

**GOD'S MESSAGES
BIBLE
COMMENTARY
SERIES**

VOLUME 8

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading.
(Nehemiah 8:8).

**COMMENTARY
ON
THE BOOKS
OF
1 & 2 CHRONICLES**

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**The Book Of
1 CHRONICLES**





Introduction To 1 and 2 Chronicles

Special Remarks:

The books of First and Second Chronicles are somewhat unique in the Biblical Canon. Much of what is included is repetition of what is found in other books, particularly in First and Second Samuel plus First and Second Kings. Because of this fact there is a strong temptation to treat the Chronicles as of slight importance in comparison with other books of the old testament.

Nevertheless, those who selected the sixty-six books of the old and new testaments felt that the material deserves a place in God's messages to man. Because of the duplication of much material, we will treat the material of these two books a bit differently than most of the rest.

The fact remains that there is a sizable amount of text here that is not found in the other books of the old testament. It is important that such material not be overlooked. We wish to limit our remarks on the material which is repeated, and at the same time be careful not to slight truths which are presented only in the Chronicles.

For this reason we have chosen to set off the text which is repeated in other books of the Bible in different text style. An attempt will be made to pay closer attention to that which is present in the chronicles and is not dealt with in other biblical books.

The Date of Writing:

There is strong reason to believe that 1 & 2 Chronicles

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were written after the return from exile. The suggested dates of writing vary widely between 400 B.C. and 180 B.C. Noted students of the Bible have contended for dates between these two extremes. The two books were apparently one book at one time. As long as the text was in Hebrew, the length of the work was not as cumbersome as it was later when it was translated into greek and other languages. The Hebrew does not contain vowels. This means there are less pages. When the translations were made, the work became cumbersome to handle and was divided into two volumes. The majority of the Bible students have contended that the Chronicles were written about four hundred years before Christ.

There are strong connections between the Chronicles and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Some feel that one or both of these two books were at one time a part of the same work.

### **The Author or Authors:**

Ezra is the most commonly suggested author of the Chronicles. However, this is not proven. There are similarities in the style of Ezra's work and that found in Chronicles, but most are somewhat cautious about making dogmatic statements. Very often we will see the author referred to as the "Chronicler."

The work is seen by some as the result of a compilation of important points from other sources of information. Obviously the author was not an eyewitness to the events of the days of Adam and Eve, Moses and Joshua. The nature of the present books leads one to conclude that the author combined truths from earlier writings with what he knew to be critical information revealed to him through his own experience, and inspired leading by the Spirit of Jehovah.

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Purposes of the Books:

First and Second Chronicles are not just a hodge podge of facts. There is a very critical reason for their existence. The Israelites have been in captivity for many long years. It would have been tempting to lose a sense of Divine planning with respect to the salvation of man.

After all, if the reader had been among those returning from captivity, what would have been his or her thoughts. Are we just a mass of people who have been given permission to move from bondage to a far greater degree of freedom. Or are we a unique people with a very important place in the mind of the Lord as He develops a nation which will bring forth a Messiah with the mission of offering eternal life to those who prove faithful?

The lengthy genealogies found in the Chronicles are not useless lists. They point out that from the time of Adam God has been in the process of developing a faithful family which will have proven it's desire to exist eternally in His direct presence.

This is not to neglect the fact that while men are preparing to move from time to eternity, they will find the life style which prepares for the transition to eternal life will also prove to be the proper choice for life in this world.

An Outline of the Two Books:

- I. The genealogy from Adam to Israel.
 - A. Adam to Noah.
 - B. Noah to Abraham.
 - C. Abraham to Judah.
 - D. Judah to the Exile.

- II. The United Kingdom.
 - A. Under Saul.

- B. Under David.
 - 1. God's Promise of a Dynasty for David.
 - 2. David Plans the Temple and is Denied.
 - 3. David Prepares for the Temple.
 - 4. End of David's Reign.
- C. Under Solomon.
 - 1. Solomon's Wisdom.
 - 2. Solomon's Prosperity.
 - 3. Construction of the Temple.
 - 4. Solomon's Death.

III. The Kingdom Divided.

- A. Israel Rebels.
- B. Rehoboam Reigns.
- C. Abijah Reigns.
- D. Asa Reigns.
- E. Jehoshaphat Reigns.
- F. Jehoram Reigns.
- G. Ahaziah Reigns.
- H. Joash Reigns.
- I. Amaziah Reigns.
- J. Uzziah Reigns.
- K. Jotham Reigns.
- L. Ahaz Reigns.

IV. From Hezekiah to the Babylonian Exile.

- A. Under Hezekiah.
- B. Under Manasseh.
- C. Under Amon.
- D. Under Josiah.
- E. Under Jehoahaz.
- F. Under Jehoiakim.
- G. Under Jehoiachin.
- H. Under Zedekiah.

V. Cyrus Decree.



Chapter 1

- 1 Chron. 1:1 Adam, Sheth, Enosh,**
- 1 Chron. 1:2 Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered,**
- 1 Chron. 1:3 Henoah, Methuselah, Lamech,**
- 1 Chron. 1:4 Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.**

Much of what is recorded in the early portion of I Chronicles is taken from the book of Genesis. The writer is particularly interested in following God's plan for man, than in writing to various groups of persons as is done in such a large part of the Holy Writings. Here he follows the ten generations from Adam to Noah and his sons.

We remind the present reader that this is far more than simply a list of names. This is a listing of a lineage of persons who lead to the development of God's nation of fleshly Israel. We are not dealing with a history of civilization. The point being presented is that the Lord had a plan for man from before the creation of the universe. Details of human history take second place to the overall purpose of a divine family which proves itself to faithfully desire living eternally in the presence of the Creator.

The list of names in these first four verses can be found in the fifth chapter of the book of Genesis. These ten generations cover a time period of approximately fifteen hundred years, from the creation to the destruction of man at the time of the flood. The events associated with these generations give us a vivid record of man's descent from purity to a state of spiritual corruption so depraved that all but eight souls were eliminated.

