from Gilead.
- 6 “Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
 Which have come up from *their* washing,
 All of which bear twins,
 And not one among them has lost her young.
- 7 “Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate
 Behind your veil.
- 8 “There are sixty queens and eighty concubines,
 And maidens without number;
- 9 *But* my dove, my perfect one, is unique:
 She is her mother’s only *daughter*;
 She is the pure *child* of the one who bore her.
 The maidens saw her and called her blessed,
 The queens and the concubines *also*, and they praised her, *saying*,

- 10 'Who is this that grows like the dawn,
As beautiful as the full moon,
As pure as the sun,
As awesome as an army with banners?'
- 11 "I went down to the orchard of nut trees
To see the blossoms of the valley,
To see whether the vine had budded
Or the pomegranates had bloomed.
- 12 "Before I was aware, my soul set me
Over the chariots of my noble people."
- 13 "Come back, come back, O Shulammite;
Come back, come back, that we may gaze at you!"
"Why should you gaze at the Shulammite,
As at the dance of the two companies?"

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Song of Songs – Part 2 (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Song of Solomon 7–8

Tenor

- 7:1 “How beautiful are your feet in sandals,
O prince’s daughter!
The curves of your hips are like jewels,
The work of the hands of an artist.
- 2 “Your navel is *like* a round goblet
Which never lacks mixed wine;
Your belly is like a heap of wheat
Fenced about with lilies.
- 3 “Your two breasts are like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle.
- 4 “Your neck is like a tower of ivory,
Your eyes *like* the pools in Heshbon
By the gate of Bath-rabbim;
Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon,
Which faces toward Damascus.
- 5 “Your head crowns you like Carmel,
And the flowing locks of your head are like purple threads;
The king is captivated by *your* tresses.
- 6 “How beautiful and how delightful you are,
My love, with *all* your charms!
- 7 “Your stature is like a palm tree,
And your breasts are *like its* clusters.
- 8 “I said, ‘I will climb the palm tree,
I will take hold of its fruit stalks.’
Oh, may your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
And the fragrance of your breath like apples,
- 9 And your mouth like the best wine!”
“It goes *down* smoothly for my beloved,
Flowing gently *through* the lips of those who fall asleep.

Soprano

- 10 “I am my beloved’s,
And his desire is for me.
- 11 “Come, my beloved, let us go out into the country,
Let us spend the night in the villages.
- 12 “Let us rise early *and go* to the vineyards;
Let us see whether the vine has budded
And its blossoms have opened,
And whether the pomegranates have bloomed.
There I will give you my love.
- 13 “The mandrakes have given forth fragrance;
And over our doors are all choice *fruits*,
Both new and old,
Which I have saved up for you, my beloved.
- 8:1 “Oh that you were like a brother to me
Who nursed at my mother’s breasts.
If I found you outdoors, I would kiss you;
No one would despise me, either.
- 2 “I would lead you *and* bring you
Into the house of my mother, who used to instruct me;
I would give you spiced wine to drink from the juice of my pomegranates.
- 3 “Let his left hand be under my head
And his right hand embrace me.”
- 4 “I want you to swear, O daughters of Jerusalem,
Do not arouse or awaken *my* love

Until she pleases.”

Chorus

- 5 “Who is this coming up from the wilderness
Leaning on her beloved?”

Soprano

- “Beneath the apple tree I awakened you;
There your mother was in labor with you,
There she was in labor *and* gave you birth.
6 “Put me like a seal over your heart,
Like a seal on your arm.
For love is as strong as death,
Jealousy is as severe as Sheol;
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
The *very* flame of the LORD.
7 “Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor will rivers overflow it;
If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love,
It would be utterly despised.”

Chorus

- 8 “We have a little sister,
And she has no breasts;
What shall we do for our sister
On the day when she is spoken for?
9 “If she is a wall,
We will build on her a battlement of silver;
But if she is a door,
We will barricade her with planks of cedar.”

Soprano

- 10 “I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers;
Then I became in his eyes as one who finds peace.
11 “Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon;
He entrusted the vineyard to caretakers.
Each one was to bring a thousand *shekels* of silver for its fruit.
12 “My very own vineyard is at my disposal;
The thousand *shekels* are for you, Solomon,
And two hundred are for those who take care of its fruit.”

Tenor

- 13 “O you who sit in the gardens,
My companions are listening for your voice—
Let me hear it!”

Soprano

- 14 “Hurry, my beloved,
And be like a gazelle or a young stag
On the mountains of spices.”

The Perfect King (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Psalm 72

A Psalm of Solomon.

- 1 Give the king Your judgments, O God,
And Your righteousness to the king’s son.
2 May he judge Your people with righteousness

- And You afflicted with justice.
- 3 Let the mountains bring peace to the people,
And the hills, in righteousness.
- 4 May he vindicate the afflicted of the people,
Save the children of the needy
And crush the oppressor.
- 5 Let them fear You while the sun *endures*,
And as long as the moon, throughout all generations.
- 6 May he come down like rain upon the mown grass,
Like showers that water the earth.
- 7 In his days may the righteous flourish,
And abundance of peace till the moon is no more.
- 8 May he also rule from sea to sea
And from the River to the ends of the earth.
- 9 Let the nomads of the desert bow before him,
And his enemies lick the dust.
- 10 Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents;
The kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.
- 11 And let all kings bow down before him,
All nations serve him.
- 12 For he will deliver the needy when he cries for help,
The afflicted also, and him who has no helper.
- 13 He will have compassion on the poor and needy,
And the lives of the needy he will save.
- 14 He will rescue their life from oppression and violence,
And their blood will be precious in his sight;
- 15 So may he live, and may the gold of Sheba be given to him;
And let them pray for him continually;
Let them bless him all day long.
- 16 May there be abundance of grain in the earth on top of the mountains;
Its fruit will wave like *the cedars of Lebanon*;
And may those from the city flourish like vegetation of the earth.
- 17 May his name endure forever;
May his name increase as long as the sun *shines*;
And let *men* bless themselves by him;
Let all nations call him blessed.
- 18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,
Who alone works wonders.
- 19 And blessed be His glorious name forever;
And may the whole earth be filled with His glory.
Amen, and Amen.

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

Unless the LORD Builds a House (c. 969t – 932t BC)

Psalm 127

A Song of Ascents, of Solomon.

- 1 Unless the LORD builds the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless the LORD guards the city,
The watchman keeps awake in vain.
- 2 It is vain for you to rise up early,
To retire late,
To eat the bread of painful labors;
For He gives to His beloved *even in his sleep*.
- 3 Behold, children are a gift of the LORD,
The fruit of the womb is a reward.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4 | Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth. |
| 5 | How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them;
They will not be ashamed
When they speak with their enemies in the gate. |

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Textual Notes

- 1) Concerning Psalm 72: "The title ascribes the psalm to Solomon. The AV followed LXX in making it a psalm for Solomon, which the Hebrew in itself would allow. But it is the construction regularly translated 'A psalm of' David, etc., and unless those headings are to be rendered 'A psalm for' So-and-so, this example must be a genitive like the rest. There is no strong reason against Solomon's authorship: the final verse is rounding off a book or books of the Psalter, in which David is the chief but not the only author."¹

¹ Derek Kidner, "Psalms 1–72: An Introduction and Commentary," *TOTC*, 273.

When Solomon Was Old (c. 937t–932t BC)

1 Kings 11:1–13

Solomon's Many Wives

1 Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women,

2 from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, "You shall not associate with them, nor shall they associate with you, *for* they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Solomon held fast to these in love. [[Deut 7:3–4](#); [17:17](#)]

3 He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away.

4 For when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father *had been*.

Solomon Worships Other Gods

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites.

6 Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father *had done*.

7 Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon.

8 Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

Solomon Refuses to Repent and Incurs God's Judgment

9 Now the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice,

10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not observe what the LORD had commanded.

11 So the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant.

12 "Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, *but* I will tear it out of the hand of your son.

13 "However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, *but* I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."

Solomon's Enemies (c. 937t–932t BC)

1 Kings 11:14–40

Hadad the Edomite

14 Then the LORD raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was of the royal line in Edom.

15 For it came about, when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain, and had struck down every male in Edom

16 (for Joab and all Israel stayed there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom),

17 that Hadad fled to Egypt, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, while Hadad *was* a young boy.

18 They arose from Midian and came to Paran; and they took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and assigned him food and gave him land.

19 Now Hadad found great favor before Pharaoh, so that he gave him in marriage the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen.

20 The sister of Tahpenes bore his son Genubath, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house; and Genubath was in Pharaoh's house among the sons of Pharaoh.

21 But when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Send me away, that I may go to my own country."

22 Then Pharaoh said to him, "But what have you lacked with me, that behold, you are seeking to go to your own country?" And he answered, "Nothing; nevertheless you must surely let me go."

Rezon the Syrian

23 God also raised up *another* adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah.

24 He gathered men to himself and became leader of a marauding band, after David slew them of *Zobah*; and they went to Damascus and stayed there, and reigned in Damascus.

25 So he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, along with the evil that Hadad *did*; and he abhorred Israel and reigned over Aram.

Jeroboam the Ephraimite

26 Then Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also rebelled against the king.

27 Now this was the reason why he rebelled against the king: Solomon built the Millo, *and* closed up the breach of the city of his father David.

28 Now the man Jeroboam was a valiant warrior, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.

29 It came about at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had clothed himself with a new cloak; and both of them were alone in the field.

30 Then Ahijah took hold of the new cloak which was on him and tore it into twelve pieces.

31 He said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give you ten tribes

32 (but he will have one tribe, for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel),

33 because they have forsaken Me, and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the sons of Ammon; and they have not walked in My ways, doing what is right in My sight and *observing* My statutes and My ordinances, as his father David *did*.

34 'Nevertheless I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, who observed My commandments and My statutes;

35 but I will take the kingdom from his son's hand and give it to you, *even* ten tribes.

36 'But to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may have a lamp always before Me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen for Myself to put My name.

37 'I will take you, and you shall reign over whatever you desire, and you shall be king over Israel.

38 'Then it will be, that if you listen to all that I command you and walk in My ways, and do what is right in My sight by observing My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build you an enduring house as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you.

39 'Thus I will afflict the descendants of David for this, but not always.'"

40 Solomon sought therefore to put Jeroboam to death; but Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt to Shishak king of Egypt, and he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

Ecclesiastes: The Teacher's Reflections – Part 1 (c. 937t–932t BC)

Ecclesiastes 1–3

Introduction

1:1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

- 2 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher,
"Vanity of vanities! All is vanity."
- 3 What advantage does man have in all his work
Which he does under the sun?
- 4 A generation goes and a generation comes,
But the earth remains forever.
- 5 Also, the sun rises and the sun sets;
And hastening to its place it rises there *again*.
- 6 Blowing toward the south,
Then turning toward the north,
The wind continues swirling along;
And on its circular courses the wind returns.
- 7 All the rivers flow into the sea,
Yet the sea is not full.
To the place where the rivers flow,
There they flow again.
- 8 All things are wearisome;
Man is not able to tell *it*.
The eye is not satisfied with seeing,
Nor is the ear filled with hearing.
- 9 That which has been is that which will be,
And that which has been done is that which will be done.
So there is nothing new under the sun.
- 10 Is there anything of which one might say,
"See this, it is new"?
Already it has existed for ages

Which were before us.

- 11 There is no remembrance of earlier things;
And also of the later things which will occur,
There will be for them no remembrance
Among those who will come later *still*.

On the Activities of Men

12 I, the Preacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven. *It is a grievous task which God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with.*

14 I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind.

15 What is crooked cannot be straightened and what is lacking cannot be counted.

On the Benefits of Wisdom

16 I said to myself, "Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge."

17 And I set my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I realized that this also is striving after wind.

18 Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge *results in* increasing pain.

On Self-Indulgence

2:1 I said to myself, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure. So enjoy yourself." And behold, it too was futility.

2 I said of laughter, "It is madness," and of pleasure, "What does it accomplish?"

3 I explored with my mind *how* to stimulate my body with wine while my mind was guiding *me* wisely, and how to take hold of folly, until I could see what good there is for the sons of men to do under heaven the few years of their lives.

On Possessions and Personal Accomplishment

4 I enlarged my works: I built houses for myself, I planted vineyards for myself;

5 I made gardens and parks for myself and I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees;

6 I made ponds of water for myself from which to irrigate a forest of growing trees.

7 I bought male and female slaves and I had homeborn slaves. Also I possessed flocks and herds larger than all who preceded me in Jerusalem.

8 Also, I collected for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I provided for myself male and female singers and the pleasures of men—many concubines.

9 Then I became great and increased more than all who preceded me in Jerusalem. My wisdom also stood by me.

10 All that my eyes desired I did not refuse them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart was pleased because of all my labor and this was my reward for all my labor.

11 Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun.

On the Difference Between Wisdom and Folly

12 So I turned to consider wisdom, madness and folly; for what *will* the man *do* who will come after the king *except* what has already been done?

13 And I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness.

14 The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I know that one fate befalls them both.

On the Transitory Nature of Life

15 Then I said to myself, "As is the fate of the fool, it will also befall me. Why then have I been extremely wise?" So I said to myself, "This too is vanity."

16 For there is no lasting remembrance of the wise man *as* with the fool, inasmuch as *in* the coming days all will be forgotten. And how the wise man and the fool alike die!

17 So I hated life, for the work which had been done under the sun was grievous to me; because everything is futility and striving after wind.

18 Thus I hated all the fruit of my labor for which I had labored under the sun, for I must leave it to the man who will come after me.

19 And who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have control over all the fruit of my labor for which I have labored by acting wisely under the sun. This too is vanity.

20 Therefore I completely despaired of all the fruit of my labor for which I had labored under the sun.

21 When there is a man who has labored with wisdom, knowledge and skill, then he gives his legacy to one who has not labored with them. This too is vanity and a great evil.

22 For what does a man get in all his labor and in his striving with which he labors under the sun?

23 Because all his days his task is painful and grievous; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is vanity.

On Finding Contentment in Pleasing God

24 There is nothing better for a man *than* to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good. This also I have seen that it is from the hand of God.

25 For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him?

26 For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting so that he may give to one who is good in God's sight. This too is vanity and striving after wind.

On the Ebb and Flow of Human Activities

3:1 There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven—

- 2 A time to give birth and a time to die;
A time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted.
- 3 A time to kill and a time to heal;
A time to tear down and a time to build up.
- 4 A time to weep and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn and a time to dance.
- 5 A time to throw stones and a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace and a time to shun embracing.
- 6 A time to search and a time to give up as lost;
A time to keep and a time to throw away.
- 7 A time to tear apart and a time to sew together;
A time to be silent and a time to speak.
- 8 A time to love and a time to hate;
A time for war and a time for peace.

On the Occupation of Men

9 What profit is there to the worker from that in which he toils?

10 I have seen the task which God has given the sons of men with which to occupy themselves.

11 He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

12 I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and to do good in one's lifetime;

13 moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his labor—it is the gift of God.

14 I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him.

15 That which is has been already and that which will be has already been, for God seeks what has passed by.

On Injustice and God's Final Judgment

16 Furthermore, I have seen under the sun *that* in the place of justice there is wickedness and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness.

17 I said to myself, "God will judge both the righteous man and the wicked man," for a time for every matter and for every deed is there.

On the Fate of Men and Animals

18 I said to myself concerning the sons of men, "God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts."

19 For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other; indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over beast, for all is vanity.

20 All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust.

21 Who knows that the breath of man ascends upward and the breath of the beast descends downward to the earth?

22 I have seen that nothing is better than that man should be happy in his activities, for that is his lot. For who will bring him to see what will occur after him?

Ecclesiastes: The Teacher's Reflections – Part 2 (c. 937t–932t BC)

Ecclesiastes 4–8

On the Oppressed and their Condition

4:1 Then I looked again at all the acts of oppression which were being done under the sun. And behold *I saw* the tears of the oppressed and *that* they had no one to comfort *them*; and on the side of their oppressors was power, but they had no one to comfort *them*.

2 So I congratulated the dead who are already dead more than the living who are still living.

3 But better *off* than both of them is the one who has never existed, who has never seen the evil activity that is done under the sun.

On Labor and Gain

4 I have seen that every labor and every skill which is done is *the result of rivalry* between a man and his neighbor. This too is vanity and striving after wind.

5 The fool folds his hands and consumes his own flesh.

6 One hand full of rest is better than two fists full of labor and striving after wind.

On Companionship and the Benefits of Combined Effort

7 Then I looked again at vanity under the sun.

8 There was a certain man without a dependent, having neither a son nor a brother, yet there was no end to all his labor. Indeed, his eyes were not satisfied with riches *and he never asked*, “And for whom am I laboring and depriving myself of pleasure?” This too is vanity and it is a grievous task.

9 Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor.

10 For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.

11 Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm *alone*?

12 And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three *strands* is not quickly torn apart.

On Power and Succession

13 A poor yet wise lad is better than an old and foolish king who no longer knows *how* to receive instruction.

14 For he has come out of prison to become king, even though he was born poor in his kingdom.

15 I have seen all the living under the sun throng to the side of the second lad who replaces him.

16 There is no end to all the people, to all who were before them, and even the ones who will come later will not be happy with him, for this too is vanity and striving after wind.

On Vowing to God

5:1 Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil.

2 Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.

3 For the dream comes through much effort and the voice of a fool through many words.

4 When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for *He takes* no delight in fools. Pay what you vow!

5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.

6 Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger *of God* that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands?

7 For in many dreams and in many words there is emptiness. Rather, fear God.

On Politics and Corruption

8 If you see oppression of the poor and denial of justice and righteousness in the province, do not be shocked at the sight; for one official watches over another official, and there are higher officials over them.

9 After all, a king who cultivates the field is an advantage to the land.

On Wealth and Income

10 He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves abundance *with its* income. This too is vanity.

11 When good things increase, those who consume them increase. So what is the advantage to their owners except to look on?

12 The sleep of the working man is pleasant, whether he eats little or much; but the full stomach of the rich man does not allow him to sleep.