Did Jehovah make a drastic mistake in creating

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man with freedom of choice between good and evil? That would be difficult to accept. We do not wish to accept ourselves as no more than machines. God made man in His image. Man can either choose to grow in that image, or destroy it and separate himself from the Lord where time melts into eternity. Yes, God could have created computers which obeyed His will by necessity. He did not desire that, nor do we!

There is much history which is not included in this list. That which the Jews needed at the time of the return from captivity is put into a nutshell. Things were not happening by chance alone. They had reasons.

**1 Chron. 1:5 The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.**

**1 Chron. 1:6 And the sons of Gomer; Ashchenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.**

**1 Chron. 1:7 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.**

Here we are following the genealogy found in Genesis 10:2-4. The division of mankind into three groups based on the three sons of Noah is to be followed. In these three verses we have the lineage of Japheth.

Japheth is sometimes considered to have been the origin of the lighter colored peoples of the earth. This would include many of the inhabitants of Europe and North America. More specific information is found in the book of Genesis on such questions. We must be extremely careful about what we have heard in the way of human tradition as compared with Biblical truth.

**1 Chron. 1:8 The sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.**

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1 Chron. 1:9 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtecha. And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

1 Chron. 1:10 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be mighty upon the earth.

1 Chron. 1:11 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,

1 Chron. 1:12 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and Caphthorim.

1 Chron. 1:13 And Canaan begat Zidon his firstborn, and Heth,

In verses eight through thirteen we have the immediate descendants of Ham. A similar list of names is found in Genesis 10:6-20. The descendants of Ham are classed by some as the darkest skinned people of the earth. We must be cautious here. The Philistines and the Caananites fall in this group and are not necessarily negroid in physical characteristics.

Nimrod is also in this group. He is described as a mighty man upon the earth. There are a number of these groups who became foes of Israel as the centuries passed.

1 Chron. 1:14 The Jebusite also, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite,

1 Chron. 1:15 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

1 Chron. 1:16 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.

1 Chron. 1:17 The sons of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram, and Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meshech.

1 Chron. 1:18 And Arphaxad begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber.

1 Chron. 1:19 And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg; because in his days the earth was divided: and his brother's name was Joktan.

1 Chron. 1:20 And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,

1 Chron. 1:21 Hadoram also, and Uzal, and Diklah,

1 Chron. 1:22 And Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,

1 Chron. 1:23 And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

1 Chron. 1:24 Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah,

1 Chron. 1:25 Eber, Peleg, Reu,

1 Chron. 1:26 Serug, Nahor, Terah,

1 Chron. 1:27 Abram; the same is Abraham.

The list above is found in Genesis 10:21-29. Obviously the key name in the list is that of Abram, or Abraham. His name means "father of a multitude." The promise was made to Abraham that through his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed. It is through his lineage that the Messiah came. A very important cross reference here is that of Matthew 1:17.

Mat 1:17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

Thus we begin to see the plan of the chronicler unfolding. He is interested in calling the attention of the Jews who had returned from captivity to the fact that they were a vital link in God's dealings with all nations. Their captivity in Assyria and in Babylon were
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only bypaths in the main highway leading to the eternal heaven which the faithful will follow.

**1 Chron. 1:28 The sons of Abraham; Isaac, and Ishmael.**

**1 Chron. 1:29 These are their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,**

**1 Chron. 1:30 Mishma, and Dumah, Massa, Hadad, and Tema,**

**1 Chron. 1:31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.**

When Sarah found that she had been unable to give Abraham children, she offered her Egyptian handmaid, Hagar. Hagar bore Ishmael when Abraham was at age eighty-six. The angel of the Lord promised Hagar that her seed would become an innumerable multitude.

**1 Chron. 1:32 Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan.**

**1 Chron. 1:33 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Henoah, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these are the sons of Keturah.**

The twenty-fifth chapter of Genesis tells us of Abraham's marriage to Keturah. By this time Sarah had died. Abraham replaced her with Keturah, through which he had six sons, two of whom were Jokshan and Midian. We then follow the line through the sons of Jokshan, and Midian. Some of these names are mentioned at various places in the history of Israel,

but the main line to the Messiah will not be through Keturah. It will be through Sarah.

**1 Chron. 1:34 And Abraham begat Isaac. The sons of Isaac; Esau and Israel.**

**1 Chron. 1:35 The sons of Esau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.**

**1 Chron. 1:36 The sons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, and Timna, and Amalek.**

**1 Chron. 1:37 The sons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.**

The descendants of Abraham through his sons Esau and Seir seem to be so closely related that they are dealt with as a unit. Both resided in the land of Edom. See Genesis chapter thirty-six for more information.

**1 Chron. 1:38 And the sons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezar, and Dishan.**

**1 Chron. 1:39 And the sons of Lotan; Hori, and Homam: and Timna was Lotan's sister.**

**1 Chron. 1:40 The sons of Shobal; Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. and the sons of Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah.**

**1 Chron. 1:41 The sons of Anah; Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.**

**1 Chron. 1:42 The sons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, and Jakan. The sons of Dishan; Uz, and Aran.**

Both the people of Seir and the Edomites played sizable roles in the history of the Israelites. For the  
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most part they were antagonistic to the descendants of Jacob. Several of the names given above will be familiar to the dedicated Bible student.

1 Chron. 1:43 Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel; Bela the son of Beor: and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

The tribes of Israel entered Canaan after the surrounding nations had been organized. The Edomites had a number of kings who preceded the years of Saul, David and Solomon. We do not note the passing of the rulership from father to son and to grandson, etc. in these nations; but they did have monarchies.

1 Chron. 1:44 And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

1 Chron. 1:45 And when Jobab was dead, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead.

1 Chron. 1:46 And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad, which smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.

1 Chron. 1:47 And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

1 Chron. 1:48 And when Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.

1 Chron. 1:49 And when Shaul was dead, Baalhanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

1 Chron. 1:50 And when Baalhanan was dead, Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city

was Pai; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

We are given no information as to the length of reign for each of these kings. It would be difficult to calculate the total number of years included.

1 Chron. 1:51 Hadad died also. And the dukes of Edom were; duke Timnah, duke Aliah, duke Jetheth,

1 Chron. 1:52 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

1 Chron. 1:53 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

1 Chron. 1:54 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram. These are the dukes of Edom.

Our chapter closes with a list of the dukes of Edom. The word dukes could also be translated as "chiefs." These dukes or chiefs were not of the same level as the kings, but were still of enough influence that their names were considered deserving of mention.

This concludes the survey of the descendants of Ishmael. Our next chapter will turn attention to those of Jacob (Israel.)



Chapter 2

Beginning at this point it becomes very difficult to follow the pattern of presentation of the genealogical records as given through chapter nine of this book. At times we expect a mention of a person when it is not given. Sometimes cities are mentioned as if they were men.

It is fairly clear that the compiler of the material was interested in following the lineage from Abraham to the Messiah who would provide the blessings to all nations which would come through this line.

One commentator after another states almost the same difficulties of accurate explanation. The material would certainly have been more understandable to those who first read these words than for the reader of the present day. All we can do is try our best. Surely the part that is necessary for the modern reader is understandable. If I do my best to explain that part which I can understand, and the present reader does all he or she can to absorb the information, We will get out of it what God intended if we make a cooperative effort and call upon the Lord to guide us.

1 Chron. 2:1 These are the sons of Israel; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun,

1 Chron. 2:2 Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

First we have a listing of the twelve sons of Jacob (Israel.) We are not particularly interested at this time in which of the wives of Jacob produced each of the twelve.

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**1 Chron. 2:3 The sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah: which three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess. And Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the sight of the LORD; and he slew him.**

Though the tribe of Judah is known as the most prominent of the twelve in terms of pointing toward the Christ, the tribe is not at all promising in it's early days. Er and Onan both have questionable records. Also note that there was intermixing with the Canaanites, which Jehovah had forbidden.

**1 Chron. 2:4 And Tamar his daughter in law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the sons of Judah were five.**

Then we find that he produced three more sons through sexual relationships with his own daughter-in-law, Tamar.

**1 Chron. 2:5 The sons of Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul.**

**1 Chron. 2:6 And the sons of Zerah; Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all.**

**1 Chron. 2:7 And the sons of Carmi; Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the thing accursed.**

Achar is the same as Achan who disobeyed the Lord in secretly picking up idolatrous objects which were strictly forbidden.

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1 Chron. 2:8 And the sons of Ethan; Azariah.

1 Chron. 2:9 The sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai.

1 Chron. 2:10 And Ram begat Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah;

1 Chron. 2:11 And Nahshon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,

1 Chron. 2:12 And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse,

1 Chron. 2:13 And Jesse begat his firstborn Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third,

1 Chron. 2:14 Nethaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth,

1 Chron. 2:15 Ozem the sixth, David the seventh:

In verses 8 through 15 we move quickly through several generations until we arrive at David. It is easy to see the general direction in which this list of names is going.

1 Chron. 2:16 Whose sisters were Zeruah, and Abigail. And the sons of Zeruah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three.

1 Chron. 2:17 And Abigail bare Amasa: and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmeelite.

1 Chron. 2:18 And Caleb the son of Hezron begat children of Azubah his wife, and of Jerioth: her sons are these; Jeshar, and Shobab, and Ardon.

1 Chron. 2:19 And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur.

1 Chron. 2:20 And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat Bezaleel.

1 Chron. 2:21 And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, whom he married when he was threescore years old; and she bare him Segub.

1 Chron. 2:22 And Segub begat Jair, who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead.

1 Chron. 2:23 And he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, with Kenath, and the towns thereof, even threescore cities. All these belonged to the sons of Machir the father of Gilead.

1 Chron. 2:24 And after that Hezron was dead in Calebephratah, then Abiah Hezron's wife bare him Ashur the father of Tekoa.

1 Chron. 2:25 And the sons of Jerahmeel the firstborn of Hezron were, Ram the firstborn, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and Ahijah.

1 Chron. 2:26 Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.

1 Chron. 2:27 And the sons of Ram the firstborn of Jerahmeel were, Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker.

1 Chron. 2:28 And the sons of Onam were, Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab and Abishur.

1 Chron. 2:29 And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bare him Ahban, and Molid.

1 Chron. 2:30 And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children.

1 Chron. 2:31 And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan; Ahlai.

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**1 Chron. 2:32 And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai; Jether, and Jonathan: and Jether died without children.**

**1 Chron. 2:33 And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth, and Zaza. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.**

**1 Chron. 2:34 Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters. And Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha.**

**1 Chron. 2:35 And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife; and she bare him Attai.**

The production of sons was extremely important to the Israelites. If a man's wife had no sons, he would go so far as to have sexual relationships with those outside the chosen people. Sheshan had daughters but no sons. He did have a male servant named Jarha, who was an Egyptian. Sheshan's solution to the problem was to allow his daughter to produce a son with Jarha the Egyptian servant. This appeased his grief at not having sons, even though it continued the mixing of the races which God had forbidden.

**1 Chron. 2:36 And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat Zabad,**

**1 Chron. 2:37 And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed,**

**1 Chron. 2:38 And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah,**

**1 Chron. 2:39 And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah,**

**1 Chron. 2:40 And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum,**

**1 Chron. 2:41 And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.**

Beginning with verse forty-two below, we find men being called the father of cities. This may be a result of the descendants of that individual being very productive and populating entire villages. Out of that city then could come a male who would be the origin of another population site.

**1 Chron. 2:42 Now the sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel were, Mesha his firstborn, which was the father of Ziph; and the sons of Mareshah the father of Hebron.**

**1 Chron. 2:43 And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.**

**1 Chron. 2:44 And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkoam: and Rekem begat Shammai.**

**1 Chron. 2:45 And the son of Shammai was Maon: and Maon was the father of Bethzur.**

**1 Chron. 2:46 And Ephah, Caleb's concubine, bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez.**

**1 Chron. 2:47 And the sons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Gesham, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph.**

**1 Chron. 2:48 Maachah, Caleb's concubine, bare Sheber, and Tirhanah.**

**1 Chron. 2:49 She bare also Shaaph the father of Madmannah, Sheva the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibeaz: and the daughter of Caleb was Achsa.**

**1 Chron. 2:50 These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the firstborn of Ephratah; Shobal the father of Kirjathjearim.**

It can be seen that the Caleb mentioned here is not the same as the Caleb who spied out the land along  
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with Joshua. This Caleb was the son of Hur. The Caleb who spied out the land along with Joshua was the son of Jephunneh

1 Chron. 2:51 Salma the father of Bethlehem, Hareph the father of Bethgader.

1 Chron. 2:52 And Shobal the father of Kirjathjearim had sons; Haroeh, and half of the Manahethites.

1 Chron. 2:53 And the families of Kirjathjearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraitites; of them came the Zareathites, and the Eshtaulites,

1 Chron. 2:54 The sons of Salma; Bethlehem, and the Netophathites, Ataroth, the house of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, the Zorites.