13 There is a grievous evil *which* I have seen under the sun: riches being hoarded by their owner to his hurt.

14 When those riches were lost through a bad investment and he had fathered a son, then there was nothing to support him.

15 As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so will he return as he came. He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that

he can carry in his hand.

16 This also is a grievous evil—exactly as a man is born, thus will he die. So what is the advantage to him who toils for the wind?

17 Throughout his life *he* also eats in darkness with great vexation, sickness and anger.

On Finding Contentment in Pleasing God

18 Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun *during* the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward.

19 Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.

20 For he will not often consider the years of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart.

On Being Unable to Enjoy Wealth

6:1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun and it is prevalent among men—

2 a man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor so that his soul lacks nothing of all that he desires; yet God has not empowered him to eat from them, for a foreigner enjoys them. This is vanity and a severe affliction.

3 If a man fathers a hundred *children* and lives many years, however many they be, but his soul is not satisfied with good things and he does not even have a *proper* burial, *then* I say, "Better the miscarriage than he,

4 for it comes in futility and goes into obscurity; and its name is covered in obscurity.

5 "It never sees the sun and it never knows *anything*; it is better off than he.

6 "Even if the *other* man lives a thousand years twice and does not enjoy good things—do not all go to one place?"

On Contentment

7 All a man's labor is for his mouth and yet the appetite is not satisfied.

8 For what advantage does the wise man have over the fool? What *advantage* does the poor man have, knowing *how* to walk before the living?

9 What the eyes see is better than what the soul desires. This too is futility and a striving after wind.

10 Whatever exists has already been named, and it is known what man is; for he cannot dispute with him who is stronger than he is.

11 For there are many words which increase futility. What *then* is the advantage to a man?

12 For who knows what is good for a man during *his* lifetime, *during* the few years of his futile life? He will spend them like a shadow. For who can tell a man what will be after him under the sun?

On Death and Sorrow

7:1 A good name is better than a good ointment,
And the day of *one's* death is better than the day of one's birth.

2 It is better to go to a house of mourning
Than to go to a house of feasting,
Because that is the end of every man,
And the living takes *it* to heart.

3 Sorrow is better than laughter,
For when a face is sad a heart may be happy.

4 The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning,
While the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.

On Fools

5 It is better to listen to the rebuke of a wise man
Than for one to listen to the song of fools.

6 For as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot,
So is the laughter of the fool;
And this too is futility.

7 For oppression makes a wise man mad,
And a bribe corrupts the heart.

8 The end of a matter is better than its beginning;
Patience of spirit is better than haughtiness of spirit.

9 Do not be eager in your heart to be angry,
For anger resides in the bosom of fools.

On Wisdom

- 10 Do not say, “Why is it that the former days were better than these?”
For it is not from wisdom that you ask about this.
- 11 Wisdom along with an inheritance is good
And an advantage to those who see the sun.
- 12 For wisdom is protection *just as* money is protection,
But the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the lives of its possessors.

On Good Times and Bad Times

- 13 Consider the work of God,
For who is able to straighten what He has bent?
- 14 In the day of prosperity be happy,
But in the day of adversity consider—
God has made the one as well as the other
So that man will not discover anything *that will be* after him.

On Living a Balanced Life

- 15 I have seen everything during my lifetime of futility; there is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness and there is a wicked man who prolongs *his life* in his wickedness.
- 16 Do not be excessively righteous and do not be overly wise. Why should you ruin yourself?
- 17 Do not be excessively wicked and do not be a fool. Why should you die before your time?
- 18 It is good that you grasp one thing and also not let go of the other; for the one who fears God comes forth with both of them.

On Wisdom and Speech

- 19 Wisdom strengthens a wise man more than ten rulers who are in a city.
- 20 Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who *continually* does good and who never sins. [cf. [Rom 3:10](#)]
- 21 Also, do not take seriously all words which are spoken, so that you will not hear your servant cursing you.
- 22 For you also have realized that you likewise have many times cursed others.

On Understanding Life

- 23 I tested all this with wisdom, *and* I said, “I will be wise,” but it was far from me.
- 24 What has been is remote and exceedingly mysterious. Who can discover it?
- 25 I directed my mind to know, to investigate and to seek wisdom and an explanation, and to know the evil of folly and the foolishness of madness.
- 26 And I discovered more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are chains. One who is pleasing to God will escape from her, but the sinner will be captured by her.
- 27 “Behold, I have discovered this,” says the Preacher, “*adding* one thing to another to find an explanation,
28 which I am still seeking but have not found. I have found one man among a thousand, but I have not found a woman among all these.
29 “Behold, I have found only this, that God made men upright, but they have sought out many devices.”

On Kings and Authority

- 8:1 Who is like the wise man and who knows the interpretation of a matter? A man’s wisdom illumines him and causes his stern face to beam.
- 2 I say, “Keep the command of the king because of the oath before God.
- 3 “Do not be in a hurry to leave him. Do not join in an evil matter, for he will do whatever he pleases.”
- 4 Since the word of the king is authoritative, who will say to him, “What are you doing?”
- 5 He who keeps a *royal* command experiences no trouble, for a wise heart knows the proper time and procedure.
- 6 For there is a proper time and procedure for every delight, though a man’s trouble is heavy upon him.

On the Uncertainty of Life

- 7 If no one knows what will happen, who can tell him when it will happen?
- 8 No man has authority to restrain the wind with the wind, or authority over the day of death; and there is no discharge in the time of war, and evil will not deliver those who practice it.

On Tyranny and Hypocrisy

9 All this I have seen and applied my mind to every deed that has been done under the sun wherein a man has exercised authority over *another* man to his hurt.

10 So then, I have seen the wicked buried, those who used to go in and out from the holy place, and they are *soon* forgotten in the city where they did thus. This too is futility.

On Crime and Punishment

11 Because the sentence against an evil deed is not executed quickly, therefore the hearts of the sons of men among them are given fully to do evil.

12 Although a sinner does evil a hundred *times* and may lengthen his *life*, still I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear Him openly.

13 But it will not be well for the evil man and he will not lengthen his days like a shadow, because he does not fear God.

On Bad Things Happening to Good People

14 There is futility which is done on the earth, that is, there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked. On the other hand, there are evil men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous. I say that this too is futility.

On the Futility of Trying to Understand Everything

15 So I commended pleasure, for there is nothing good for a man under the sun except to eat and to drink and to be merry, and this will stand by him in his toils *throughout* the days of his life which God has given him under the sun.

16 When I gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task which has been done on the earth (even though one should never sleep day or night),

17 and I saw every work of God, *I concluded* that man cannot discover the work which has been done under the sun. Even though man should seek laboriously, he will not discover; and though the wise man should say, "I know," he cannot discover.

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Ecclesiastes: The Teacher's Reflections – Part 3 (c. 937t–932t BC)**Ecclesiastes 9–12****On Living and Dying**

9:1 For I have taken all this to my heart and explain it that righteous men, wise men, and their deeds are in the hand of God. Man does not know whether *it will be* love or hatred; anything awaits him.

2 It is the same for all. There is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked; for the good, for the clean and for the unclean; for the man who offers a sacrifice and for the one who does not sacrifice. As the good man is, so is the sinner; as the swearer is, so is the one who is afraid to swear.

3 This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there is one fate for all men. Furthermore, the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards they *go* to the dead.

4 For whoever is joined with all the living, there is hope; surely a live dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten.

6 Indeed their love, their hate and their zeal have already perished, and they will no longer have a share in all that is done under the sun.

On Enjoying Life

7 Go *then*, eat your bread in happiness and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works.

8 Let your clothes be white all the time, and let not oil be lacking on your head.

9 Enjoy life with the woman whom you love all the days of your fleeting life which He has given to you under the sun; for this is your reward in life and in your toil in which you have labored under the sun.

10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do *it* with *all* your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.

On the Paradoxes of Life

11 I again saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift and the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise nor wealth to the discerning nor favor to men of ability; for time and chance overtake them all.

12 Moreover, man does not know his time: like fish caught in a treacherous net and birds trapped in a snare, so the sons of men are ensnared at an evil time when it suddenly falls on them.

On the Wisdom of the Poor

13 Also this I came to see as wisdom under the sun, and it impressed me.

14 There was a small city with few men in it and a great king came to it, surrounded it and constructed large siegeworks against it.

15 But there was found in it a poor wise man and he delivered the city by his wisdom. Yet no one remembered that poor man.

16 So I said, "Wisdom is better than strength." But the wisdom of the poor man is despised and his words are not heeded.

On Wisdom and Folly

17 The words of the wise heard in quietness are *better* than the shouting of a ruler among fools.

18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.

10:1 Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom *and* honor.

2 A wise man's heart *directs him* toward the right, but the foolish man's heart *directs him* toward the left.

3 Even when the fool walks along the road, his sense is lacking and he demonstrates to everyone *that* he is a fool.

On the Folly of Rulers

4 If the ruler's temper rises against you, do not abandon your position, because composure allays great offenses.

5 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, like an error which goes forth from the ruler—

6 folly is set in many exalted places while rich men sit in humble places.

7 I have seen slaves *riding* on horses and princes walking like slaves on the land.

On the Need for Wisdom in Work

8 He who digs a pit may fall into it, and a serpent may bite him who breaks through a wall.

9 He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, and he who splits logs may be endangered by them.

10 If the axe is dull and he does not sharpen *its* edge, then he must exert more strength. Wisdom has the advantage of giving success.

11 If the serpent bites before being charmed, there is no profit for the charmer.

On Wise Speech and Thought

12 Words from the mouth of a wise man are gracious, while the lips of a fool consume him;

13 the beginning of his talking is folly and the end of it is wicked madness.

14 Yet the fool multiplies words. No man knows what will happen, and who can tell him what will come after him?

15 The toil of a fool *so* wearies him that he does not *even* know how to go to a city.

On the Importance of Wise Leadership

16 Woe to you, O land, whose king is a lad and whose princes feast in the morning.

17 Blessed are you, O land, whose king is of nobility and whose princes eat at the appropriate time—for strength and not for drunkenness.

18 Through indolence the rafters sag, and through slackness the house leaks.

19 *Men* prepare a meal for enjoyment, and wine makes life merry, and money is the answer to everything.

20 Furthermore, in your bedchamber do not curse a king, and in your sleeping rooms do not curse a rich man, for a bird of the heavens will carry the sound and the winged creature will make the matter known.

On the Need for Diversification in Labor and Investment

11:1 Cast your bread on the surface of the waters, for you will find it after many days.

2 Divide your portion to seven, or even to eight, for you do not know what misfortune may occur on the earth.

3 If the clouds are full, they pour out rain upon the earth; and whether a tree falls toward the south or toward the north, wherever the tree falls, there it lies.

4 He who watches the wind will not sow and he who looks at the clouds will not reap.

5 Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones *are formed* in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things.

6 Sow your seed in the morning and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good.

On the Pleasures of Youth

7 The light is pleasant, and *it is* good for the eyes to see the sun.

8 Indeed, if a man should live many years, let him rejoice in them all, and let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many. Everything that is to come *will be* futility.

9 Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things.

10 So, remove grief and anger from your heart and put away pain from your body, because childhood and the prime of life are fleeting.

On Serving God Before Old Age Comes

12:1 Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, “I have no delight in them”;

2 before the sun and the light, the moon and the stars are darkened, and clouds return after the rain;

3 in the day that the watchmen of the house tremble, and mighty men stoop, the grinding ones stand idle because they are few, and those who look through windows grow dim;

4 and the doors on the street are shut as the sound of the grinding mill is low, and one will arise at the sound of the bird, and all the daughters of song will sing softly.

5 Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective. For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street.

6 *Remember Him* before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed;

7 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

Theme Repeated

8 “Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “all is vanity!”

Epilogue

9 In addition to being a wise man, the Preacher also taught the people knowledge; and he pondered, searched out and arranged many proverbs.

10 The Preacher sought to find delightful words and to write words of truth correctly.

11 The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of *these* collections are like well-driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd.

12 But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion *to books* is wearying to the body.

13 The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to* every person.

14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

The Death of Solomon (932t BC)

1 Kings 11:41–43	2 Chronicles 9:29–31
<p>41 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon and whatever he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon?</p> <p>42 Thus the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.</p> <p>43 And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David, and his son Rehoboam reigned in his place.</p>	<p>29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, are they not written in the records of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat?</p> <p>30 Solomon reigned forty years in Jerusalem over all Israel.</p> <p>31 And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam reigned in his place.</p>

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The Division of the Kingdom (931n BC)

1 Kings 12:1–24

Rehoboam is Confronted by Jeroboam

1 Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king.
 2 Now when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard *of it*, he was living in Egypt
 (for he was yet in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon).
 3 Then they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying,
 4 “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”
 5 Then he said to them,
 “Depart for three days, then return to me.”
 So the people departed.

Rehoboam Consults His Older Advisers

6 King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying,
 “How do you counsel *me* to answer this people?”
 7 Then they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to this people today, and will serve them and grant them their petition, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

God Causes Rehoboam to Reject the Elders’ Wise Advice

8 But he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had given him, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him.
 9 So he said to them, “What counsel do you give that we may answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us’?”
 10 The young men who grew up with him spoke to him, saying,
 “Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us!’ But you shall speak to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins!
 11 Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’”
 12 Then Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day as the king had directed, saying, “Return to me on the third day.”
 13 The king answered the people harshly, for he forsook the advice of the elders which they had given him,
 14 and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.”
 15 So the king did not listen to the people; for it was a turn *of events* from the LORD, that He might establish His word, which the LORD spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

2 Chronicles 10:1–11:4

10:1 Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king.
 2 When Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard *of it*
 (for he was in Egypt where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon),
 Jeroboam returned from Egypt.
 3 So they sent and summoned him. When Jeroboam and all Israel came, they spoke to Rehoboam, saying,
 4 “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”
 5 He said to them,
 “Return to me again in three days.”
 So the people departed.

6 Then King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying,
 “How do you counsel *me* to answer this people?”
 7 They spoke to him, saying, “If you will be kind to this people and please them
 and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.”

8 But he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had given him, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him.
 9 So he said to them, “What counsel do you give that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us’?”
 10 The young men who grew up with him spoke to him, saying,
 “Thus you shall say to the people who spoke to you, saying, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter for us.’ Thus you shall say to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins!
 11 Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I *will discipline you* with scorpions.’”
 12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day as the king had directed, saying, “Return to me on the third day.”
 13 The king answered them harshly, and King Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the elders.
 14 He spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father disciplined you with whips, but I *will discipline you* with scorpions.”
 15 So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn *of events* from God that the LORD might establish His word, which He spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

The Northern Tribes Revolt and Proclaim Jeroboam King

16 When all Israel *saw* that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, saying, “What portion do we have in David? *We have* no inheritance in the son of Jesse;

To your tents, O Israel! Now look after your own house, David!” So Israel departed to their tents.

17 But as for the sons of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem.

19 So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

20 It came about when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, that they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. None but the tribe of Judah followed the house of David.

God Prevents a Civil War

21 Now when Rehoboam had come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.

22 But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

23 “Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin and to the rest of the people, saying,

24 ‘Thus says the LORD, “You must not go up and fight against your relatives the sons of Israel; return every man to his house, for this thing has come from Me.”’” So they listened to the word of the LORD, and returned and went *their way* according to the word of the LORD.

16 When all Israel *saw* that the king did not listen to them the people answered the king, saying, “What portion do we have in David? *We have* no inheritance in the son of Jesse.

Every man to your tents, O Israel; Now look after your own house, David.” So all Israel departed to their tents.

17 But as for the sons of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

18 Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was over the forced labor, and the sons of Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem.

19 So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

11:1 Now when Rehoboam had come to Jerusalem, he assembled the house of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors, to fight against Israel to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.

2 But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

3 “Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

4 ‘Thus says the LORD, “You shall not go up or fight against your relatives; return every man to his house, for this thing is from Me.”’” So they listened to the words of the LORD and returned from going against Jeroboam.

The North and the South (931–929 BC)

1 Kings 12:25; 2 Chronicles 11:5–12

Jeroboam Fortifies the Northern Kingdom

1 Kgs 12:25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel.

Rehoboam Fortifies the Southern Kingdom

2 Chr 11:5 Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built cities for defense in Judah.

6 Thus he built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa,

7 Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam,

8 Gath, Mareshah, Ziph,

9 Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah,

10 Zorah, Aijalon and Hebron, which are fortified cities in Judah and in Benjamin.

11 He also strengthened the fortresses and put officers in them and stores of food, oil and wine.

12 He put shields and spears in every city and strengthened them greatly. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

Jeroboam’s Sin and Rehoboam’s Obedience (931–929 BC)

1 Kings 12:26–31; 2 Chronicles 11:13–17

Jeroboam Institutes a Religious System of His Own Making

1 Kgs 12:26 Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.

27 “If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their lord,

even to Rehoboam king of Judah; and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.”

28 So the king consulted, and made two golden calves, and he said to them, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt.”

29 He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

30 Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.

31 And he made houses on high places, and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi.

The Priests and Levites Move to Judah

2 Chr 11:13 Moreover, the priests and the Levites who were in all Israel stood with him [*Rehoboam*] from all their districts.

14 For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the LORD.

15 He set up priests of his own for the high places, for the satyrs and for the calves which he had made.

16 Those from all the tribes of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the LORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers.

17 They strengthened the kingdom of Judah and supported Rehoboam the son of Solomon for three years, for they walked in the way of David and Solomon for three years.

God Sends a Prophet to Bethel (c. 15 Marchesvan [November] 929 BC)

1 Kings 12:32–13:34

The Man of God Cries Out Against Jeroboam’s Altar

12:32 Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah, and he went up to the altar; thus he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves which he had made. And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made.

33 Then he went up to the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.

13:1 Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense.

2 He cried against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, “O altar, altar, thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.’”

3 Then he gave a sign the same day, saying, “This is the sign which the LORD has spoken, ‘Behold, the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on it shall be poured out.’”

4 Now when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Seize him.” But his hand which he stretched out against him dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself.

5 The altar also was split apart and the ashes were poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

Jeroboam’s False Repentance and Attempted Bribe

6 The king said to the man of God, “Please entreat the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.” So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored to him, and it became as it was before.

7 Then the king said to the man of God, “Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.”

8 But the man of God said to the king, “If you were to give me half your house I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place.

9 For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, ‘You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.’”

10 So he went another way and did not return by the way which he came to Bethel.

The Old Prophet’s Treachery

11 Now an old prophet was living in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the deeds which the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words which he had spoken to the king, these also they related to their father.

12 Their father said to them, “Which way did he go?” Now his sons had seen the way which the man of God who came from Judah had gone.

13 Then he said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” So they saddled the donkey for him and he rode away on it.

14 So he went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak; and he said to him, “Are you the man of God who came from Judah?” And he said, “I am.”

15 Then he said to him, “Come home with me and eat bread.”

16 He said, "I cannot return with you, nor go with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place.

17 For a command *came* to me by the word of the LORD, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water there; do not return by going the way which you came.'"

18 He said to him, "I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" *But* he lied to him.

God's Judgment Falls on the Man of God

19 So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house and drank water.

20 Now it came about, as they were sitting down at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back;

21 and he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because you have disobeyed the command of the LORD, and have not observed the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you,

22 but have returned and eaten bread and drunk water in the place of which He said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water"; your body shall not come to the grave of your fathers.'"

23 It came about after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

24 Now when he had gone, a lion met him on the way and killed him, and his body was thrown on the road, with the donkey standing beside it; the lion also was standing beside the body.

The Old Prophet Buries the Man of God

25 And behold, men passed by and saw the body thrown on the road, and the lion standing beside the body; so they came and told *it* in the city where the old prophet lived.

26 Now when the prophet who brought him back from the way heard *it*, he said, "It is the man of God, who disobeyed the command of the LORD; therefore the LORD has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him."

27 Then he spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle the donkey for me." And they saddled *it*.

28 He went and found his body thrown on the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body; the lion had not eaten the body nor torn the donkey.

29 So the prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey and brought it back, and he came to the city of the old prophet to mourn and to bury him.

30 He laid his body in his own grave, and they mourned over him, *saying*, "Alas, my brother!"

31 After he had buried him, he spoke to his sons, saying, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones.

32 For the thing shall surely come to pass which he cried by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria."

Jeroboam Hardens His Heart in Spite of the Miraculous Events

33 After this event Jeroboam did not return from his evil way, but again he made priests of the high places from among all the people; any who would, he ordained, to be priests of the high places.

34 This event became sin to the house of Jeroboam, even to blot *it* out and destroy *it* from off the face of the earth.

Jeroboam's Refusal to Repent Provokes God's Judgment (c. 928n BC)

1 Kings 14:1–18

1 At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam became sick.

2 Jeroboam said to his wife, "Arise now, and disguise yourself so that they will not know that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; behold, Ahijah the prophet is there, who spoke concerning me *that I would be* king over this people.

3 Take ten loaves with you, *some* cakes and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy."

4 Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age.

5 Now the LORD had said to Ahijah, "Behold, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son, for he is sick. You shall say thus and thus to her, for it will be when she arrives that she will pretend to be another woman."

6 When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet coming in the doorway, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam, why do you pretend to be another woman? For I am sent to you *with* a harsh *message*.

7 Go, say to Jeroboam, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over My people Israel,

8 and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you—yet you have not been like My servant David, who kept My commandments and who followed Me with all his heart, to do only that which was right in My sight;

9 you also have done more evil than all who were before you, and have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke Me to anger, and have cast Me behind your back—

10 therefore behold, I am bringing calamity on the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every male person, both bond and free in Israel, and I will make a clean sweep of the house of Jeroboam, as one sweeps away dung until it is all gone.

11 Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city the dogs will eat. And he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat; for the LORD has spoken *it*.”

12 “Now you, arise, go to your house. When your feet enter the city the child will die.

13 All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he alone of Jeroboam’s *family* will come to the grave, because in him something good was found toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.

14 Moreover, the LORD will raise up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on.

15 For the LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the *Euphrates* River, because they have made their Asherim, provoking the LORD to anger.

16 He will give up Israel on account of the sins of Jeroboam, which he committed and with which he made Israel to sin.”

17 Then Jeroboam’s wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah. As she was entering the threshold of the house, the child died.

18 All Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through His servant Ahijah the prophet.

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The Hebrew calendar was (and is) lunar-solar. Each month started with the new moon. Since twelve lunar months fall short of a full solar year, in some years a thirteenth month was added. In later years the formula was worked out with some exactitude as to when this should be done. The month that began near the spring equinox was called Nisan. The northern kingdom (Israel) considered the year to start in Nisan throughout its history, whereas for civil purposes Judah considered the year to start in the seventh month, Tishri, corresponding roughly to our October.
- 2) The Scriptures often give the number of the month instead of the month’s name, and when this is done the numbering always starts from Nisan, independently of whether the official year started in Nisan or Tishri. In the readings, the expression “931n” is used to represent the year beginning on Nisan 1, 931 BC and ending the day before Nisan 1, 930 BC. This is the kind of year that would be used in the court records of the northern kingdom. “931t” represents the year beginning Tishri 1, 931 BC and ending the day before Tishri 1, 930 BC; this is the kind of year that would be used in Judah. The six-month overlap of these two dates is written as 931t/930n, meaning the time period that began on Tishri 1 of 931 BC and ended the day before Nisan 1 of 930 BC. The overlap of 932t and 931n is written 931n/931t. This method of expressing dates may be called the “Nisan/Tishri” notation.¹

¹ Rodger C. Young, “Tables of Reign Lengths from the Hebrew Court Records,” *JETS* 48/2 (June 2005): 225.

Rehoboam's Dynasty (972–915 BC)

1 Kings 14:21	2 Chronicles 11:18–23; 12:13
<p>21 Now Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah.</p> <p>Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.</p>	<p>12:13 So King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and reigned.</p> <p>Now Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess.</p> <p>11:18 Then Rehoboam took as a wife Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David and of Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse,</p> <p>19 and she bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah and Zaham.</p> <p>20 After her he took Maacah the [grand]daughter of Absalom, and she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza and Shelomith.</p> <p>21 Rehoboam loved Maacah the [grand]daughter of Absalom more than all his other wives and concubines. For he had taken eighteen wives and sixty concubines and fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters.</p> <p>22 Rehoboam appointed Abijah the son of Maacah as head and leader among his brothers, for he intended to make him king.</p> <p>23 He acted wisely and distributed some of his sons through all the territories of Judah and Benjamin to all the fortified cities, and he gave them food in abundance. And he sought many wives for them.</p>

Rehoboam Forsakes God in His Fourth Year (928t BC)

1 Kings 14:22–24	2 Chronicles 12:1, 14
<p>22 Judah did evil in the sight of the LORD,</p> <p>and they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers had done, with the sins which they committed.</p> <p>23 For they also built for themselves high places and <i>sacred</i> pillars and Asherim on every high hill and beneath every luxuriant tree.</p> <p>24 There were also male cult prostitutes in the land. They did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel.</p>	<p>1 When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the LORD.</p> <p>14 He did evil because he did not set his heart to seek the LORD.</p>

God Sends Shishak to Discipline Judah (927t BC)

1 Kings 14:25–28	2 Chronicles 12:2–12
<p>25 Now it happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.</p>	<p>2 And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem</p> <p>3 with 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen. And the people who came with him from Egypt were without number: the Lubim, the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians.</p> <p>4 He captured the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem.</p> <p>5 Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, 'You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you to Shishak.'"</p> <p>6 So the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is righteous."</p> <p>7 When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word</p>

<p>26 He took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and he took everything, even taking all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.</p> <p>27 So King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place, and committed them to the care of the commanders of the guard who guarded the doorway of the king's house.</p> <p>28 Then it happened as often as the king entered the house of the LORD, that the guards would carry them and would bring them back into the guards' room.</p>	<p>of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves so I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some <i>measure</i> of deliverance, and My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak.</p> <p>8 But they will become his slaves so that they may learn <i>the difference between</i> My service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries."</p> <p>9 So 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 palace. He took everything; he even took the golden shields which Solomon had made.</p> <p>10 Then King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place and committed them to the care of the commanders of the guard who guarded the door of the king's house.</p> <p>11 As often as the king entered the house of the LORD, the guards came and carried them and <i>then</i> brought them back into the guards' room.</p> <p>12 And when he humbled himself, the anger of the LORD turned away from him, so as not to destroy <i>him</i> completely; and also conditions were good in Judah.</p>
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The Death of Rehoboam (915t BC)

1 Kings 14:29–31	2 Chronicles 12:15–16
<p>29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?</p> <p>30 There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.</p> <p>31 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David; and his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And Abijam his son became king in his place.</p>	<p>15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer, according to genealogical enrollment?</p> <p>And <i>there were</i> wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.</p> <p>16 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David; and his son Abijah became king in his place.</p>

Abijah, Rehoboam's Son, Assumes the Throne of Judah (915t BC)

1 Kings 15:1–2	2 Chronicles 13:1–2a
<p>1 Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah.</p> <p>2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Maacah</p> <p>the [<i>grand</i>]daughter of Abishalom [<i>Absalom</i>].</p>	<p>1 In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah.</p> <p>2a He reigned three years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Micaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.</p>

Abijah's War With Jeroboam (c. 914t BC)

2 Chronicles 13:2b–20a
<p>Abijah Is Outnumbered</p> <p>2b Now there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.</p> <p>3 Abijah began the battle with an army of valiant warriors, 400,000 chosen men, while Jeroboam drew up in battle formation against him with 800,000 chosen men <i>who were</i> valiant warriors.</p> <p>Abijah's Speech</p> <p>4 Then Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said, "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel:</p> <p>5 Do you not know that the LORD God of Israel gave the rule over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt?</p> <p>6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up and rebelled against his master,</p>

7 and worthless men gathered about him, scoundrels, who proved too strong for Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, when he was young and timid and could not hold his own against them.

8 So now you intend to resist the kingdom of the LORD through the sons of David, being a great multitude and *having* with you the golden calves which Jeroboam made for gods for you.

9 Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests like the peoples of *other* lands? Whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams, even he may become a priest of *what are* no gods.

10 But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the sons of Aaron are ministering to the LORD as priests, and the Levites attend to their work.

11 Every morning and evening they burn to the LORD burnt offerings and fragrant incense, and the showbread is *set* on the clean table, and the golden lampstand with its lamps is *ready* to light every evening; for we keep the charge of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken Him.

12 Now behold, God is with us at *our* head and His priests with the signal trumpets to sound the alarm against you. O sons of Israel, do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers, for you will not succeed.”

God Helps Abijah Win a Victory Over Jeroboam

13 But Jeroboam had set an ambush to come from the rear, so that *Israel* was in front of Judah and the ambush was behind them.

14 When Judah turned around, behold, they were attacked both front and rear; so they cried to the LORD, and the priests blew the trumpets.

15 Then the men of Judah raised a war cry, and when the men of Judah raised the war cry, then it was that God routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

16 When the sons of Israel fled before Judah, God gave them into their hand.

17 Abijah and his people defeated them with a great slaughter, so that 500,000 chosen men of Israel fell slain.

18 Thus the sons of Israel were subdued at that time, and the sons of Judah conquered because they trusted in the LORD, the God of their fathers.

19 Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured from him *several* cities, Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron with its villages.

20a Jeroboam did not again recover strength in the days of Abijah;

The Death of Abijah (912t BC)

1 Kings 15:3–8

3 He walked in all the sins of his father which he had committed before him; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, like the heart of his father David.

4 But for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to raise up his son after him and to establish Jerusalem;

5 because David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite.

6 There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his [*Abijah's*] life.

7 Now the rest of the acts of Abijah and all that he did, are they not written in the

Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

8 And Abijah slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David; and Asa his son became king in his place.

2 Chronicles 13:21–14:1a

13:21 But Abijah became powerful; and took fourteen wives to himself, and became the father of twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters.

22 Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways and his words are written in the treatise of the prophet Iddo.

14:1a So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, and his son Asa became king in his place.

Asa, Abijah's Son, Assumes the Throne of Judah (912t BC)

1 Kings 15:9–10

9 So in the twentieth year of Jeroboam the king of Israel, Asa began to reign as king of Judah.

10 He reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem; and his [grand]mother's name was Maacah the [*grand*]daughter of Abishalom [*Absalom*].

Asa's Early Reign Marked by Religious Reform (c. 912–907 BC)

1 Kings 15:11–12

11 Asa did what was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father.

12 He also put away the male cult prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols which his fathers had made.

2 Chronicles 14:2–5a

2 Asa did good and right in the sight of the LORD his God,

3 for he removed the foreign altars and high places,

tore down the *sacred* pillars, cut down the Asherim,

4 and commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers and to observe the law and the commandment.

5a He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah.

The Death of Jeroboam (910n BC)

1 Kings 14:19–20

19 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he made war and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.

20 The time that Jeroboam reigned *was* twenty-two years; and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his place.

2 Chronicles 13:20b

20b and the LORD struck him and he died.

Nadab, Jeroboam's Son, Assumes the Throne of Israel (910n BC)

1 Kings 15:25–26

25 Now Nadab the son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned over Israel two years.

26 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father and in his sin which he made Israel sin.

Nadab is Assassinated by Baasha (909n BC)

1 Kings 15:27–28, 31

27 Then Baasha the son of Ahijah of the house of Issachar conspired against him, and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, while Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon.

28 So Baasha killed him in the third year of Asa king of Judah and reigned in his place.

31 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Baasha of Issachar Assumes the Throne of Israel (909n BC)

1 Kings 15:29–30, 33–34

33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah became king over all Israel at Tirzah, *and reigned* twenty-four years.

29 It came about as soon as he was king, he struck down all the household of Jeroboam. He did not leave to Jeroboam any persons alive, until he had destroyed them, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Ahijah the Shilonite,

30 *and* because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, because of his provocation with which he provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger.

34 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel sin.

God Rewards Asa's Reforms With Peace (c. 907–897 BC)

2 Chronicles 14:1b, 5b–8

1b The land was undisturbed for ten years during his days.

5b And the kingdom was undisturbed under him.

6 He built fortified cities in Judah, since the land was undisturbed, and there was no one at war with him during those years, because the LORD had given him rest.

7 For he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and surround *them* with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought Him, and He has given us rest on every side." So they built and prospered.

8 Now Asa had an army of 300,000 from Judah, bearing large shields and spears, and 280,000 from Benjamin, bearing shields and wielding bows; all of them were valiant warriors.

Zerah the Cushite Attacks the Southern Kingdom (897t BC)

2 Chronicles 14:9–15:7

Asa Asks God for Help

14:9 Now Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots, and he came to Mareshah.

10 So Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up in battle formation in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

11 Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, "LORD, there is no one besides You to help *in the battle* between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O LORD our God, for we trust in You, and in Your name have come against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; let not man prevail against You."

God Answers Asa's Prayer

12 So the LORD routed the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.

13 Asa and the people who *were* with him pursued them as far as Gerar; and so many Ethiopians fell that they could not recover, for they were shattered before the LORD and before His army. And they carried away very much plunder.

14 They destroyed all the cities around Gerar, for the dread of the LORD had fallen on them; and they despoiled all the cities, for there was much plunder in them.

15 They also struck down those who owned livestock, and they carried away large numbers of sheep and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

Azariah Encourages Asa to Continue/Renew His Religious Reforms

15:1 Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded,

2 and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the LORD is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.

3 For many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law.

4 But in their distress they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him.

5 In those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands.

6 Nation was crushed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every kind of distress.

7 But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is reward for your work."

The Southern Kingdom Swears Allegiance to Yahweh (Sivan [June] 896t BC)

1 Kings 15:13–15

2 Chronicles 15:8–19

8 Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke, he took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. He then restored the altar of the LORD which was in front of the porch of the LORD.

9 He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them, for many defected to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

10 So they assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign.

<p>13 He also removed Maacah his [grand]mother from <i>being</i> queen mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah; and Asa cut down her horrid image and burned <i>it</i> at the brook Kidron.</p> <p>14 But the high places were not taken away; nevertheless the heart of Asa was wholly devoted to the LORD all his days.</p> <p>15 He brought into the house of the LORD the dedicated things of his father and his own dedicated things: silver and gold and utensils.</p>	<p>11 They sacrificed to the LORD that day 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought.</p> <p>12 They entered into the covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and soul;</p> <p>13 and whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman.</p> <p>14 Moreover, they made an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets and with horns.</p> <p>15 All Judah rejoiced concerning the oath, for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought Him earnestly, and He let them find Him. So the LORD gave them rest on every side.</p> <p>16 He also removed Maacah, the mother of King Asa, from the <i>position of</i> queen mother, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah, and Asa cut down her horrid image, crushed <i>it</i> and burned <i>it</i> at the brook Kidron.</p> <p>17 But the high places were not removed from Israel; nevertheless Asa's heart was blameless all his days.</p> <p>18 He brought into the house of God the dedicated things of his father and his own dedicated things: silver and gold and utensils.</p> <p>19 And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign [<i>counted from the division</i>].</p>
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Baasha Attacks Judah (896t BC)

1 Kings 15:16–22, 32	2 Chronicles 16:1–10
<p>16 Now there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.</p> <p>17 Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent <i>anyone</i> from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah.</p> <p>18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold which were left in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the treasuries of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying,</p> <p>19 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you a present of silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."</p> <p>20 So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah and all Chinneroth, besides all the land of Naphtali.</p> <p>21 When Baasha heard of it, he ceased fortifying Ramah and remained in Tirzah.</p> <p>22 Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah—none was exempt—and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had built. And King Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.</p>	<p>1 In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent <i>anyone</i> from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah. [cf. 2 Chr 15:9]</p> <p>2 Then Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the king's house,</p> <p>and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying,</p> <p>3 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me."</p> <p>4 So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim and all the store cities of Naphtali.</p> <p>5 When Baasha heard of it, he ceased fortifying Ramah and stopped his work.</p> <p>6 Then King Asa brought all Judah,</p> <p>and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had been building, and with them he fortified Geba and Mizpah.</p> <p>7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you have relied on the king of Aram and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the</p>

<p>32 There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.</p>	<p>king of Aram has escaped out of your hand. 8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand. 9 For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars.” 10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time.</p>
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The Death of Baasha (886n BC)

1 Kings 16:1–7

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying,
 2 “Inasmuch as I exalted you from the dust and made you leader over My people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have made My people Israel sin, provoking Me to anger with their sins,
 3 behold, I will consume Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
 4 Anyone of Baasha who dies in the city the dogs will eat, and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat.”
 5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha and what he did and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?
 6 And Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son became king in his place.
 7 Moreover, the word of the LORD through the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani also came against Baasha and his household, both because of all the evil which he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he struck it.