1 Chron. 2:55 And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and Suchathites. These are the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab.

This extended list of genealogical records does not mean as much to non Jewish persons living many centuries later.. They did mean much to those who were coming back from captivity and attempting to establish their territorial rights in the land which belonged to them by right of ancestry.

Chapter 3

There is much similarity between the material in this chapter and that found in 2 Samuel 3-5. There are differences in the two accounts, but with much difficulty the general thread of David's descendants can be followed. As pointed out before, even the most conservative of the commentators express concerns about corruptions of the text. Even so, the material has been considered worthy of inclusion within the canon of holy writings.

The reader will recall that very special promises were made by the Lord with respect to the blessings to come to mankind through two men, Abraham and David. This is a part of the tracing of those promises.

1 Chron. 3:1 Now these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the firstborn Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess:

1 Chron. 3:2 The third, Absalom the son of Maachah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur: the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith:

1 Chron. 3:3 The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital: the sixth, Ithream by Eglah his wife.

1 Chron. 3:4 These six were born unto him in Hebron; and there he reigned seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years.

David ruled for the first seven and one half years from Hebron. The last thirty-three years he ruled from Jerusalem over all Israel. We are first given a list of his sons as born during the years at Hebron. They are:

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1. Amnon
2. Daniel
3. Absalom
4. Adonijah
5. Shephatiah
6. Ithream

The above were all born by different mothers.

**1 Chron. 3:5 And these were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shimea, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon, four, of Bathshua the daughter of Ammiel:**

**1 Chron. 3:6 Ibhar also, and Elishama, and Eliphelet,**

**1 Chron. 3:7 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,**

**1 Chron. 3:8 And Elishama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine.**

Verses three through five above list nine sons born to David during his reign in Jerusalem. They are:

1. Shimea
2. Shobab
3. Nathan
4. Solomon

These four were born by Bathsheba.

5. Ibhar
6. Elishua
7. Eliphelet
8. Nogah
9. Nepheg
10. Japhia
11. Elishama
12. Eliada
13. Eliphelet

**1 Chron. 3:9 These were all the sons of David, beside the sons of the concubines, and Tamar their sister.**

Although not given the number of daughters born to David, it seems that we can assume a somewhat similar number of them. Only Tamar is listed. That does not mean there were no others. The names of the sons born by the concubines are not given. They are of only secondary importance in the history of Israel.

The line will now be traced through David's son Solomon and his descendants.

**1 Chron. 3:10 And Solomon's son was Rehoboam, Abia his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son,**

**1 Chron. 3:11 Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son,**

**1 Chron. 3:12 Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son,**

**1 Chron. 3:13 Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son,**

**1 Chron. 3:14 Amon his son, Josiah his son.**

First we have the line from Solomon to Josiah.

1. Rehoboam
2. Abia
3. Asa
4. Jehoshaphat
5. Joram
6. Ahaziah
7. Joash
8. Amaziah
9. Azariah
10. Jotham
11. Ahaz



12. Hezekiah
13. Manasseh
14. Amon
15. Josiah

**1 Chron. 3:15 And the sons of Josiah were, the firstborn Johanan, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum.**

The line from Josiah to Zedekiah.

1. Jehoiakim
2. Jehoiachin
3. Zedekiah

**1 Chron. 3:16 And the sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.**

We will now underline the main line to the end of the chapter.

**1 Chron. 3:17 And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, Salathiel his son,**

**1 Chron. 3:18 Malchiram also, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.**

**1 Chron. 3:19 And the sons of Pedaiah were, Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their sister:**

**1 Chron. 3:20 And Hashubah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushabhesed, five.**

**1 Chron. 3:21 And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jesaiah: the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shechaniah.**

**1 Chron. 3:22 And the sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah; and the sons of Shemaiah; Hattush, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, six.**

**1 Chron. 3:23 And the sons of Neariah; Elioenai, and Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.**

**1 Chron. 3:24 And the sons of Elioenai were, Hodaiah, and Eliashib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Dalaiah, and Anani, seven.**

By the time we reach the end of this chapter three, we are eight generations after the exile. Abraham was dead. David was dead. But the promises the Lord made to mankind through these two men still lived. Jesus Christ is well known as the Son of David. We can trace God's plan for man from Adam, to Abraham, to David and to the Only Begotten Son of the Eternal Father. Let us not be overwhelmed by the human frailties in the transmission of God's truth.

There are those who believe we should not pray in modern times that "Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Yes, it is true that the Kingdom of God has been established on earth with Jesus Christ as the King of kings. However, the prayer does not stop with the request that the Kingdom appear. It goes much farther and pleads that through that spiritual Kingdom the will of the Father will be honored and implemented among all the nations of the world. Let each of us do all within our power to promote the "Victory in Jesus."



## *Chapter 4*

The previous chapter contained the list of David's sons, carrying the line of Christ forward with particular attention to the tribes of Judah and Simeon. The tribe of Simeon was largely absorbed by the tribe of Judah at the time these words were written, but the writer of Chronicles felt the need to include all of the twelve tribes in his discussion.

This material may be less meaningful to the present day reader, particularly if that reader is non-Jewish. But, rest assured, it was far from meaningless to the Hebrews who were anxiously waiting for the promises made through Abraham and David.

Our own comments will be much abbreviated, except for a few verses which we can more easily relate to.

**1 Chron. 4:1 The sons of Judah; Pharez, Hezron, and Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal.**

The first half of the chapter has to do with the tribe of Judah. It is from this tribe that the name Jew is derived. It was concentrated in the south of the land of Canaan and was associated with the very important city of Jerusalem. It's high degree of importance in the history of the Israelites may be the reason for it's position in the list.

**1 Chron. 4:2 And Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath; and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites.**

**1 Chron. 4:3 And these were of the father of Etam; Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister was Hazeleponi:**  
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1 Chron. 4:4 And Penuel the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephratah, the father of Bethlehem.

The reader will note here the method of connecting the names of cities or villages with the names of prominent persons. Bethlehem-Ephratah is known to all of us. This is little different than our present references to “Smithville” or “Charleston.” It does, however, make it difficult at times to know whether a person or a community is being discussed.

1 Chron. 4:5 And Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.

1 Chron. 4:6 And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hopher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.

1 Chron. 4:7 And the sons of Helah were, Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan.

1 Chron. 4:8 And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.

1 Chron. 4:9 And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow.

Here we find an individual who has little reputation in the rest of Holy Scripture, but who sparkles like a gem in just a few verses. That person is Jabez. His mother brought him into the world with much discomfort. So much so, that she gave him a name indicating that fact. Though he was introduced to the family great difficulty, he later became a source of pride. He stood out among his brethren as more honourable than the rest.



1 Chron. 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

In the effort to rise above the name his mother gave him, Jabez called upon God for help. His prayer is one which should be on the lips of all God's people. Jabez knew very well that anything he accomplished was dependent upon God's providential hand supporting him in his efforts. He desired that God would help him to prosper, and that He in turn would be able to respond to God's help with a life separated from evil.

God does hear the fervent prayer of a righteous person. His prayer was heard and he apparently lived an efficient and righteous life.

1 Chron. 4:11 And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which was the father of Eshton.

1 Chron. 4:12 And Eshton begat Bethrapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Irnahash. These are the men of Rechah.

1 Chron. 4:13 And the sons of Kenaz; Othniel, and Seraiah: and the sons of Othniel; Hathath.

1 Chron. 4:14 And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the valley of Charashim; for they were craftsmen.

Craftsmen have been vital in every age of man. Those like Joab were mechanically gifted. Those who labor with their hands are sometimes less respected than political rulers and wealthy businessmen. This is



a mistake. Any person who makes efficient use of the talents bestowed upon him is due much honor.

1 Chron. 4:15 And the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of Elah, even Kenaz.

We recognize Caleb, the son of Jephunneh as one of the twelve spies who searched out the land of Canaan before Israel entered into it.

1 Chron. 4:16 And the sons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel.

1 Chron. 4:17 And the sons of Ezra were, Jether, and Mered, and Ephher, and Jalon: and she bare Miriam, and Shammai, and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa.

1 Chron. 4:18 And his wife Jehudijah bare Jered the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these are the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.

1 Chron. 4:19 And the sons of his wife Hodiah the sister of Naham, the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maachathite.

1 Chron. 4:20 And the sons of Shimon were, Amnon, and Rinnah, Benhanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi were, Zoheth, and Benzoheth.

1 Chron. 4:21 The sons of Shelah the son of Judah were, Er the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea,

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Add the makers of fine linen to the list of craftsmen given earlier. We can assume that these persons were talented in making clothing fit for the priests and royalty of the land. Such talent would have been highly respected.

**1 Chron. 4:22 And Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab, and Jashubilehem. And these are ancient things.**

**1 Chron. 4:23 These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work.**

There is some difference of opinion concerning the identity of these persons called potters and those who dwelt among plants and hedges. The “potters” may have been brick-masons. The plants and hedges are thought by some to have been locations rather than references to vegetation.

**1 Chron. 4:24 The sons of Simeon were, Nemuel, and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul:**

The remainder of the chapter concerns the descendants of Simeon, the son of Jacob. As was mentioned earlier, this tribe was practically dissolved into the tribe of Judah over the centuries, but is listed here as one of the original twelve tribes.

**1 Chron. 4:25 Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son.**

**1 Chron. 4:26 And the sons of Mishma; Hamuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimei his son.**

**1 Chron. 4:27 And Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters: but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply, like to the children of Judah.**

While the children of Judah were increasing from seventy-four thousand six hundred to seventy-six thousand five hundred, the tribe of Simeon (or Shimei) actually decreased from fifty-nine thousand three hundred to twenty-two thousand two hundred. It is quite correct then to say that the family of Simeon did not multiply as did that of Judah.

**1 Chron. 4:28 And they dwelt at Beersheba, and Moladah, and Hazarshual,**

**1 Chron. 4:29 And at Bilhah, and at Ezem, and at Tolad,**

**1 Chron. 4:30 And at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag,**

**1 Chron. 4:31 And at Bethmarcaboth, and Hazarsusim, and at Bethbirei, and at Shaaraim. These were their cities unto the reign of David.**

**1 Chron. 4:32 And their villages were, Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities:**

**1 Chron. 4:33 And all their villages that were round about the same cities, unto Baal. These were their habitations, and their genealogy.**

We can see here a differentiation between larger cities and less populated villages.

**1 Chron. 4:34 And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Joshah, the son of Amaziah,**

**1 Chron. 4:35 And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel,**

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1 Chron. 4:36 And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Jeshohaiah, and Asaiah, and Adiel, and Jesimiel, and Benaiah,

1 Chron. 4:37 And Ziza the son of Shiphi, the son of Allon, the son of Jedaiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah;

1 Chron. 4:38 These mentioned by their names were princes in their families: and the house of their fathers increased greatly.

1 Chron. 4:39 And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.

1 Chron. 4:40 And they found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for they of Ham had dwelt there of old.

The tribe of Simeon had been dominated by the tribe of Judah to the extent that they had to seek pasture land for their herd and flocks in the highlands of Mount Seir and vicinity. The people in that area were descendants of Ham. This could mean they were Philistines or Canaanites who had lived there from long before this.

1 Chron. 4:41 And these written by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: because there was pasture there for their flocks.

1 Chron. 4:42 And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.

1 Chron. 4:43 And they smote the rest of the

Amalekites that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day.

The tribe of Simeon found it necessary to contend with too many foes. They retreated from their part of the land into the area of the Amalekites who had escaped from Saul and took pasture land from the remainder of the Amalekites.