Elah, Baasha’s Son, Assumes the Throne of Israel (886n BC)

1 Kings 16:8

8 In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel at Tirzah, *and reigned* two years.

Elah is Assassinated by Zimri (885n BC)

1 Kings 16:9–10, 14

9 His servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. Now he *was* at Tirzah drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who *was* over the household at Tirzah.
 10 Then Zimri went in and struck him and put him to death in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and became king in his place.
 14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Zimri—King For a Week (885n BC)

1 Kings 16:11–13, 15–20

15a In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days at Tirzah.
 11 It came about when he became king, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he killed all the household of Baasha; he did not leave a single male, neither of his relatives nor of his friends.
 12 Thus Zimri destroyed all the household of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke against Baasha through Jehu the prophet,
 13 for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned and which they made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols.
 15b Now the people were camped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines.
 16 The people who were camped heard it said, “Zimri has conspired and has also struck down the king.” Therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp.
 17 Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah.

18 When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house over him with fire, and died,
 19 because of his sins which he sinned, doing evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, making Israel sin.
 20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri and his conspiracy which he carried out, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

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Chronological Notes

- 1) The account of Asa's reign over the Southern Kingdom as recorded in 2 Chronicles contains several chronological notes:
 - A) 2 Chr 14:1 – during the first part of Asa's reign, the land "had rest for 10 years."
 - B) 2 Chr 15:10 – the Southern Kingdom swore allegiance to Yahweh in the "third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign."
 - C) 2 Chr 15:19 – there was "no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign."
 - D) 2 Chr 16:1 – "In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign, King Baasha of Israel attacked Judah."
 - E) 2 Chr 16:12 – "In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa developed a foot disease."
 - F) 2 Chr 16:13 – "Asa passed away in the forty-first year of his reign."

- 2) These chronological markers create a significant problem for the OT chronologist: 1 Kings 15:33 records that Baasha ruled for 24 years, while 1 Kings 16:8 reports that Elah succeeded Baasha in the twenty-sixth year of Asa. Clearly, Baasha could not have been alive in Asa's thirty-sixth year where 2 Chronicles 16:1 places him.

- 3) The only current solution which harmonizes Kings and Chronicles and leaves the text of the MT as it stands is that taken by Thiele¹ and Steinmann²: the dates mentioned in 2 Chr 15:19 and 2 Chr 16:1 should be taken as dynastic years, dated from the division of the kingdom (hence my insertion of the words "[counted from the division]"). Noting that Rehoboam reigned for 17 years and Abijah for 3 years, we are able to subtract 20 years from the references which then become the 15th and 16th years of Asa's reign and synchronize with the years of Baasha. The passage can then be read as follows: the victory celebration after the battle with Zerah in the 15th year included large numbers of Israelites who had defected from the northern kingdom to join Asa (2 Chr 15:9). This defection prompted Baasha to fortify Ramah to prevent further desertion (2 Chr 16:1b).

- 4) This solution, while ingenious, is not without problems:³
 - A) Of the hundreds of bits of data for the chronology of the divided monarchy, this would be the only occasion of dating from the schism. It would be unique to this passage and it is therefore arbitrary to appeal to it—an example of special pleading.
 - B) It ignores the plain sense of the text that these were the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years "of Asa's reign." The formulae used for these regnal years are identical to the formulae used throughout Chronicles as well as in Kings and generally throughout the OT to cite the regnal years of individual kings. While it is certainly allowable that the Chronicler used a doublet account to achieve his purposes, it is hard to argue that the Chronicler intended anything other than the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years of Asa's reign. Re-dating by eliminating the twenty years of earlier reigns in Judah also does not ease the inerrancy question: The specter remains that the Chronicler may have misunderstood some sources which dated from the schism, for this was certainly not his intent or practice.
 - C) This reconstruction would also play havoc with the Chronicler's argument and theological method. While in effect emending 15:19 and 16:1, it leaves the date in 16:12 untouched. This results in the following sequence: victory celebration in the fifteenth year, attack by Baasha in the sixteenth year, the rebuke of the prophet and his imprisonment, all presumably in the sixteenth through eighteenth years, and the foot disease in the thirty-ninth year. The foot disease as

¹ Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, 57–61.

² Andrew Steinmann, *From Paul to Abraham*, 152–153.

³ Raymond Dillard, "The Reign of Asa (2 Chronicles 14–16): An Example of the Chronicler's Theological Method," *JETS* 23:3 (Sept 1980): 207–218.

retribution would come over 20 years after the offense. The cycles of obedience-blessing and sin-punishment that everywhere characterize the Chronicler are thereby destroyed. If 16:12 is also reduced by twenty years so that the foot disease is contracted in the nineteenth year, then it took 22 years for it to kill him—and that will not work either.

- D) This method would also fail to take account of the Chronicler's careful introduction of chronological patterns into his accounts of various reigns to achieve his theological purposes. The example from the reign of Rehoboam has been discussed above (see Dillard's paper); the treatment of Josiah is also particularly interesting.
- 5) In conclusion, at this time and subject to further research, I have decided to present the reading as following the current harmonization solution. As Selman comments, "No solution, therefore commends itself with any confidence."⁴
- A) One potential solution is offered by Kohlberg: regnal overlaps for Abijah and Asa. Thus the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign would be dated from his nomination as vice-regent to Abijah.⁵

Commentary Notes

- 1) At first glance, the mention that Asa "removed the pagan altars and the high places" (2 Chr 14:3) seems to be in tension with the statement that "the high places were not eliminated from Israel" (2 Chr 15:17); many regard these two statements as fiat contradictions or a measure of the author's incompetence as a historian. Rather than dismiss efforts to ease the apparent contradiction as unconscionably harmonistic, it would be more plausible to assume that in the author's mind the two statements were not in tension; it is unlikely that either the author or a later editor would contradict himself in such short compass. (1) Since 15:17 occurs toward the end of Asa's reign, presumably in some proximity to his thirty-fifth year from the narrator's viewpoint (15:19), and 14:3 refers to early reforms, an intervening period of up to thirty years is possible. The two statements could be understood as no more than evidence of the resilience of the indigenous cults which plagued Judah's history and required repeated reformation. (2) It is also possible that the Chronicler's insertion of the words "from Israel" in 15:17 is intended to indicate that Asa did not remove the high places from the cities earlier belonging to the Northern Kingdom and then under his sway; contrast the explicit statement that he removed the high places "from all the cities of Judah" (14:5). This difficulty is not unique to the Chronicler's account of Asa, but recurs in his statements that Jehoshaphat did (17:6) and did not (20:33) remove the high places.⁶

⁴ Martin J. Selman, "2 Chronicles," TOTC, 415.

⁵ Bruno Kohlberg, "Redating the Hebrew Kings," 57–61. Online: <http://www.redatedkings.com/download/Redating.pdf>.

⁶ Raymond B. Dillard, "2 Chronicles," WBC, 118.

Tibni and Omri—A Tale of Two Rival Kings (885n–880n BC)

1 Kings 16:21–22

21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; the *other* half followed Omri.

22 But the people who followed Omri prevailed over the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. And Tibni died and Omri became king.

Omri, Commander of the Army, Begins Sole Reign of Israel (880n/880t BC)

1 Kings 16:23–24

23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri became king over Israel *and reigned* twelve years; he reigned six years at Tirzah.

24 He bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; and he built on the hill, and named the city which he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.

The Death of Omri (874n BC)

1 Kings 16:25–28

25 Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, and acted more wickedly than all who *were* before him.

26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and in his sins which he made Israel sin, provoking the LORD God of Israel with their idols.

27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did and his might which he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

28 So Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria; and Ahab his son became king in his place.

Ahab, Omri's son, Assumes the Throne of Israel (874n BC)

1 Kings 16:29

29 Now Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel in the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years.

Asa Develops a Foot Disease (873t BC)

1 Kings 15:23b

23b But in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

2 Chronicles 16:12

12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.

The Death of Asa (871t BC)

1 Kings 15:23a–24

23a Now the rest of all the acts of Asa and all his might and all that he did and the cities which he built, are they not written in the

Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

24 And Asa slept with his fathers

and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father;

and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place.

2 Chronicles 16:11, 13–14; 17:1

16:11 Now, the acts of Asa from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

13 So Asa slept with his fathers, having died in the forty-first year of his reign.

14 They buried him in his own tomb which he had cut out for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the resting place which he had filled with spices of various kinds blended by the perfumers' art; and they made a very great fire for him.

17:1 Jehoshaphat his son then became king in his place, and made his position over Israel firm.

Jehoshaphat, Asa's Son, Begins Sole Reign of Judah (871t/870n BC)

1 Kings 22:41–42

2 Chronicles 20:31

41 Now Jehoshaphat the son of Asa became king over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.
42 Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem.
And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

31 Now Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah.

He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years.
And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.

Jehoshaphat's Early Reign Marked by Religious Reform (870–868 BC)

1 Kings 22:43, 46

2 Chronicles 17:3–4, 6–9; 20:32–33

Jehoshaphat's Religious Reforms

46 The remnant of the sodomites who remained in the days of his father Asa, he expelled from the land.
43a He walked in all the way of Asa his father; he did not turn aside from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD.

Jehoshaphat Orders the Law to be Taught in Judah

Not Everyone Shares Jehoshaphat's Love of Yahweh

43b However, the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and burnt incense on the high places.

17:3 The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father David's earlier days and did not seek the Baals,
17:4 but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did.
17:6 He took great pride in the ways of the LORD and again removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah.

20:32 He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not depart from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD.

17:7 Then in the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah;
17:8 and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tobadonijah, the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests.
17:9 They taught in Judah, *having* the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

20:33 The high places, however, were not removed; the people had not yet directed their hearts to the God of their fathers.

God Rewards Jehoshaphat's Faithfulness (c. 868 – c. 854 BC)

2 Chronicles 17:2, 5, 10–18:1a

God Helps Jehoshaphat Secure His Kingdom

17:2 He placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had captured.

5 So the LORD established the kingdom in his control, and all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor.

God Causes the Surrounding Kingdoms to Fear Judah

10 Now the dread of the LORD was on all the kingdoms of the lands which *were* around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat.

11 Some of the Philistines brought gifts and silver as tribute to Jehoshaphat; the Arabians also brought him flocks, 7,700 rams and 7,700 male goats.

Jehoshaphat's Wealth and Power Continues to Grow as God Blesses Him

12 So Jehoshaphat grew greater and greater, and he built fortresses and store cities in Judah.

13 He had large supplies in the cities of Judah, and warriors, valiant men, in Jerusalem.
 14 This was their muster according to their fathers' households: of Judah, commanders of thousands, Adnah *was* the commander, and with him 300,000 valiant warriors;
 15 and next to him *was* Johanan the commander, and with him 280,000;
 16 and next to him Amasiah the son of Zichri, who volunteered for the LORD, and with him 200,000 valiant warriors;
 17 and of Benjamin, Eliada a valiant warrior, and with him 200,000 armed with bow and shield;
 18 and next to him Jehozabad, and with him 180,000 equipped for war.
 19 These are they who served the king, apart from those whom the king put in the fortified cities through all Judah.
 18:1a Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor;

Ahab's Reign Marked by Great Evil (874n – c. 860 BC)

1 Kings 16:30–34

30 Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him.
 31 It came about, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went to serve Baal and worshiped him.
 32 So he erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal which he built in Samaria.
 33 Ahab also made the Asherah. Thus Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel than all the kings of Israel who were before him.
 34 In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the *loss of* Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the *loss of* his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun. [cf. [Josh 6:26](#)]

Elijah Proclaims God's Judgment on Ahab (c. 860n BC)

1 Kings 17

Elijah Foretells Drought

1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word." [[Jam 5:17](#)]

Elijah Fed by Ravens

2 The word of the LORD came to him, saying,
 3 "Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.
 4 It shall be that you will drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there."
 5 So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan.
 6 The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook.
 7 It happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

The Widow of Zarephath

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, [cf. [Luke 4:25–26](#)]
 9 "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you."
 10 So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, "Please get me a little water in a jar, that I may drink."
 11 As she was going to get *it*, he called to her and said, "Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand."
 12 But she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die."
 13 Then Elijah said to her, "Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it first and bring *it* out to me, and afterward you may make *one* for yourself and for your son.
 14 For thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain on the face of the earth.'"
 15 So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for *many* days.
 16 The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through Elijah.

The Widow's Son Raised

17 Now it came about after these things that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became sick; and his sickness was so severe that there was no breath left in him.
 18 So she said to Elijah, "What do I have to do with you, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my iniquity to remembrance and to put my son to death!"

19 He said to her, "Give me your son." Then he took him from her bosom and carried him up to the upper room where he was living, and laid him on his own bed.

20 He called to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought calamity to the widow with whom I am staying, by causing her son to die?"

21 Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and called to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray You, let this child's life return to him."

22 The LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived.

23 Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house and gave him to his mother; and Elijah said, "See, your son is alive."

24 Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth."

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Chronological Notes

- 1) At first glance the chronology for Omri's reign seems wrong. The text says he ruled twelve years, beginning with Asa's thirty-first year. Asa reigned forty-one years (1 Kgs 15:10), which seems to create a gap of two years. What has occurred, however, is that the twelve years reflects the "coreign" of Tibni and Omri (885n–880n) and the length of time Omri ruled on his own (880n–874n). Thiele states that in this case the author utilizes a dual dating procedure "that is used for all three of the overlapping reigns in Israel and for two in Judah." Thus, Omri comes to power in Asa's twenty-seventh year after Zimri's murder of Elah (1 Kgs 16:15), fights Tibni until the thirty-first year of Asa (1 Kgs 16:23), and dies in Asa's thirty-eighth year, a total of twelve years by the northern means of reckoning reigns.¹
- 2) The text says that Jehoshaphat's reign lasted twenty-five years (1 Kgs 22:42; 2 Chr 20:31). Thiele concludes that this total includes a three-year coregency with Asa (873t–871t) and a five-year coregency with Jehoram (854t–848t). These calculations coordinate the statements about these men's reigns made in 1 Kings 15:24; 22:51–52 and 2 Kings 1:17; 3:1; 8:16–24. They also link their reigns with the northern kings of the same era and perhaps explain who ruled Israel during the disease Asa suffered (2 Chr 16:11–12).²
- 3) The chronology of the stories of Elijah is difficult to reconstruct, but the reference to Jehu and Hazael (1 Kgs 19:15–17) suggests that they were persons already known to Elijah. Jehu, however, did not become king until 841n, twelve years after Ahab's death in 853n, and he reigned for twenty-eight years. It would seem, then, that Elijah's commission came late in Ahab's life. We know also that it came at least four years before the king's death. The basis for this assertion is that the commission was given before Ben-Hadad's siege of Samaria, which in turn was four years before Ahab was slain in the Ramoth Gilead campaign of 853n (1 Kgs 20:1, 26; 22:1). A date of 857 for Elijah's trek to Horeb would appear to be reasonable. Since that journey was after the three-year drought, Elijah must have first encountered Ahab in about 860, fourteen years after he had commenced his reign. This would be ample time for the apostate conditions described in the narrative to have taken firm root.³

¹ Paul R. House, "1, 2 Kings," *NAC*, 202.

² *Ibid*, 242.

³ Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 346.

Showdown on Mount Carmel (c. 857n BC)

1 Kings 18

God Sends Elijah Back to Ahab

1 Now it happened *after* many days that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, “Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the face of the earth.”

2 So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine *was* severe in Samaria.

3 Ahab called Obadiah who *was* over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly;

4 for when Jezebel destroyed the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water.)

5 Then Ahab said to Obadiah, “Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the valleys; perhaps we will find grass and keep the horses and mules alive, and not have to kill some of the cattle.”

6 So they divided the land between them to survey it; Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way by himself.

7 Now as Obadiah was on the way, behold, Elijah met him, and he recognized him and fell on his face and said, “Is this you, Elijah my master?”

8 He said to him, “It is I. Go, say to your master, ‘Behold, Elijah *is here*.’”

9 He said, “What sin have I committed, that you are giving your servant into the hand of Ahab to put me to death?”

10 As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent to search for you; and when they said, ‘He is not *here*,’ he made the kingdom or nation swear that they could not find you.

11 And now you are saying, ‘Go, say to your master, “Behold, Elijah *is here*.”’

12 It will come about when I leave you that the Spirit of the LORD will carry you where I do not know; so when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although *I* your servant have feared the LORD from my youth.

13 Has it not been told to my master what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, that I hid a hundred prophets of the LORD by fifties in a cave, and provided them with bread and water?

14 And now you are saying, ‘Go, say to your master, “Behold, Elijah *is here*”; he will then kill me.’”

15 Elijah said, “As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today.”

Elijah Orders Ahab to Assemble Israel and the Prophets of Baal

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, “Is this you, you troubler of Israel?”

18 He said, “I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house *have*, because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and you have followed the Baals.

19 Now then send *and* gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, *together* with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel’s table.”

20 So Ahab sent *a message* among all the sons of Israel and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel.

Elijah’s Challenge

21 Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long *will* you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people did not answer him a word.

22 Then Elijah said to the people, “I alone am left a prophet of the LORD, but Baal’s prophets are 450 men.

23 Now let them give us two oxen; and let them choose one ox for themselves and cut it up, and place it on the wood, but put no fire *under it*; and I will prepare the other ox and lay it on the wood, and I will not put a fire *under it*.

24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the LORD, and the God who answers by fire, He is God.” And all the people said, “That is a good idea.”

Elijah Mocks the Prophets of Baal

25 So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one ox for yourselves and prepare it first for you are many, and call on the name of your god, but put no fire *under it*.”

26 Then they took the ox which was given them and they prepared it and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon saying, “O Baal, answer us.” But there was no voice and no one answered. And they leaped about the altar which they made.

27 It came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened.”

28 So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them.

29 When midday was past, they raved until the time of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice; but there was no voice, no one answered, and no one paid attention.

Yahweh Demonstrates His Power

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come near to me.” So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the LORD

which had been torn down.

31 Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, “Israel shall be your name.”

32 So with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and he made a trench around the altar, large enough to hold two measures of seed.

33 Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid *it* on the wood.

34 And he said, “Fill four pitchers with water and pour *it* on the burnt offering and on the wood.” And he said, “Do it a second time,” and they did it a second time. And he said, “Do it a third time,” and they did it a third time.

35 The water flowed around the altar and he also filled the trench with water.

36 At the time of the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, Elijah the prophet came near and said, “O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things at Your word.

37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that You, O LORD, are God, and *that* You have turned their heart back again.”

38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

39 When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, “The LORD, He is God; the LORD, He is God.”

Prophets of Baal Executed

40 Then Elijah said to them, “Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape.” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

The Prayer of a Righteous Man

41 Now Elijah said to Ahab, “Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of the roar of a *heavy* shower.”

42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. But Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he crouched down on the earth and put his face between his knees. [[James 5:16–18](#)]

43 He said to his servant, “Go up now, look toward the sea.” So he went up and looked and said, “There is nothing.” And he said, “Go back “ seven times.

44 It came about at the seventh *time*, that he said, “Behold, a cloud as small as a man’s hand is coming up from the sea.” And he said, “Go up, say to Ahab, ‘Prepare *your chariot* and go down, so that the *heavy* shower does not stop you.’”

45 In a little while the sky grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy shower. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.

46 Then the hand of the LORD was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and outran Ahab to Jezreel.

The Aftermath—Elijah’s Discouragement and Elisha’s Call (c. 857n BC)

1 Kings 19

Jezebel Threatens to Kill Elijah

1 Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.”

Elijah On the Run

3 And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers.”

5 He lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and behold, there was an angel touching him, and he said to him, “Arise, eat.”

6 Then he looked and behold, there was at his head a bread cake *baked on* hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again.

7 The angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, “Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you.”

8 So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.

Yahweh Questions Elijah

9 Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

10 He said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”

11 So He said, “Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake.

12 After the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing.

13 When Elijah heard *it*, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice *came* to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

14 Then he said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”

Elijah’s Commission

15 The LORD said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram;

16 and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.

17 It shall come about, the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death.

18 Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him.” [\[Rom 11:1–5\]](#)

The Call of Elisha

19 So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. And Elijah passed over to him and threw his mantle on him.

20 He left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, “Please let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?”

21 So he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen, and gave *it* to the people and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah and ministered to him.

Ben-Hadad of Syria Attacks Ahab (c. 857n BC)

1 Kings 20:1–22

Ben-Hadad Besieges Israel’s Capital Samaria

1 Now Ben-hadad king of Aram gathered all his army, and there *were* thirty-two kings with him, and horses and chariots. And he went up and besieged Samaria and fought against it.

Negotiations Fail

2 Then he sent messengers to the city to Ahab king of Israel and said to him, “Thus says Ben-hadad,

3 ‘Your silver and your gold are mine; your most beautiful wives and children are also mine.’”

4 The king of Israel replied, “It is according to your word, my lord, O king; I am yours, and all that I have.”

5 Then the messengers returned and said, “Thus says Ben-hadad, ‘Surely, I sent to you saying, “You shall give me your silver and your gold and your wives and your children,”

6 but about this time tomorrow I will send my servants to you, and they will search your house and the houses of your servants; and whatever is desirable in your eyes, they will take in their hand and carry away.’”

7 Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land and said, “Please observe and see how this man is looking for trouble; for he sent to me for my wives and my children and my silver and my gold, and I did not refuse him.”

8 All the elders and all the people said to him, “Do not listen or consent.”

9 So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, “Tell my lord the king, ‘All that you sent for to your servant at the first I will do, but this thing I cannot do.’” And the messengers departed and brought him word again.

10 Ben-hadad sent to him and said, “May the gods do so to me and more also, if the dust of Samaria will suffice for handfuls for all the people who follow me.”

11 Then the king of Israel replied, “Tell *him*, ‘Let not him who girds on *his armor* boast like him who takes *it off*.’”

12 When *Ben-hadad* heard this message, as he was drinking with the kings in the temporary shelters, he said to his servants, “Station *yourselves*.” So they stationed *themselves* against the city.

Yahweh Promises to Deliver Ahab

13 Now behold, a prophet approached Ahab king of Israel and said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Have you seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver them into your hand today, and you shall know that I am the LORD.’”

14 Ahab said, “By whom?” So he said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘By the young men of the rulers of the provinces.’” Then he said, “Who shall begin the battle?” And he answered, “You.”

God Helps Ahab Defeat the Syrians

15 Then he mustered the young men of the rulers of the provinces, and there were 232; and after them he mustered all the people, *even* all the sons of Israel, 7,000.

16 They went out at noon, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the temporary shelters with the thirty-two kings who helped him.

17 The young men of the rulers of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out and they told him, saying, "Men have come out from Samaria."

18 Then he said, "If they have come out for peace, take them alive; or if they have come out for war, take them alive."

19 So these went out from the city, the young men of the rulers of the provinces, and the army which followed them.

20 They killed each his man; and the Arameans fled and Israel pursued them, and Ben-hadad king of Aram escaped on a horse with horsemen.

21 The king of Israel went out and struck the horses and chariots, and killed the Arameans with a great slaughter.

Ben-Hadad's Second Attack Foretold

22 Then the prophet came near to the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, strengthen yourself and observe and see what you have to do; for at the turn of the year the king of Aram will come up against you."

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Ben-Hadad's Second Attack on the Northern Kingdom (c. 856n BC)

1 Kings 20:23–43

Ben-Hadad Plans Another Attack

23 Now the servants of the king of Aram said to him, "Their gods are gods of the mountains, therefore they were stronger than we; but rather let us fight against them in the plain, *and* surely we will be stronger than they.

24 Do this thing: remove the kings, each from his place, and put captains in their place,

25 and muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot. Then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we will be stronger than they." And he listened to their voice and did so.

Ahab is Vastly Outnumbered

26 At the turn of the year, Ben-hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel.

27 The sons of Israel were mustered and were provisioned and went to meet them; and the sons of Israel camped before them like two little flocks of goats, but the Arameans filled the country.

God Gives Ahab the Victory

28 Then a man of God came near and spoke to the king of Israel and said, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because the Arameans have said, "The LORD is a god of *the* mountains, but He is not a god of *the* valleys," therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD.'"

29 So they camped one over against the other seven days. And on the seventh day the battle was joined, and the sons of Israel killed of the Arameans 100,000 foot soldiers in one day.

30a But the rest fled to Aphek into the city, and the wall fell on 27,000 men who were left.

Ben-Hadad Pleads for His Life

30b And Ben-hadad fled and came into the city into an inner chamber.

31 His servants said to him, "Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings, please let us put sackcloth on our loins and ropes on our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will save your life."

32 So they girded sackcloth on their loins and *put* ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Please let me live.'"

Ahab Spares Ben-Hadad

32b And he said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother."

33 Now the men took this as an omen, and quickly catching his word said, "Your brother Ben-hadad." Then he said, "Go, bring him." Then Ben-hadad came out to him, and he took him up into the chariot.

34 *Ben-hadad* said to him, "The cities which my father took from your father I will restore, and you shall make streets for yourself in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." *Ahab said*, "And I will let you go with this covenant." So he made a covenant with him and let him go.

God Sends a Prophet to Rebuke Ahab

35 Now a certain man of the sons of the prophets said to another by the word of the LORD, "Please strike me." But the man refused to strike him.

36 Then he said to him, "Because you have not listened to the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as you have departed from me, a lion will kill you." And as soon as he had departed from him a lion found him and killed him.

37 Then he found another man and said, "Please strike me." And the man struck him, wounding him.

38 So the prophet departed and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes.

39 As the king passed by, he cried to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the midst of the battle; and behold, a man turned aside and brought a man to me and said, 'Guard this man; if for any reason he is missing, then your life shall be for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.'

40 While your servant was busy here and there, he was gone." And the king of Israel said to him, "So shall your judgment be; you yourself have decided *it*."

41 Then he hastily took the bandage away from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him that he was of the prophets.

42 He said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because you have let go out of *your* hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall go for his life, and your people for his people.'"

43 So the king of Israel went to his house sullen and vexed, and came to Samaria.

Naboth's Vineyard (c. 856n BC)

1 Kings 21:1–29

Ahab Asks to Buy Naboth's Vineyard

1 Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

2 Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money."

3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers." [cf. [Lev 25:23–28](#); [Num 36:7–9](#)]

4 So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food.

Jezebel's Scheme

5 But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?"

6 So he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you a vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

7 Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city.

9 Now she wrote in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people;

10 and seat two worthless men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death." [cf. [Deut 17:6–7](#); [19:15–21](#); [Exod 22:28](#); [Lev 24:13–16](#)]

Naboth and His Sons are Murdered

11 So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent *word* to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them.

12 They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the people.

13 Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him; and the worthless men testified against him, even against Naboth, before the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones.

14 Then they sent *word* to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

15 When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

Yahweh Sends Elijah to Foretell Ahab's and Jezebel's Punishment

17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

18 "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth where he has gone down to take possession of it.

19 "You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "Have you murdered and also taken possession?"' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours.''" [cf. [2 Kgs 9:24–26](#)]

20 Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" And he answered, "I have found *you*, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD.

21 "Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel;

22 and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked *Me* to anger, and *because* you have made Israel sin.

23 "Of Jezebel also has the LORD spoken, saying, 'The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.'

24 "The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat."

25 Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife incited him.

26 He acted very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD cast out before the sons of Israel.

Ahab Humbles Himself and Yahweh Shows Mercy

27 It came about when Ahab heard these words, that he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and fasted, and he lay in sackcloth and

went about despondently.

28 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying,

29 “Do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days, *but* I will bring the evil upon his house in his son’s days.” [cf. [2 Kgs 22:8–20](#); [Jer 18:7–8](#)]

Three Years of Peace (855n–853n BC)

1 Kings 22:1, 44; 2 Chronicles 18:1b

Peace With Syria

1 Kgs 22:1 Three years passed without war between Aram and Israel.

Peace With Judah

1 Kgs 22:44 Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel.

2 Chr 18:1b and he allied himself by marriage with Ahab. [*Jehoshaphat’s son Jehoram married Ahab’s daughter Athaliah*]

Jehoram [Judah] Begins His Coregency With Jehoshaphat (854t BC)

2 Kings 1:17b

17b And because he had no son, Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah.

Ahab, Jehoshaphat, Micaiah and the Lying Prophets (853n BC)

1 Kings 22:2–28

2 Chronicles 18:2–27

Ahab Asks Jehoshaphat to Help Him Reclaim Ramoth Gilead

2 In the third year

Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel.

3 Now the king of Israel said to his servants, “Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and we are still doing nothing to take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?”

4 And he said to Jehoshaphat,

“Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?”

And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel,

“I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.”

Jehoshaphat Makes Ahab Seek Direction from Yahweh

5 Moreover, Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel,

“Please inquire first for the word of the LORD.”

6 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, “Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle or shall I refrain?” And they said, “Go up, for the Lord will give *it* into the hand of the king.”

7 But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not yet a prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of him?”

8 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.

He is Micaiah son of Imlah.” But Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say so.”

9 Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, “Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah.”

10 Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting each on his throne, arrayed in *their* robes,

2 Some years later

he went down to *visit* Ahab at Samaria.

And Ahab slaughtered many sheep and oxen for him and the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead.

3 Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah,

“Will you go with me *against* Ramoth-gilead?”

And he said to him,

“I am as you are, and my people as your people, and *we will be* with you in the battle.”

4 Moreover, Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel,

“Please inquire first for the word of the LORD.”

5 Then the king of Israel assembled the prophets, four hundred men, and said to them, “Shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?” And they said, “Go up, for God will give *it* into the hand of the king.”

6 But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not yet a prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of him?”

7 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me but always evil.

He is Micaiah, son of Imla.” But Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say so.”

8 Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, “Bring quickly Micaiah, Imla’s son.”

9 Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting each on his throne, arrayed in *their* robes,

at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

11 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron for himself and said, "Thus says the LORD, 'With these you will gore the Arameans until they are consumed.'"

12 All the prophets were prophesying thus, saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and prosper, for the LORD will give *it* into the hand of the king."

13 Then the messenger who went to summon Micaiah spoke to him saying, "Behold now, the words of the prophets are uniformly favorable to the king. Please let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably."

14 But Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, what the LORD says to me, that I shall speak."

15 When he came to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?" And he answered him, "Go up and succeed, and the LORD will give *it* into the hand of the king."

16 Then the king said to him, "How many times must I adjure you to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"

17 So he said,

"I saw all Israel
Scattered on the mountains,
Like sheep which have no shepherd.
And the LORD said, 'These have no master.
Let each of them return to his house in peace.'"

18 Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"

Micaiah Reveals God's Plan to Ahab

19 Micaiah said, "Therefore, hear the word of the LORD.

I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right and on His left.

20 The LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said this while another said that.

21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.'

22 The LORD said to him, 'How?'

And he said, 'I will go out and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then He said, 'You are to entice *him* and also prevail. Go and do so.'

23 Now therefore, behold, the LORD has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; and the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you."

24 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, "How did the Spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?"

25 Micaiah said, "Behold, you shall see on that day when you enter an inner room to hide yourself."

Ahab Ignores God's Warning

26 Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son;

and *they* were sitting at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

10 Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron for himself and said, "Thus says the LORD, 'With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are consumed.'"

11 All the prophets were prophesying thus, saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and succeed, for the LORD will give *it* into the hand of the king."

12 Then the messenger who went to summon Micaiah spoke to him saying, "Behold, the words of the prophets are uniformly favorable to the king. So please let your word be like one of them and speak favorably."

13 But Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, what my God says, that I will speak."

14 When he came to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?" He said, "Go up and succeed, for they will be given into your hand."

15 Then the king said to him, "How many times must I adjure you to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?"

16 So he said,

"I saw all Israel
Scattered on the mountains,
Like sheep which have no shepherd;
And the LORD said, 'These have no master.
Let each of them return to his house in peace.'"

17 Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?"

18 Micaiah said, "Therefore, hear the word of the LORD.

I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing on His right and on His left.

19 The LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab king of Israel to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said this while another said that.

20 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.'

And the LORD said to him, 'How?'

21 He said, 'I will go and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then He said, 'You are to entice *him* and prevail also. Go and do so.'

22 Now therefore, behold, the LORD has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of these your prophets, for the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you."

23 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, "How did the Spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?"

24 Micaiah said, "Behold, you will see on that day when you enter an inner room to hide yourself."

25 Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son;

<p>27 and say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this man in prison and feed him sparingly with bread and water until I return safely."'"</p> <p>28 Micaiah said, "If you indeed return safely the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Listen, all you people."</p>	<p>26 and say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this <i>man</i> in prison and feed him sparingly with bread and water until I return safely."'"</p> <p>27 Micaiah said, "If you indeed return safely, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Listen, all you people."</p>
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Chronological Notes

- 1) A coregency between Jehoram and Jehoshaphat is implied in 2 Kings 1:17b, where it is said that Joram of Israel began in the second year of Jehoram of Judah. This same year is called the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat in 2 Kings 3:1; the eighteenth year was 853t whether measured from the death of his father Asa in an accession sense or non-accession sense. 853t overlaps Joram's known beginning year, 852n, in 852n/852t. The "second of Jehoram" (2 Kgs 1:17) is thus 852n/852t. If this number is taken in a non-accession sense, Jehoram's coregency began in 854t.¹
 - A) 2 Kings 1:17 – Jehoram's (Israel) first year = Jehoram's (Judah) second year (of his coregency) = 852 BC.
 - B) 2 Kings 3:1 – Jehoram's (Israel) first year = Jehoshaphat's eighteenth year (of his sole reign, i.e., 871t) = 852 BC.
 - C) 2 Kings 8:16 – Jehoram's (Israel) fifth year = Jehoram's (Judah) first year (of sole reign) = 848t BC.

- 2) During Ahab's reign, Shalmaneser III (the fourth of the neo-Assyrian kings) made it clear "that Assyria's objective was to extend her hegemony over the entire western world."² He conquered Carchemish in 857, one year before Ben-Hadad and Ahab made their treaty at Aphek (this may be the military and political context that helps make sense of Ahab's mercy to Ben-Hadad). "By 853 Shalmaneser pushed as far south as Qarqar (Khirbet Qerqur) on the Orontes River, not much more than a hundred miles from Damascus. There, according to his own annals, he engaged a great coalition of kings led by Ben-Hadad and including Ahab. In true Assyrian fashion he claims to have achieved a smashing victory, but the truth is surely something less than that. The very fact that he pressed no farther and, in fact, retreated to Calah, his capital, indicates that at best the affair was a stalemate. Moreover, Ben-Hadad and Ahab, following Qarqar, felt so free of Assyrian pressure that they broke their treaty and renewed hostilities."³ Thus the battle at Qarqar is the recent military and political backdrop against which the story of Ahab, Jehoshaphat, Micaiah and the lying prophets takes place.

¹ Rodger C. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?" *JETS* 46.4 (Dec 2003): 597.

² Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 348.