There is a problem here when we compare what God commanded Saul to do concerning the Amalekites and the fact that some are said to have escaped. We know that Saul was to kill King Agag and failed to do that. The problem lies, however, in the fact that God commanded even the mothers and the children of the Amalekites to be slain. It may be that Saul allowed not only Agag to escape, but also some who fled from his military forces.



Chapter 5

Chapter five continues the listing of the descendants of Jacob or Israel. In this chapter we will be looking at the two and one half tribes which settled on the east side of the Jordan River. These were Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Mannasseh.

The latter part of the chapter discusses the conflict with the Arab tribes who were using the contested territory as pasture for flocks and herds. Then, because of the spiritual adultery of these two and one half tribes, God allowed them to be taken into captivity by Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria.

1 Chron. 5:1 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

Reuben was the oldest son of Jacob and would normally have been honored with the birthright of his father. This right was forfeited because of Reuben's sexual misconduct with his father's concubine Bilhah. (See Gen. 35)

The birthright was taken from Reuben and was awarded to Joseph. The genealogy of Reuben has nothing to do with the birthright of Jacob.

1 Chron. 5:2 For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:)

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Judah had proven to be more faithful to the Lord than had his brethren. As a result, a chief ruler was to come from his descendants. Some see this as a reference to the Messiah. Others relate it to King David. Since Jesus Christ was a descendant of David, we can comfortably say both claims are true.

**1 Chron. 5:3 The sons, I say, of Reuben the firstborn of Israel were, Hanoah, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.**

**1 Chron. 5:4 The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son,**

**1 Chron. 5:5 Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son,**

**1 Chron. 5:6 Beerah his son, whom Tilgathpilneser king of Assyria carried away captive: he was prince of the Reubenites.**

Verses 3 through 5 give us the lineage from Reuben to Beerah, who was taken captive by Tiglath-pileser. The variant spelling of this name should not confuse the Bible student. As we have already seen, such variations in spelling are common in the scriptures. Note that Beerah was not called a king. He was of lesser importance and was titled a prince.

**1 Chron. 5:7 And his brethren by their families, when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned, were the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,**

**1 Chron. 5:8 And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel, who dwelt in Aroer, even unto Nebo and Baalmeon:**

**1 Chron. 5:9 And eastward he inhabited unto the entering in of the wilderness from the river**





**Euphrates: because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead.**

These tribes who settled on the east side of the Jordan moved steadily from the river toward the east. They had requested that when the rest of the Israelites moved across the river to take the land of Canaan, that they be allowed to settle on the east. This was agreed to provided they would help their brethren to take the land west of the Jordan.

The fine pasture land which they inherited was a source of great hostility between these tribes and the Arab descendants of Ishmael.

**1 Chron. 5:10 And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand: and they dwelt in their tents throughout all the east land of Gilead.**

**1 Chron. 5:11 And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, in the land of Bashan unto Salcah:**

As time passed and Saul became the first king of the united kingdom, the hostility broke out into open war. The hagarites would have been the descendants of Hagar, Sarah's handmaid. The Hagarites were defeated and the two and one half tribes took over the land on the east side of the river. This land included both Gilead and Bashan.

**1 Chron. 5:12 Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Bashan.**

**1 Chron. 5:13 And their brethren of the house of their fathers were, Michael, and Meshullam,**

and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven.

**1 Chron. 5:14** These are the children of Abihail the son of Huri, the son of Jaroah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeshishai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz;

**1 Chron. 5:15** Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers.

**1 Chron. 5:16** And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of Sharon, upon their borders.

**1 Chron. 5:17** All these were reckoned by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.

Above we have a list of some who led the transjordanic tribes during the period of heated conflict with the Hagarites. A count was made of the able men of war in the days of Jotham in Judah and Jeroboam in Israel.

**1 Chron. 5:18** The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, were four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.

**1 Chron. 5:19** And they made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab.

The war between the Israelites and the Hagarites was not fought with poison gas and nuclear weapons as has been the case in these later centuries. The army's strength was count in terms of the number who could wear armor and fight with swords and arrows.

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1 Chron. 5:20 And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and he was intreated of them; because they put their trust in him.

The tribes of Israel had more than just men on their side. They were given aid through the hand of the Almighty God. They cried out to Him for help, and He heard their cry. It is pitiful that later they separated themselves from faith in God and suffered the consequences.

1 Chron. 5:21 And they took away their cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of men an hundred thousand.

1 Chron. 5:22 For there fell down many slain, because the war was of God. And they dwelt in their steads until the captivity.

It brings nausea to the pit of the stomach to realize that humanity can become so incensed with hatred for their fellow man that actions such as these above break out in century after century, and in locations across the world. Even within those who claim to be followers of the Son of God, power struggles bring great grief.

These numbers of livestock seem very large, but certainly not impossible. One hundred thousand captives taken from the Hagarites also may seem high, but families at that time were known for producing many children.

1 Chron. 5:23 And the children of the half tribe of Manasse dwelt in the land: they increased

from Bashan unto Baalhermon and Senir, and unto mount Hermon.

1 Chron. 5:24 And these were the heads of the house of their fathers, even Epher, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, famous men, and heads of the house of their fathers.

The half tribe of Manasseh became more prominent that did the other two tribes. They included strong and powerful men of war. Such men could have made great servants of the Lord.

1 Chron. 5:25 And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them.

Rather than devoting themselves to the service of Jehovah, the people of this strong tribe became attracted to the false gods of the people whom they had overcome. When they should have been grateful and given honor to the True and Living God, they bent the knee to Satan.

1 Chron. 5:26 And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgathpilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.

As a result of their rebellion against Him, God reversed His attitude toward them. He allowed Tiglath-
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pileser, the King of Assyria, to enter the land, defeat them and carry them away into the land of Assyria.

Let those nations whom God has blessed so bountifully in these latter days take careful heed. The same God who has blessed these nations with freedom and prosperity can take them away when it is proven that they despise Him and have chosen the way of Satan and his angels!

## *Chapter 6*

The compiler of the book of I Chronicles now moves to the genealogy of the tribe of Levi. There is strong reason to believe he was of the priestly tribe himself. Comparatively speaking, this record is more precise and complete than those we have been examining on the other sons of Jacob.