³ Merrill, 348–349. From more data related to the dating of the Battle of Qarqar, see Kenneth A. **Strand**, "Thiele's Biblical Chronology as a Corrective for Extrabiblical Dates," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 34.2 (1996): 295–317; Rodger C. **Young**, "Evidence for Inerrancy from an Unexpected Source: OT Chronology," *Bible and Spade* 21.2 (2008): 54–64, and Bryant G. **Wood**, "Israelite Kings in Assyrian Inscriptions," *Bible and Spade* 24.2 (Spring 2011):

The Death of Ahab (853n BC)

1 Kings 22:29–40

29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-gilead.
 30 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle.
 31 Now the king of Aram had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, saying, "Do not fight with small or great, but with the king of Israel alone."
 32 So when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "Surely it is the king of Israel," and they turned aside to fight against him, and Jehoshaphat cried out.

 33 When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.
 34 Now a certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel in a joint of the armor. So he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the fight; for I am severely wounded."
 35 The battle raged that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot in front of the Arameans, and died at evening, and the blood from the wound ran into the bottom of the chariot.
 36 Then a cry passed throughout the army close to sunset, saying, "Every man to his city and every man to his country."
 37 So the king died and was brought to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria.
 38 They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood (now the harlots bathed themselves *there*), according to the word of the LORD which He spoke.

 39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab and all that he did and the ivory house which he built and all the cities which he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?
 40 So Ahab slept with his fathers, and Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

2 Chronicles 18:28–19:3

18:28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-gilead.
 29 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into battle.
 30 Now the king of Aram had commanded the captains of his chariots, saying, "Do not fight with small or great, but with the king of Israel alone."
 31 So when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It is the king of Israel," and they turned aside to fight against him. But Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him, and God diverted them from him.
 32 When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.
 33 A certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel in a joint of the armor. So he said to the driver of the chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the fight, for I am severely wounded."
 34 The battle raged that day, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot in front of the Arameans until the evening; and at sunset he died.

 19:1 Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem.
 2 Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD and so *bring* wrath on yourself from the LORD?
 3 "But there is *some* good in you, for you have removed the Asheroth from the land and you have set your heart to seek God."

Ahaziah, Ahab's Son, Assumes the Throne of Israel (853n BC)

1 Kings 22:51–53

51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel.
 52 He did evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin.
 53 So he served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the LORD God of Israel to anger, according to all that his father had done.

Moab Rebels Against Israel (853n BC)

2 Kings 1:1

2 Kings 3:4–5

1 Now Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab.

4 Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheep breeder, and used to pay the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams.

5 But when

Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

Jehoshaphat's Judicial Reforms (853n BC)

2 Chronicles 19:4–11

4 So Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem and went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to the LORD, the God of their fathers.

5 He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city.

6 He said to the judges, "Consider what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD who is with you when you render judgment.

7 "Now then let the fear of the LORD be upon you; be very careful what you do, for the LORD our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe."

8 In Jerusalem also Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests, and some of the heads of the fathers' households of Israel, for the judgment of the LORD and to judge disputes among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

9 Then he charged them saying, "Thus you shall do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully and wholeheartedly.

10 "Whenever any dispute comes to you from your brethren who live in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and ordinances, you shall warn them so that they may not be guilty before the LORD, and wrath may *not* come on you and your brethren. Thus you shall do and you will not be guilty.

11 "Behold, Amariah the chief priest will be over you in all that pertains to the LORD, and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, in all that pertains to the king. Also the Levites shall be officers before you. Act resolutely, and the LORD be with the upright."

God Gives Jehoshaphat Victory Over Moab (c. 853n BC)

2 Chronicles 20:1–30; 1 Kings 22:47

War Comes to Judah

2 Chr 20:1 Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat.

2 Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi)."

Jehoshaphat's Prayer

3 Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

4 So Judah gathered together to seek help from the LORD; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD.

5 Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD before the new court,

6 and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You.

7 "Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?

8 "They have lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary there for Your name, saying,

9 'Should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You (for Your name is in this house) and cry to You in our distress, and You will hear and deliver us.'

10 "Now behold, the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them),

11 see *how* they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from Your possession which You have given us as an inheritance.

12 "O our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You."

God Speaks Through Jahaziel

13 All Judah was standing before the LORD, with their infants, their wives and their children.

14 Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph;

15 and he said, "Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, 'Do not fear or

be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's.

16 'Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel.

17 'You *need* not fight in this *battle*; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you."

18 Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD.

19 The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

Jehoshaphat Follows God's Command

20 They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the LORD your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed."

21 When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised *Him* in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness is everlasting."

God Gives the Victory

22 When they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed.

23 For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying *them* completely; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

24 When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold, they *were* corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped.

25 When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found much among them, *including* goods, garments and valuable things which they took for themselves, more than they could carry. And they were three days taking the spoil because there was so much.

26 Then on the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore they have named that place "The Valley of Beracah" until today.

27 Every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

28 They came to Jerusalem with harps, lyres and trumpets to the house of the LORD.

Peace for Judah

29 And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel.

30 So the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God gave him rest on all sides.

Judah Rules Edom

1 Kgs 22:47 Now there was no king in Edom; a deputy was king.

Jehoshaphat's Unwise Partnership with Ahaziah (852n BC)

1 Kings 22:48-49

48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold,

but they did not go for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.

49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat was not willing.

2 Chronicles 20:35-37

35 After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel. He acted wickedly in so doing.

36 So he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion-geber.

37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works."

So the ships were broken and could not go to Tarshish.

Chronological Notes

- 1) There are enough differences in the accounts of the Moabite wars (2 Kgs 3:4–27; 2 Chr 20:1–30) that commentators typically do not see them as referring to the same event (although some interpret 2 Chr 20 as a midrash of 2 Kgs 3). In 2 Chronicles 20, Jehoshaphat is alone, aided by Jahaziel (not Elisha), and the conclusion of the story is a resounding victory for God and Judah. By contrast, 2 Kings 3 records an alliance of kings (Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and the king of Edom), the aid of Elisha, and the story ends with a defeat of Mesha’s army while Mesha himself escapes and Israel is forced to withdraw. Given these differences, no attempt will be made to harmonize the two accounts. What remains, however, is to decide which war occurred first.
 - A) Argument for 2 Chronicles 20:1–30 occurring before 2 Kings 3:4–27:¹
 - (1) In 2 Kings 3:8, Jehoram proposed that they attack Moab by way of Edom. This would make sense if the 2 Chronicles 20 war had already occurred—Edom had been part of the Moabite army (2 Chr 20:10) and was subjugated to Judah after Jehoshaphat’s victory. The fact that the Moabites and Ammonites had turned on the Edomites (2 Chr 20:23) would explain Edom’s willingness to ally with Judah and Israel against Moab in the 2 Kings 3 war. On this view, 1 Kings 22:47 is understood as a short reference to the result of the 2 Chronicles 20 war: Jehoshaphat placed his deputy as king over Edom and it was that “king” who joined Jehoram and Jehoshaphat in the 2 Kings 3 offensive. Further, if 2 Chronicles 20 occurred soon after Ahab’s death, it would explain how Jehoshaphat later felt free to launch a shipping venture with Ahaziah far to the south in Ezion-geber which was Edomite territory (cf. 2 Chr 8:17; 20:35–36).
 - B) Argument for 2 Kings 3:4–27 occurring before 2 Chronicles 20:1–30:²
 - (1) The 2 Kings 3 war did not end in complete victory—Mesha’s army was destroyed, but Mesha himself escaped and such was his “fury” (2 Kgs 3:26–27) that Israel was forced to withdraw. By contrast, the 2 Chronicles 20 war ended in total victory for Judah, and God gave Jehoshaphat “rest all around” (2 Chr 20:29–30). This strong element of finality argues for the 2 Chronicles 20 war being the second and last war of Jehoshaphat. On this view, the 2 Kings 3 war becomes the motivation for a renewed attack in 2 Chronicles 20 by a strengthened Moabite king who attacked Judah first by way of Edom—this gave the element of surprise and meant that Edom, eager to throw off the yoke of Judah, could add their forces to the army.
 - C) After much dithering, I decided to go with 2 Chronicles 20 occurring before 2 Kings 3. This conclusion may change given new data or further research.

¹ See C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, “1 and 2 Kings,” *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 213; Richard D. Patterson and Hermann J. Austel, “1 Samuel–2 Kings,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 180; Joe M. Sprinkle, “2 Kings 3: History or Historical Fiction?” *BBR* 9 (1999): 247–270. Also F. LaGard Smith, *The Narrated Bible*, 716–726.

² Martin J. Selman, “2 Chronicles,” *TOTC*, 421–22; Sara Japhet, “I & II Chronicles,” *OTL*, 786; Richard D. Patterson and Hermann J. Austel, “1 Samuel–2 Kings,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Revised Ed.*, 819 n. 9 (Patterson and Austel apparently changed their view and this is reflected in the revised edition of the *EBC*).

Ahaziah [Israel] and Elijah (852n BC)

2 Kings 1:2–16

2 And Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber which *was* in Samaria, and became ill. So he sent messengers and said to them, “Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I will recover from this sickness.”

3 But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and say to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel *that* you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?’

4 Now therefore thus says the LORD, ‘You shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” Then Elijah departed.

5 When the messengers returned to him he said to them, “Why have you returned?”

6 They said to him, “A man came up to meet us and said to us, ‘Go, return to the king who sent you and say to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel *that* you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.’”’”

7 He said to them, “What kind of man was he who came up to meet you and spoke these words to you?”

8 They answered him, “*He was* a hairy man with a leather girdle bound about his loins.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

9 Then *the king* sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him, and behold, he was sitting on the top of the hill. And he said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’”

10 Elijah replied to the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

11 So he again sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he said to him, “O man of God, thus says the king, ‘Come down quickly.’”

12 Elijah replied to them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. [\[Luke 9:54\]](#)

13 So he again sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. When the third captain of fifty went up, he came and bowed down on his knees before Elijah, and begged him and said to him, “O man of God, please let my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight.

14 Behold fire came down from heaven and consumed the first two captains of fifty with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight.”

15 The angel of the LORD said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he arose and went down with him to the king.

16 Then he said to him, “Thus says the LORD, ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of His word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed where you have gone up, but shall surely die.’”

The Death of Ahaziah [Israel] (852n BC)

2 Kings 1:17–18

17 So Ahaziah died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And because he had no son, Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah [*Jehoram’s coregency with Jehoshaphat*].

18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Elijah Ascends to Heaven (852n BC)

2 Kings 2

Elijah Tests Elisha

1 And it came about when the LORD was about to take up Elijah by a whirlwind to heaven, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

2 Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here please, for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel.

3 Then the sons of the prophets who *were at* Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?” And he said, “Yes, I know; be still.”

4 Elijah said to him, “Elisha, please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho.

5 The sons of the prophets who *were at* Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?” And he answered, “Yes, I know; be still.”

6 Then Elijah said to him, “Please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan.” And he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So the two of them went on.

7 Now fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood opposite *them* at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.

8 Elijah took his mantle and folded it together and struck the waters, and they were divided here and there, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.

9 When they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.”

10 He said, “You have asked a hard thing. *Nevertheless*, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so.”

Elijah is Taken Up to Heaven

11 As they were going along and talking, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.

12 Elisha saw *it* and cried out, “My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw Elijah no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

Elisha’s Double Portion

13 He also took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and returned and stood by the bank of the Jordan.

14 He took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and struck the waters and said, “Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?” And when he also had struck the waters, they were divided here and there; and Elisha crossed over.

15 Now when the sons of the prophets who *were* at Jericho opposite *him* saw him, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

Elisha Tries to Prevent a Search for Elijah

16 They said to him, “Behold now, there are with your servants fifty strong men, please let them go and search for your master; perhaps the Spirit of the LORD has taken him up and cast him on some mountain or into some valley.” And he said, “You shall not send.”

17 But when they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, “Send.” They sent therefore fifty men; and they searched three days but did not find him.

18 They returned to him while he was staying at Jericho; and he said to them, “Did I not say to you, ‘Do not go’?”

Elisha Heals the Water of Jericho from Joshua’s Curse

19 Then the men of the city said to Elisha, “Behold now, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the water is bad and the land is unfruitful.”

20 He said, “Bring me a new jar, and put salt in it.” So they brought *it* to him.

21 He went out to the spring of water and threw salt in it and said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘I have purified these waters; there shall not be from there death or unfruitfulness any longer.’”

22 So the waters have been purified to this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke.

Elisha Calls for God’s Judgment on the Youth of Bethel

23 Then he went up from there to Bethel; and as he was going up by the way, young lads came out from the city and mocked him and said to him, “Go up, you baldhead; go up, you baldhead!”

24 When he looked behind him and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the LORD. Then two female bears came out of the woods and tore up forty-two lads of their number.

25 He went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

Joram, Ahaziah’s Brother, Assumes the Throne of Israel (852n BC)

2 Kings 3:1–3

1 Now Jehoram the son of Ahab became king over Israel at Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years.

2 He did evil in the sight of the LORD, though not like his father and his mother; for he put away the *sacred* pillar of Baal which his father had made.

3 Nevertheless, he clung to the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel sin; he did not depart from them.

Joram [Israel] Asks Jehoshaphat to Help Quell the Moabite Rebellion (c. 852n BC)

2 Kings 3:6–27

Joram Enlists the Aid of Judah

6 And King Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel.

7 Then he went and sent *word* to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, “The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me to fight against Moab?” And he said, “I will go up; I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses.”

8 He said, “Which way shall we go up?” And he answered, “The way of the wilderness of Edom.”

We Three Kings

9 So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom; and they made a circuit of seven days' journey, and there was no water for the army or for the cattle that followed them.

10 Then the king of Israel said, "Alas! For the LORD has called these three kings to give them into the hand of Moab."

11 But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not a prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of the LORD by him?" And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, "Elisha the son of Shaphat is here, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah."

12 Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the LORD is with him." So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

Elisha Prophesies Victory

13 Now Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What do I have to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and to the prophets of your mother." And the king of Israel said to him, "No, for the LORD has called these three kings *together* to give them into the hand of Moab."

14 Elisha said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look at you nor see you.

15 But now bring me a minstrel." And it came about, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.

16 He said, "Thus says the LORD, 'Make this valley full of trenches.'

17 For thus says the LORD, 'You shall not see wind nor shall you see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, so that you shall drink, both you and your cattle and your beasts.

18 This is but a slight thing in the sight of the LORD; He will also give the Moabites into your hand.

19 Then you shall strike every fortified city and every choice city, and fell every good tree and stop all springs of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.'"

God Tricks the Moabites

20 It happened in the morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, that behold, water came by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

21 Now all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them. And all who were able to put on armor and older were summoned and stood on the border.

22 They rose early in the morning, and the sun shone on the water, and the Moabites saw the water opposite *them* as red as blood.

23 Then they said, "This is blood; the kings have surely fought together, and they have slain one another. Now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!"

24 But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites arose and struck the Moabites, so that they fled before them; and they went forward into the land, slaughtering the Moabites.

The Kings Carry Out God's Command

25a Thus they destroyed the cities; and each one threw a stone on every piece of good land and filled it. So they stopped all the springs of water and felled all the good trees,

Mesha Survives

25b until in Kir-hareseth *only* they left its stones; however, the slingers went about *it* and struck it.

26 When the king of Moab saw that the battle was too fierce for him, he took with him 700 men who drew swords, to break through to the king of Edom; but they could not.

27 Then he took his oldest son who was to reign in his place, and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall. And there came great wrath against Israel, and they departed from him and returned to their own land.

Elisha and the Prophet's Widow (c. 850 BC)

2 Kings 4:1-7

1 Now a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the LORD; and the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves."

2 Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" And she said, "Your maidservant has nothing in the house except a jar of oil."

3 Then he said, "Go, borrow vessels at large for yourself from all your neighbors, *even* empty vessels; do not get a few.

4 And you shall go in and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour out into all these vessels, and you shall set aside what is full."

5 So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons; they were bringing *the vessels* to her and she poured.

6 When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not one vessel more." And the oil stopped.

7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debt, and you *and* your sons can live on the rest.”

Elisha and the Shunammite Woman (c. 850 BC)

2 Kings 4:8–17

8 Now there came a day when Elisha passed over to Shunem, where there was a prominent woman, and she persuaded him to eat food. And so it was, as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat food.
 9 She said to her husband, “Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God passing by us continually.
 10 Please, let us make a little walled upper chamber and let us set a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; and it shall be, when he comes to us, *that* he can turn in there.”
 11 One day he came there and turned in to the upper chamber and rested.
 12 Then he said to Gehazi his servant, “Call this Shunammite.” And when he had called her, she stood before him.
 13 He said to him, “Say now to her, ‘Behold, you have been careful for us with all this care; what can I do for you? Would you be spoken for to the king or to the captain of the army?’” And she answered, “I live among my own people.”
 14 So he said, “What then is to be done for her?” And Gehazi answered, “Truly she has no son and her husband is old.”
 15 He said, “Call her.” When he had called her, she stood in the doorway.
 16 Then he said, “At this season next year you will embrace a son.” And she said, “No, my lord, O man of God, do not lie to your maidservant.”
 17 The woman conceived and bore a son at that season the next year, as Elisha had said to her.

The Death of Jehoshaphat (849t BC)

1 Kings 22:45, 50

2 Chr 20:34; 21:1–3

Before His Death, Jehoshaphat Gives Gifts to His Sons

21:2 He [*Jehoram*] had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azaryahu, Michael and Shephatiah. All these *were* the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.
 3a Their father gave them many gifts of silver, gold and precious things, with fortified cities in Judah,

Jehoshaphat Gives the Kingdom to Jehoram

3b but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the firstborn.

Jehoshaphat Dies

45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might which he showed and how he warred, are they not written in the

20:34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first to last, behold, they are written in the annals of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.

Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah?

50 And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David, and Jehoram his son became king in his place.

21:1 Then Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Jehoram his son became king in his place.

Jehoram, Jehoshaphat’s Son, Begins Sole Reign of Judah (848n/848t BC)

2 Kings 8:16–17

2 Chronicles 21:5

16 Now in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then the king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah became king.