There are still some inconsistencies in the listings as given in other locations of the old testament such as 2 Chronicles 22, 23 and 24, or Joshua 21.

It says something about the material of this chapter when we see that there are eighty-one verses, and yet the number of pages of comments by various commentary writers is limited in comparison with the amount written on other chapters which have far fewer verses. The lists of names of persons and cities make laborious reading. Further thought causes us to realize the degree to which the Lord was involved in the life of His chosen people. There is no reason to believe that God is less concerned about individual persons today than He was in the patriarchal and Mosaic ages.

Much of the Old Testament contains types and shadows of that which was to follow in the Christian age. In the Mosaic age there was a High Priest and a number of common priests. Today Christ serves as the High Priest, and all faithful Christians are common priests. It is not surprising that the Bible presents a strong emphasis upon the priesthood. It is the avenue of approach to God.

**1 Chron. 6:1 The sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.**



We begin with the three sons of Levi. The remainder of the chapter will present the names of their descendants and also the territories in which the priests served.

**1 Chron. 6:2 And the sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.**

**1 Chron. 6:3 And the children of Amram; Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam. The sons also of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.**

The genealogy of Kohath is given first. We will follow the main line of this man. Kohath produced Amram and Amran begot Aaron, Moses and Miriam. Thus Aaron and Moses were the grandsons of Kohath. Aaron was the first High Priest. Moses was the prime lawgiver. Jesus Christ combines the two. He is both High Priest and Lawgiver.

**1 Chron. 6:4 Eleazar begat Phinehas, Phinehas begat Abishua,**

**1 Chron. 6:5 And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi,**

**1 Chron. 6:6 And Uzzi begat Zerariah, and Zerariah begat Meraioth,**

**1 Chron. 6:7 Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,**

**1 Chron. 6:8 And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Ahimaaz,**

**1 Chron. 6:9 And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan,**

**1 Chron. 6:10 And Johanan begat Azariah, (he it is that executed the priest's office in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem:)**

The above verses list the High Priests from Aaron to Azariah, who was the first of the High Priests to officiate in the temple built by Solomon.

**1 Chron. 6:11 And Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub,**

**1 Chron. 6:12 And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Shallum,**

**1 Chron. 6:13 And Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah,**

**1 Chron. 6:14 And Azariah begat Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak,**

Do not let the mention of Azariah in both verses eleven and thirteen. One is a descendant of the other.

**1 Chron. 6:15 And Jehozadak went into captivity, when the LORD carried away Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.**

Verses eleven through fourteen present the names of the High Priests from Azariah to Jehozadak, who was High Priest at the time Nebuchadnezzar came and took the southern kingdom into captivity in Bab;ylon.

**1 Chron. 6:16 The sons of Levi; Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.**

**1 Chron. 6:17 And these be the names of the sons of Gershom; Libni, and Shimei.**

We return to the main line from Levi. This time we follow the genealogy of Gershom.

**1 Chron. 6:18 And the sons of Kohath were, Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.**

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1 Chron. 6:19 The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. And these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers.

Not all of the Levites were priests. The reader may recall that the New Testament often speaks of the “priests and the Levites.” We are now given a list of the heads of families of the Levites descending from Gershom.

1 Chron. 6:20 Of Gershom; Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son,

1 Chron. 6:21 Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeaterai his son.

1 Chron. 6:22 The sons of Kohath; Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son,

1 Chron. 6:23 Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son,

1 Chron. 6:24 Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uziah his son, and Shaul his son.

1 Chron. 6:25 And the sons of Elkanah; Amasai, and Ahimoth.

1 Chron. 6:26 As for Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; Zophai his son, and Nahath his son,

1 Chron. 6:27 Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son.

1 Chron. 6:28 And the sons of Samuel; the firstborn Vashni, and Abiah.

1 Chron. 6:29 The sons of Merari; Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son,

We are back again to the main lines from Levi. This time the genealogy is that of Merari.

1 Chron. 6:30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son.

1 Chron. 6:31 And these are they whom David set over the service of song in the house of the LORD, after that the ark had rest.

1 Chron. 6:32 And they ministered before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem: and then they waited on their office according to their order.

A portion of the descendants of Merari were appointed by David to supervise the singing which took place in the tabernacle when it rested in the city of Jerusalem. This continued until after Solomon built the temple. Then these duties fell upon the various orders as their turn came up.

1 Chron. 6:33 And these are they that waited with their children. Of the sons of the Kohathites: Heman a singer, the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel,

There were three men chosen as principals over the singers. One was chosen from the Kohathites. This was Heman. One was chosen from the Gershonites. This was Asaph. One was chosen from the Merarites. This was Ethan. Heman and his group were located in the center. Ethan and his group were on the right side of Heman. Asaph and his group were on the left side of Heman.

The name of Asaph should be familiar to anyone who has spent time with the psalms. Many of them are

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accredited to this man. David is known as the “sweet singer of Israel”, but Asaph seems to have composed quite a number of those we sing today.

**1 Chron. 6:34** The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah,

**1 Chron. 6:35** The son of Zuph, the son of Elkanah, the son of Mahath, the son of Amasai,

**1 Chron. 6:36** The son of Elkanah, the son of Joel, the son of Azariah, the son of Zephaniah,

**1 Chron. 6:37** The son of Tahath, the son of Assir, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah,

**1 Chron. 6:38** The son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.

**1 Chron. 6:39** And his brother Asaph, who stood on his right hand, even Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea,

**1 Chron. 6:40** The son of Michael, the son of Baaseiah, the son of Malchiah,

**1 Chron. 6:41** The son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah,

**1 Chron. 6:42** The son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei,

**1 Chron. 6:43** The son of Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi.

**1 Chron. 6:44** And their brethren the sons of Merari stood on the left hand: Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch,

**1 Chron. 6:45** The son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah,

**1 Chron. 6:46** The son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer,

**1 Chron. 6:47** The son of Mahli, the son of

**Mushi, the son of Merari, the son of Levi.**

**1 Chron. 6:48 Their brethren also the Levites were appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.**

The Levites had more to do than sing. Some were also appointed to other tasks required in the tabernacle. Among these might have been janitorial work, arrangement of furniture, etc.