17 He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

5 Jehoram *was* thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.

Chronological Notes

- 1) Establishing a Chronological Framework for Elisha's Ministry.
 - A) *Elijah's Translation* (2 Kgs 2). Elisha's sole ministry began with the translation of Elijah.¹ The story itself gives no chronological data—it simply notes that Elijah and Elisha were traveling from Gilgal when Yahweh was about to take Elijah up to heaven (Gilgal was approx. 10 miles south of Samaria). However, the canonical arrangement places the story immediately after the death of Ahaziah (2 Kings 1:15b–18; 852n BC) and before Joram's [Israel] campaign with Jehoshaphat [Judah] to quell the Moabite rebellion (2 Kings 3:6–27; c. 852 BC). Assuming this placement to be chronological, we can fix an upper bound on Elisha's sole ministry of 852 BC.
 - (1) There is one potential reason to reject the placement of 2 Kings 2 as chronological—the letter from Elijah to Jehoram [Judah] as recorded in 2 Chronicles 21:12–15.² The letter comes as a surprise to the reader of Chronicles. As Selman observes: "Elijah makes no other appearance in Chronicles, is only known to have prophesied in Israel (though cf. 1 Kgs 19:3, 8), wrote no other letters, and is thought by many to have been dead by this time!"³ Solutions to this issue include:
 - (a) Coregency Solution: Elijah wrote the letter during the early years of Jehoram's [Judah] coregency⁴ with his father Jehoshaphat (2 Kgs 1:17; 854t–849t BC).⁵
 - (i) The data in 2 Chronicles 21:1–11 does not support this solution. In the letter, Elijah makes specific mention of the fact that Jehoram murdered his brothers (2 Chr 21:13). This action was not taken until *after* Jehoshaphat's death (cf. 2 Chr 21:2–4).
 - (b) Prophetic Solution: Elijah wrote the letter prophetically before his translation and it was delivered to Jehoram [Judah] after he murdered his brothers (c. 848t BC).⁶
 - (i) Dillard is dismissive: "It is not probable that the Chronicler intends us to think the letter was written 'prophetically' before Elijah's death or that it was in some way transmitted from heaven."⁷ However, we should not be too quick to dismiss this solution. As Mabie comments: "While nothing in the text indicates this was the case, nothing in the text precludes the possibility either."⁸
 - (c) Scribal Error Solution: The name "Elijah" in 2 Chronicles 21:12 is a scribal error—the intended name was "Elisha." This error requires only the two final consonants to be altered.⁹
 - (d) Anachrony Solution: 2 Kings 2 is out of place chronologically and Elijah was not translated until after the beginning of Jehoram's sole reign over Judah in 848n/848t BC.¹⁰

¹ I assume an actual translation to heaven (e.g., Enoch). This understanding is contested by Roy E. Knuteson in "Elijah's Little-Known Letter in 2 Chronicles 21:12–15," *BSAC* 162:645 (Jan 2005), but I do not find his argument convincing.

² Scholars who see the letter as the Chronicler's own invention and thus having no implications for the chronology of Elisha's ministry include: H. G. M. Williamson, *1 and 2 Chronicles*, 306–307; E. L. Curtis and A. A. Madsen, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Chronicles," *ICC* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1910), 415; W. Rudolph, *Chronikbücher* (HAT 21; Tübingen 1955), 267; Jacob M. Myers, "II Chronicles," *The Anchor Bible*, 122.

³ Martin J. Selman, "2 Chronicles: An Introduction and Commentary," *TOTC*, 455.

⁴ Rodger C. Young, "Tables of Reign Lengths from the Hebrew Court Records," *JETS* 48/2 (June 2005) 225–48.

⁵ Suggested by Selman (456), Thompson (John A. Thompson, "1, 2 Chronicles," *NAC*, 299), and Merrill (cf. Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 351 n. 78).

⁶ Frederick J. Mabie, "1 and 2 Chronicles," *EBC*, Rev. Ed., 251; J. Barton Payne, "1 & 2 Chronicles," *EBC*, 505.

⁷ Raymond B. Dillard, "2 Chronicles," *WBC*, 168.

⁸ Mabie, 251.

⁹ This solution is preferred by Alberto R. Green, "Regnal Formulas in the Hebrew and Greek Texts of the Books of Kings," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* Vol. 42, No. 3, Jul., 1983, 176.

¹⁰ This view is suggested by Dillard (167–8), Payne (505) and the *Chronological Life Application Study Bible*.

- (i) This solution assigns an upper bound on Elisha's sole ministry of 848 BC. Note that Elijah's absence from the 2 Kings 3:11–19 narrative does not necessarily imply his absence from earth at the time (although the wording of 3:11 suggests that Elisha's interaction with Elijah was past).¹¹
- (2) After rejecting the coregency solution, we are left with two solutions which retain a date of 852 BC for the beginning of Elisha's sole ministry (prophetic and scribal error), and one solution which reduces this date to 848 BC (anachrony). At this point, we need more data before coming to a conclusion. We will come back to this issue after we have examined the rest of Elisha's ministry.¹²
- B) *Elisha Prophesies Victory for Joram [Israel] and Jehoshaphat* (2 Kgs 3:11–19). Given the synchronism with Jehoshaphat, this event is associated with the beginning of Joram's [Israel] reign (c. 852n BC).
- C) *Elisha and the Prophet's Widow* (2 Kgs 4:1–7). We are given no chronological data for this story. The canonical arrangement places it early in Elisha's ministry (c. 852 BC).
- D) *Elisha Asks God to Give the Shunammite Woman a Son* (2 Kgs 4:8–17). We are not told when Elisha first met the prominent woman who lived in Shunem (cf. "one day" in 2 Kgs 4:8). Their friendship began at her insistence and grew over some period of time ("whenever he was passing through, he would stop there for a meal"). Eventually, Elisha wanted to repay her kindness and when she refused his gratitude, Gehazi pointed out that she had no children. Elisha, at God's direction, foretold the birth of a son, and "at the specified time the next year she gave birth to a son" (2 Kgs 4:17). From this, we can reasonably conclude that the story involves a 15–21 month period (6 to 12 months of friendship plus a 9 month pregnancy).¹³
- E) *Elisha Raises the Shunammite Woman's Son from the Dead* (2 Kings 4:18–37). The story of the woman of Shunem continues with the words "the boy grew and one day he went out to see his father who was with the harvest workers." Obviously, a period of several years had gone by—the question is, how many? Clearly, he was old enough to speak (>2 years) and old enough to go out into the field alone (>5 years), so a conservative estimate is that the boy is around 6 years old when he died and was raised to life by Elisha. Thus the time period involved in the Shunammite woman narrative of 2 Kings 4:8–37 totals around 8 consecutive years.
- F) *Elisha Cures the Stew* (2 Kings 4:38–41). The canonical arrangement places this story after the raising from the dead of the Shunammite woman's son. Further, it tell us that it took place "when there was a famine in the land" (2 Kgs 4:38).
- (1) There are several famines recorded in the book of Kings: Elijah's famine (1 Kgs 18:2), the poisoned stew famine (2 Kgs 4:38), Samaria's famine (2 Kgs 6:25; 7:4), Elisha's seven-year famine (2 Kgs 8:1) and the Jerusalem famine (2 Kgs 25:3). It is likely that the poisoned stew famine and Elisha's seven-year famine are the same (and the Samaria famine, while primarily the result of Ben-Hadad's siege, was likely exacerbated by the seven-year famine).¹⁴ The other famines are far enough removed from Elisha's ministry that they can be excluded from consideration.
- (2) When did Elisha's seven-year famine begin? The only clues we have are found in 2 Kings 8:1–6.
- (a) The text reads, "Now Elisha advised the woman whose son he had brought back to life" (NET; 2 Kgs 8:1). This wording implies that Elisha predicted the famine *after* he raised the woman's son from the dead (cf. 8:1).¹⁵
- (b) Gehazi was recounting the story of Elisha raising the woman's son from the dead to the king when the Shunammite woman returned from Philistia. This implies that Elisha raised her son from the dead *prior* to her

¹¹ Mabie, 251.

¹² Japhet does not take a firm position on any solution: "It seems probable that the Chronicler had a different view of the chronological pattern, which in any case implies a difference of a very few years" (Sara Japhet, "1 & II Chronicles," *OTL*, 812).

¹³ The canonical arrangement implies that Elisha's friendship with the woman formed subsequent to Elijah's translation.

¹⁴ Donald J. Wiseman, "1 and 2 Kings," *TOTC*, 218; Iain Provan, "1 & 2 Kings," *UBCS*, 190 (Provan suggests that: "from here to ch. 8, the whole narrative takes place in the context of famine").

¹⁵ The text could read, "Now Elisha advised the woman to whom God had given a son."

leaving for Philistia.¹⁶

(3) We conclude, then, that the seven-year famine began not long after Elisha raised the woman's son from the dead. When we add this time period to the earlier 2 Kings 4:8–37 narrative, we have around 15 consecutive years from the beginning of Elisha's initial contact with the woman to her return to Israel from Philistia (15 to 21 months + 6 years + 7 years = 14.25 to 14.75 years). Since this block of time exceeds Joram's [Israel] reign of around 11 years (852n–841n BC), we are forced to conclude that either Elisha met the Shunammite woman prior to Elijah's translation (841 + 15 = 856 BC), or that she returned to Israel during the first years of Jehu's [Israel] reign (852 – 15 = 837 BC).¹⁷

- G) *Elisha Feeds 100 People* (2 Kings 4:42–44). The canonical arrangement places this story after the poisoned stew event and during the seven-year famine.
- H) *Elisha Heals Naaman* (2 Kings 5). The canonical arrangement places this story during the seven-year famine (it follows the famine-related events of 2 Kings 4:38–44). Unfortunately, we are not told the name of either the king of Syria or the king of Israel. Do we have reason to believe that Joram was king of Israel and Ben-Hadad was king of Syria?¹⁸
- (1) At the beginning of the story of Naaman's healing, the text records that Syria was sending raiding parties into Israel (2 Kgs 5:2). Later, at the end of the story in which Elisha traps the Syrian army in Samaria, the text says that Syria stopped sending raiding parties into Israel (2 Kgs 6:23). These two verses suggest that 2 Kings 5:1–6:23 forms a single chronological unit that describes events that occurred in series during the time of the Syrian raids.
- (2) Immediately after the end of the Syrian raids (2 Kgs 6:24), King Ben-Hadad besieged Samaria.¹⁹ Note that the verse says, "Afterward" (ESV; lit. "it came to pass after this"). This means that 2 Kings 6:24–7:20 took place sometime after the events of 2 Kings 5:1–6:23. Since Hazael killed Ben-Hadad prior to Jehu becoming king of Israel (cf. 2 Kgs 8:28), we conclude that 2 Kings 6:24–7:20 is associated with Joram's reign. This in turn suggests that 2 Kings 5–7 forms a single chronological unit—all three chapters took place during Joram's reign over Israel (852n–841n BC).
- I) *Elisha Makes an Axhead Float* (2 Kings 6:1–7). This event is part of the 2 Kings 5–7 chronological unit and thus occurred during Joram's [Israel] reign.
- J) *Elisha Traps Syria's Army* (2 Kings 6:8–23). This event is part of the 2 Kings 5–7 chronological unit and thus occurred during Joram's [Israel] reign.
- K) *Elisha Prophesies the End of Ben-Hadad's Siege of Samaria* (2 Kings 6:24–7:20). This event is part of the 2 Kings 5–7 chronological unit and thus occurred during Joram's [Israel] reign.
- L) *Gehazi Recounts the Tale of the Shunammite Woman's Son to the King* (2 Kings 8:1–6). The last we heard of Gehazi, he was afflicted with Naaman's skin disease and had gone out from Elisha's presence (2 Kgs 5:27). He is not mentioned by name again in connection with Elisha (cf. 2 Kgs 6:15–17), and we infer that his service to Elisha had ended. Now we find him chatting with the king of Israel (the king is again unnamed).
- (1) When did this event take place and who was king of Israel at the time?

¹⁶ It could not have happened immediately upon her return—her home and land had been confiscated, and so the father would not have been out in the fields with the harvesters. The entire story falls apart if we try to have the famine concurrent with her sojourning in Philistia.

¹⁷ This idea is not without precedent. Wiseman comments: "...the king might be Jehu, for J(eh)roam knew Elisha well" (Donald J. Wiseman, "1 and 2 Kings," *TOTC*, 205).

¹⁸ This is the standard interpretation. See Iain W. Provan, "1&2 Kings," *UBCS*, pp. 198–200, 204–205 and T. R. Hobbs, "2 Kings," *WBC*, pp. 63, 76.

¹⁹ While there is debate over how many rulers of Syria were called Ben-Hadad, Hazael was never called Ben-Hadad—he is consistently called King Hazael throughout Kings and Chronicles. Thus we infer that the Ben-Hadad of 2 Kings 6:24 was the Ben-Hadad whom Hazael murdered. Since Joram [Israel] fought Hazael, it follows that Joram was king during the siege of Samaria (cf. 2 Kgs 8:28).

- (a) Flashback Solution: 2 Kings 8:1–6 occurred prior to Naaman’s healing.²⁰ This solution places the event subsequent to the Shunammite woman’s son being raised from the dead but before Naaman’s healing. The king of Israel would have been Joram. However, as we have seen above, the block of time involved in the Shunammite narrative is 15 *consecutive* years—thus Naaman’s healing must have already taken place.
- (b) Healed Solution: Gehazi had repented and been healed prior to his talk with the king.²¹ This is, of course, an argument from silence, but it is still possible. By this time, Jehu would have been king of Israel.
- (c) Diseased Solution: Gehazi was still afflicted with Naaman’s skin disease,²² but it was not so serious that he could not interact with others in some limited or controlled fashion. It should be noted that Naaman’s disease did not require complete separation from other people—Naaman was able to command Syria’s army and interact with Ben-Hadad and his own family without fear of contaminating them (cf. his interaction with his wife and servant girl in 2 Kgs 5:2–4). If Gehazi was still afflicted with the disease, then it is probable that he lived a solitary life, but was still able to interact with others. The king would have been Jehu, who by this time has assumed the throne of Israel. If done properly, Jehu could have conversed with Gehazi and still have avoided any concerns about becoming unclean (cf. Lev 13–14).

(2) We conclude that 2 Kings 8:1–6 took place subsequent to the seven-year famine and at the end of the 15 consecutive years involved in the Shunammite narrative. By this time Jehu had killed Joram and assumed the throne of Israel. Note that this conclusion means that 2 Kings 8:1–6 is out of place chronologically—it should be placed after Jehu’s rise to power (after 2 Kgs 10:30). Its canonical placement was likely done for literary reasons; it completes the Shunammite narrative which is a fundamental part of the Elisha cycle of 2 Kings 2–8.

- M) *Elisha Prophesies the Rise of Hazael as King of Syria* (2 Kings 8:7–14). The synchronisms with Ben-Hadad, Hazael, Joram [Israel] and Ahaziah [Judah] date this event to the final year of Joram’s [Israel] reign (841n BC).
- N) *Elisha Anoints Jehu King of Israel by Proxy* (2 Kings 9:1–3). The synchronisms with Ben-Hadad, Hazael, Joram [Israel] and Ahaziah [Judah] date this event to the final year of Joram’s [Israel] reign (841n BC).
- O) *Elisha’s Death* (2 Kings 13:14–20). This event is clearly associated with the reign of Jehoash [Israel] (798n–782n).
- P) We return now to the question of when Elisha’s ministry began: 852 BC or 848 BC. If we go with the anachrony solution, Elisha’s sole ministry began in 848. This means that the seven-year famine began around 8 years later in 840.²³ This creates an issue for 2 Kings 5–7 which is clearly associated with both the seven-year famine and Joram’s [Israel] reign. Since Joram [Israel] was killed by Jehu in 841 BC, we conclude that the better choice is either the prophetic or scribal error solution—thus Elisha’s sole ministry began in 852 BC.

2) Chronological Table of Elisha’s Ministry.

- 852 BC — Ahaziah [Israel] dies; Joram [Israel] becomes king; Elijah is translated; Elisha’s sole ministry begins.
- c. 850 BC — The Shunammite woman gives birth to a son.
- c. 844 BC — The son dies and is raised to life; Elisha predicts a seven-year famine; the Shunammite woman leaves Israel.
- c. 844–841 BC — The events of 2 Kings 5–7
- 841n BC — Elisha predicts Ben-Hadad’s death; Hazael kills Ben-Hadad; Joram [Israel] and Ahaziah [Judah] attack Hazael; Jehu anointed king.
- 841–837 BC — The events of 2 Kings 9:1–10:30.
- c. 837 BC — The seven-year famine ends; the Shunammite woman returns to Israel; Gehazi talks with Jehu.

²⁰ Thomas L. Constable, “2 Kings,” *Bible Knowledge Commentary of the Old Testament*, 552; C. F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 3, 235–36.

²¹ Jesse C. Long, *1&2 Kings*, 350; Hobbs, 101–105.

²² Naaman’s disease was almost certainly not modern leprosy (Hansen’s disease), since the lesions of Hansen’s disease are never white (2 Kgs 5:27).

²³ This assumes that Elisha met the Shunammite woman *after* Elijah’s translation.

Jehoram's [Judah] Early Reign Characterized by Murder, War and Idolatry (848n/848t BC)

2 Kings 8:18–22

2 Chronicles 21:4, 6–11

Jehoram Murders His Brothers**God Has Mercy on Judah in Spite of Jehoram's Wickedness**

18 He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab became his wife; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

19 However, the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah, for the sake of David His servant, since He had promised him to give a lamp to him through his sons always.

With Jehoshaphat Dead, Edom Rebels Against Judah

20 In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves.

21 Then Joram crossed over to Zair, and all his chariots with him.

And he arose by night and struck the Edomites who had surrounded him and the captains of the chariots; but *his* army fled to their tents.

22a So Edom revolted against Judah to this day.

Libnah Also Rebels

22b Then Libnah revolted at the same time.

Jehoram's Idolatry

4 Now when Jehoram had taken over the kingdom of his father and made himself secure, he killed all his brothers with the sword, and some of the rulers of Israel also.

6 He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did (for Ahab's daughter was his wife), and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

7 Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant which He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and his sons forever.

8 In his days Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and set up a king over themselves.

9 Then Jehoram crossed over with his commanders and all his chariots with him. And he arose by night and struck down the Edomites who were surrounding him and the commanders of the chariots.

10a So Edom revolted against Judah to this day.

10b Then Libnah revolted at the same time against his rule, because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

11 Moreover, he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray.

Jehoram [Judah] Receives Elijah's Letter (c. 848 BC)

2 Chronicles 21:12–15

12 Then a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet saying, "Thus says the LORD God of your father David, 'Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father and the ways of Asa king of Judah,

13 but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have caused Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot as the house of Ahab played the harlot, and you have also killed your brothers, your own family, who were better than you,

14 behold, the LORD is going to strike your people, your sons, your wives and all your possessions with a great calamity;

15 and you will suffer severe sickness, a disease of your bowels, until your bowels come out because of the sickness, day by day.'"

Judah is Pillaged by the Philistines and the Arabs (c. 845 BC)

2 Chronicles 21:16–17

16 Then the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabs who bordered the Ethiopians;

17 and they came against Judah and invaded it, and carried away all the possessions found in the king's house together with his sons and his wives, so that no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

Obadiah's Prophecy Against Edom (c. 845 BC)

Obadiah 1

Yahweh Promises to Destroy Edom

1 The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom—

- We have heard a report from the LORD,
And an envoy has been sent among the nations *saying*,
“Arise and let us go against her for battle”—
- 2 “Behold, I will make you small among the nations;
You are greatly despised.
- 3 “The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,
You who live in the clefts of the rock,
In the loftiness of your dwelling place,
Who say in your heart,
‘Who will bring me down to earth?’
- 4 “Though you build high like the eagle,
Though you set your nest among the stars,
From there I will bring you down,” declares the LORD.
- 5 “If thieves came to you,
If robbers by night—
O how you will be ruined!—
Would they not steal *only* until they had enough?
If grape gatherers came to you,
Would they not leave *some* gleanings?
- 6 “O how Esau will be ransacked,
And his hidden treasures searched out!
- 7 “All the men allied with you
Will send you forth to the border,
And the men at peace with you
Will deceive you and overpower you.
They who eat your bread
Will set an ambush for you.
(There is no understanding in him.)
- 8 “Will I not on that day,” declares the LORD,
“Destroy wise men from Edom
And understanding from the mountain of Esau?”
- 9 “Then your mighty men will be dismayed, O Teman,
So that everyone may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter.

Edom’s Wrongs against Judah

- 10 “Because of violence to your brother Jacob,
You will be covered *with* shame,
And you will be cut off forever.
- 11 “On the day that you stood aloof,
On the day that strangers carried off his wealth,
And foreigners entered his gate
And cast lots for Jerusalem—
You too were as one of them.
- 12 “Do not gloat over your brother’s day,
The day of his misfortune.
And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah
In the day of their destruction;
Yes, do not boast
In the day of *their* distress.
- 13 “Do not enter the gate of My people
In the day of their disaster.
Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity
In the day of their disaster.
And do not loot their wealth
In the day of their disaster.
- 14 “Do not stand at the fork of the road
To cut down their fugitives;
And do not imprison their survivors
In the day of their distress.

The Coming “Day of the LORD”

- 15 “For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations.
As you have done, it will be done to you.
Your dealings will return on your own head.
- 16 “Because just as you drank on My holy mountain,
All the nations will drink continually.
They will drink and swallow
And become as if they had never existed.
- 17 “But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, [cf. [Joel 2:32](#)]
And it will be holy.
And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions.
- 18 “Then the house of Jacob will be a fire
And the house of Joseph a flame;
But the house of Esau *will be* as stubble.
And they will set them on fire and consume them,
So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau,”
For the LORD has spoken.
- 19 Then *those of* the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau,
And *those of* the Shephelah the Philistine *plain*;
Also, possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria,
And Benjamin *will possess* Gilead.
- 20 And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel,
Who are *among* the Canaanites as far as Zarephath,
And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
Will possess the cities of the Negev.
- 21 The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion
To judge the mountain of Esau,
And the kingdom will be the LORD’s.

Elisha Raises the Shunammite Woman’s Son (c. 844 BC)

2 Kings 4:18–37

The Boy Dies

- 18 When the child was grown, the day came that he went out to his father to the reapers.
19 He said to his father, “My head, my head.” And he said to his servant, “Carry him to his mother.”
20 When he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her lap until noon, and *then* died.

The Mother Goes to See Elisha

- 21 She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut *the door* behind him and went out.
22 Then she called to her husband and said, “Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and return.”
23 He said, “Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath.” And she said, “*It will be well.*”
24 Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, “Drive and go forward; do not slow down the pace for me unless I tell you.”
25 So she went and came to the man of God to Mount Carmel. When the man of God saw her at a distance, he said to Gehazi his servant, “Behold, there is the Shunammite.
26 “Please run now to meet her and say to her, ‘Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?’” And she answered, “It is well.”
27 When she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came near to push her away; but the man of God said, “Let her alone, for her soul is troubled within her; and the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me.”
28 Then she said, “Did I ask for a son from my lord? Did I not say, ‘Do not deceive me?’”
29 Then he said to Gehazi, “Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand, and go your way; if you meet any man, do not salute him, and if anyone salutes you, do not answer him; and lay my staff on the lad’s face.”
30 The mother of the lad said, “As the LORD lives and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” And he arose and followed her.

Elisha Raises the Son from the Dead

- 31 Then Gehazi passed on before them and laid the staff on the lad’s face, but there was no sound or response. So he returned to meet him and told him, “The lad has not awakened.”
32 When Elisha came into the house, behold the lad was dead and laid on his bed.
33 So he entered and shut the door behind them both and prayed to the LORD.

34 And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth and his eyes on his eyes and his hands on his hands, and he stretched himself on him; and the flesh of the child became warm.

35 Then he returned and walked in the house once back and forth, and went up and stretched himself on him; and the lad sneezed seven times and the lad opened his eyes.

36 He called Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, "Take up your son."

37 Then she went in and fell at his feet and bowed herself to the ground, and she took up her son and went out.

Seven Year Famine in Israel Begins (c. 844 BC)

2 Kings 8:1–2

1 Now Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Arise and go with your household, and sojourn wherever you can sojourn; for the LORD has called for a famine, and it will even come on the land for seven years."

2 So the woman arose and did according to the word of the man of God, and she went with her household and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

Elisha Cures the Poison Stew (c. 844–841 BC)

2 Kings 4:38–41

38 When Elisha returned to Gilgal, *there was* a famine in the land. As the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put on the large pot and boil stew for the sons of the prophets."

39 Then one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds, and came and sliced them into the pot of stew, for they did not know *what they were*.

40 So they poured *it* out for the men to eat. And as they were eating of the stew, they cried out and said, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." And they were unable to eat.

41 But he said, "Now bring meal." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour *it* out for the people that they may eat." Then there was no harm in the pot.

Elisha Feeds 100 People (c. 844–841 BC)

2 Kings 4:42–44

42 Now a man came from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the first fruits, twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. And he said, "Give *them* to the people that they may eat."

43 His attendant said, "What, will I set this before a hundred men?" But he said, "Give *them* to the people that they may eat, for thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and have *some* left over.'"

44 So he set *it* before them, and they ate and had *some* left over, according to the word of the LORD.

Elisha Heals Naaman (c. 844–841 BC)

2 Kings 5

Naaman's Disease

1 Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man with his master, and highly respected, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man was also a valiant warrior, *but he was* a leper.

2 Now the Arameans had gone out in bands and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman's wife.

3 She said to her mistress, "I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy."

4 Naaman went in and told his master, saying, "Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel."

5 Then the king of Aram said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." He departed and took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand *shekels* of gold and ten changes of clothes.

6 He brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, "And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy."

7 When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending *word* to me to cure a man of his leprosy? But consider now, and see how he is seeking a quarrel against me."

8 It happened when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent *word* to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Now let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

The Jordan River

9 So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots and stood at the doorway of the house of Elisha.

10 Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and *you will* be clean."

11 But Naaman was furious and went away and said, “Behold, I thought, ‘He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.’”

12 “Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage.

13 Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, “My father, had the prophet told you *to do some* great thing, would you not have done *it*? How much more *then*, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean?’”

14 So he went down and dipped *himself* seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child and he was clean.

Elisha Will Not Accept Naaman’s Gifts

15 When he returned to the man of God with all his company, and came and stood before him, he said, “Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel; so please take a present from your servant now.”

16 But he said, “As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will take nothing.” And he urged him to take *it*, but he refused.

17 Naaman said, “If not, please let your servant at least be given two mules’ load of earth; for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering nor will he sacrifice to other gods, but to the LORD.

18 “In this matter may the LORD pardon your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon your servant in this matter.”

19a He said to him, “Go in peace.”

Gehazi’s Greed

19b So he departed from him some distance.

20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, “Behold, my master has spared this Naaman the Aramean, by not receiving from his hands what he brought. As the LORD lives, I will run after him and take something from him.”

21 So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw one running after him, he came down from the chariot to meet him and said, “Is all well?”

22 He said, “All is well. My master has sent me, saying, ‘Behold, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.’”

23 Naaman said, “Be pleased to take two talents.” And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags with two changes of clothes and gave them to two of his servants; and they carried *them* before him.

24 When he came to the hill, he took them from their hand and deposited them in the house, and he sent the men away, and they departed.

25 But he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, “Where have you been, Gehazi?” And he said, “Your servant went nowhere.”

26 Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go *with you*, when the man turned from his chariot to meet you? Is it a time to receive money and to receive clothes and olive groves and vineyards and sheep and oxen and male and female servants?

27 “Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and to your descendants forever.” So he went out from his presence a leper *as white as snow*.

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Chronological Notes

1) The date of Obadiah.¹

A) Since we do not know who the author of Obadiah was (there are many Obadiah’s mentioned in Scripture²), it is difficult to date this prophecy. Archer remarked, “This shortest book in the Old Testament, consisting of only twenty-one verses, bears the distinction of being the most difficult of all the prophecies to date.”³ There are three clues concerning when Obadiah was written:

¹ Most of this material is sourced from Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Obadiah, 2012 Edition” and Allan P. Brown, “Introduction to Obadiah.”

² Tradition connects this Obadiah to the Obadiah who protected God’s prophets during the reign of Ahab.

³ Gleason L. Archer Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 299.

B) Internal references to historical events.

- (1) Obadiah referred to a time in the apparently recent past when the Edomites gloated over a successful invasion of Jerusalem (1:10–14, esp. v. 11). There are several occasions mentioned in Kings and Chronicles in which Judah was defeated and Jerusalem invaded:⁴
- (a) Shishak's invasion during Rehoboam's reign (927t BC; 1 Kgs 14:25–28; 2 Chr 12:2–12).
 - (b) Philistine/Arab invasion during Jehoram's reign (c. 845 BC; 2 Chr 21:16–17; 22:1).
 - (c) Jehoash's [Israel] invasion during Amaziah's reign (c. 790 BC; 2 Kgs 14:13–14; 2 Chr 25:23–24).
 - (d) Nebuchadnezzar's invasion during Jehoiakim's reign (609t–598t BC; 2 Kgs 24:1–4; 2 Chr 36:6–7).
 - (e) Nebuchadnezzar's invasion during Jehoiachin's reign (598t BC; 2 Kgs 24:10–16; 2 Chr 36:10).
 - (f) Nebuchadnezzar's invasion during Zedekiah's reign (9 Tammuz, 587 BC; 2 Kgs 25:3–7; 2 Chr 36:15–20).
- (2) Of these invasions, the two that best fit the descriptions in Obadiah are the Philistine/Arab invasion during Jehoram's reign (c. 845 BC) and the final destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar at the end of Zedekiah's reign (587 BC). Currently most scholars favor a date of 587 BC,⁵ but the 845 BC date also has many adherents.⁶
- (a) Arguments for the Early Date (c. 845 BC).⁷
 - (i) Edom had revolted during the reign of Jehoram and was a bitter antagonist of Judah at this time (2 Kgs 8:20–22; 2 Chr 21 :8–20).
 - (ii) There is no mention in Obadiah of the deportation of the entire population which was part of the Babylonian invasion of 587 BC.
 - (iii) The captives were not taken to Babylon as in 587, but to Phoenicia and the West (Obad 1:20).
 - (iv) All the later prophets who speak of the fall of Jerusalem and the captivity mention the Chaldeans, often including the name of Nebuchadnezzar himself, whereas Obadiah leaves the enemy unidentified.
 - (v) No reference is made to the total destruction of the city and temple which took place in 587. Verse 13, “Do not enter the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; do not gloat over his disaster in the day of his calamity; do not loot his wealth in the day of his calamity” (ESV) is hardly appropriate if Jerusalem were already a desolate heap of ruins, as the 587 date would imply.

⁴ I am excluding the Edomite invasion of Judah during Ahaz's reign (732t–716t BC; 2 Chr 28:16–18) since no mention is made of Jerusalem.

⁵ E.g., Watts, pp. 8–9, 19, 27, 54; Allen, pp. 129–33; Douglas Stuart, *Hosea–Jonah*, pp. 403–4, 416; Thomas J. Finley, *Joel, Amos, Obadiah*, p. 340–42; Billy K. Smith, “Obadiah,” in *Amos, Obadiah, Jonah*, p. 172; David W. Baker, *Obadiah, Jonah, Micah: An Introduction and Commentary*, p. 23; Carl E. Armerding, “Obadiah,” in *Daniel–Minor Prophets*, vol. 7 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, p. 337; Frank E. Gaebelien, *Four Minor Prophets [Obadiah, Jonah, Habakkuk, and Haggai]: Their Message for Today*, pp. 13, 28; G. Herbert Livingston, “Obadiah,” in *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 839; Roland K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 898, 902; John Bright, *A History of Israel*, pp. 356, 417; Robert B. Chisholm Jr., “A Theology of the Minor Prophets,” in *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 418; idem, *Handbook on the Prophets*, p. 403; *The New Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 939; and Waltke, p. 845.

⁶ E.g., Keil, 1:341–49; Walter L. Baker, “Obadiah,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, p. 1454; Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets*, p. 136; Archer, pp. 299–303; Leon J. Wood, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 262–64; Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Israel: A History of Old Testament Israel*, p. 382; Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, p. 186; Edward J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 277; Charles H. Dyer, in *The Old Testament Explorer*, pp. 765–66; and Warren W. Wiersbe, “Obadiah,” in *The Bible Exposition Commentary/Prophets*, p. 371. See especially Jeffrey Niehaus, “Obadiah,” in *The Minor Prophets*, pp. 496–502.

⁷ Cf. Freeman and Archer.

(b) Arguments for the Late Date (587 BC).⁸

- (i) During Nebuchadnezzar's invasions, the city suffered seizure of its "wealth" and wholesale deportation of its population (2 Kgs 24:13–16; 25:4–17; 2 Chr 36:18, 20).
- (ii) In 587 the city was virtually burned to the ground, including the temple (2 Kgs 25:9, 10; 2 Chr 36:19), and many of its inhabitants were massacred (2 Kgs 25:8–21; 2 Chr 36:17; cf. Jer 6:1–9:22; Ezek 4:1–7:27). There is specific reference to unsuccessful "fugitives" in the account of the king's escape with his retinue (2 Kgs 25:4–5).
- (iii) Of particular significance are the accounts of Edom's conduct at this time. There is evidence for its participation as an ally in a coalition of Palestinian states against Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 27:3; 40:11); yet it was later accused of taking vengeance on Judah (Ezek 25:12), and of delivering the Israelites "over to the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time their punishment reached its climax" (Ezek 35:5–6; cf. Lam 1:17).
- (iv) Edom was equally guilty at this time of rejoicing in Jerusalem's destruction (Ps 137:7; Lam 2:15–17; 4:21; Ezek 35:11–15; 36:2–6); and it is therefore at this time that the prophetic announcements of Edom's annihilation reached a climax (Jer 9:26; 25:21; Lam 4:21–22; Ezek 25:13; 32:29; 35:3–4; 7–9, 11, 14–15; 36:7). Specific correlations include numerous points of contact in Jeremiah 49:7–22 and in Ezekiel 35–36.

C) The book's placement in the Hebrew canon.

- (1) The Jews put all 12 of the Minor Prophets on one scroll for convenience sake and to keep them from getting lost. The order in which they appear in the Hebrew Bible is basically chronological, and this order continued in later translations of the Old Testament, including English translations. This would lead us to conclude that the ancient Jews regarded Obadiah as one of the earlier prophetic books.
- (2) The order is not completely chronological. Freeman comments, "In the arrangement of The Twelve in the Hebrew Bible the chronological principle which seems to have determined the over-all order was as follows: (1) the prophets of the Assyrian period were placed first (Hosea to Nahum); (2) then followed those of the Babylonian period (Habakkuk and Zephaniah); (3) the series closed with the three prophets of the Persian period after the exile (Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi)."⁹

D) Possible quotations/allusions to the writings of other OT prophets.

- (1) There are similarities between Obadiah 1:1–6 and Jeremiah 49:9 and 14–17 and between Obadiah 1:10–18 and Joel 1:15; 2:1, 32; 3:3–4, 17, and 19.¹⁰ There are also similarities between Obadiah 1:9–10, 14, 18, and 19 and Amos 1:2, 6, 11–12, and 9:13. However, in all these instances it is really impossible to determine if Obadiah referred to the other prophets, if they referred to Obadiah, if they all depended on another common source, or if the Holy Spirit simply led each prophet independently to express himself in similar terms.

E) At this time I personally favor an early date of c. 845 BC and so Obadiah will be placed in today's reading.

⁸ Cf. Armerding and Allen.

⁹ Freeman, 135. See also Greg Goswell, "The Order of the Books in the Hebrew Bible," *JETS* 51:4 (Dec 2008): 673–88.

¹⁰ For a defense of the priority of Obadiah to Jeremiah, see Niehaus, 501.