**1 Chron. 6:49 But Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt offering, and on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.**

**1 Chron. 6:50 And these are the sons of Aaron; Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son,**

**1 Chron. 6:51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son,**

**1 Chron. 6:52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son,**

**1 Chron. 6:53 Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.**

The descendants of Aaron were charged with offering the burnt offerings and the incense. All of the work done in the Most Holy Place was assigned to Aaron and a series of his descendants who held the office of High Priest.

**1 Chron. 6:54 Now these are their dwelling places throughout their castles in their coasts, of the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites: for theirs was the lot.**

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Now we are given a listing of the territories in which the priest and Levites served. The family of the Kohathites was given the first lot.

The mention of castles is somewhat difficult for the modern reader. We think of a castle as a building within itself. The castles mentioned here were walls surrounding their dwelling places.

1 Chron. 6:55 And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it.

The suburbs were a measured distance around the village or city. We are not talking about suburbs such as those around major cities in the nations of the twenty-first century.

1 Chron. 6:56 But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

1 Chron. 6:57 And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, namely, Hebron, the city of refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs,

1 Chron. 6:58 And Hilen with her suburbs, Debir with her suburbs,

1 Chron. 6:59 And Ashan with her suburbs, and Bethshemesh with her suburbs:

It may be worth the time to compare the twenty-first chapter of Joshua with the present listings. There are differences in spellings and in some cases the name itself. This is to be expected as much time has passed since the record given in Joshua. Cities do change their

names, and spellings of cities and towns do change over time.

Hebron is mentioned here as one of the six cities of refuge to which one might flee if he had accidentally been responsible for the death of another.

1 Chron. 6:60 And out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her suburbs, and Alemeth with her suburbs, and Anathoth with her suburbs. All their cities throughout their families were thirteen cities.

Thirteen cities were assigned to the tribe of Benjamin.

1 Chron. 6:61 And unto the sons of Kohath, which were left of the family of that tribe, were cities given out of the half tribe, namely, out of the half tribe of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities.

Ten cities were assigned to the Kohathites from the half tribe of Manasseh.

1 Chron. 6:62 And to the sons of Gershom throughout their families out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

The Gershomites received thirteen cities from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali and Manasseh.

1 Chron. 6:63 Unto the sons of Merari were given by lot, throughout their families, out of the
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**tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.**

The Merarites received twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Zebulun.

**1 Chron. 6:64 And the children of Israel gave to the Levites these cities with their suburbs.**

**1 Chron. 6:65 And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, these cities, which are called by their names.**

The Levites also received cities from the tribes of Judah, Simeon and Benjamin.

**1 Chron. 6:66 And the residue of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim.**

**1 Chron. 6:67 And they gave unto them, of the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; they gave also Gezer with her suburbs,**

Shechem and Gezer were given to the Kohathites as cities of refuge.

**1 Chron. 6:68 And Jokmeam with her suburbs, and Bethoron with her suburbs,**

**1 Chron. 6:69 And Aijalon with her suburbs, and Gathrimmon with her suburbs:**

**1 Chron. 6:70 And out of the half tribe of Manasseh; Aner with her suburbs, and Bileam**

**with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.**

Other cities given to the Kohathites were Jokmean, Aijalon and Gathrimmon.

**1 Chron. 6:71 Unto the sons of Gershom were given out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, and Ashtaroth with her suburbs:**

The Gershomites received Golan and Ashtaroth from the half tribe of Manasseh.

**1 Chron. 6:72 And out of the tribe of Issachar; Kedesh with her suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs,**

**1 Chron. 6:73 And Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs:**

The tribe of Issachar provided the Levites with Kedesh, Daberath, Ramoth and Anem.

**1 Chron. 6:74 And out of the tribe of Asher; Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs,**

**1 Chron. 6:75 And Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs:**

From the tribe of Asher the Levites received Mashal, Abdon, Hukok and Rehob, all with their suburbs.

**1 Chron. 6:76 And out of the tribe of Naphtali; Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and Hammon**

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with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.

The tribe of Napthali provided the Levites with Kedesh, Hammon and Kirjathaim.

1 Chron. 6:77 Unto the rest of the children of Merari were given out of the tribe of Zebulun, Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs:

The tribe of Zebulun gave the Merarites the cities of Rimmon and Tabor.

1 Chron. 6:78 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, were given them out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and Jahzah with her suburbs,

1 Chron. 6:79 Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs:

From the east side of the Jordan, the tribe of Reuben gave the Merarites the cities of Bezer, Jahzah, Kedemoth and Mephaath.

1 Chron. 6:80 And out of the tribe of Gad; Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs,

1 Chron. 6:81 And Heshbon with her suburbs, and Jazer with her suburbs.

The tribe of Gad gave the Levites the cities of Ramoth-Gilead, Mahanaim, Heshbon and Jazer.

Today when gospel preachers are supported by the congregations they serve, the congregations may expect valuable services to be rendered by those preachers. It was the same with the tribes and the Levites. The tribes supported the Levites and the Levites rendered their services in return.

In all, there were forty-eight of these Levite cities, of which six were designaged as cities of refuge.



Chapter 7

After having taken a very close look at the genealogy of the tribe of Levi, we turn to a consideration of several of the tribes of lesser prominence. These include Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim and Asher.

The previous chapters of I Chronicles have dealt with the transjordanic tribes, and those in the southern part of Canaan. Those in this chapter are located in the northern portion of the land.

1 Chron. 7:1 Now the sons of Issachar were, Tola, and Puah, Jashub, and Shimrom, four.

1 Chron. 7:2 And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house, to wit, of Tola: they were valiant men of might in their generations; whose number was in the days of David two and twenty thousand and six hundred.

1 Chron. 7:3 And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five: all of them chief men.

1 Chron. 7:4 And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, were bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand men: for they had many wives and sons.

1 Chron. 7:5 And their brethren among all the families of Issachar were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies fourscore and seven thousand.

These first five verses discuss the tribe of Issachar. There are similar lists in Genesis 46 and Numbers 26.

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It is becoming increasingly difficult to harmonize the listings found in different chapters. Names are included in one list which are not found in another. Spellings of names also differ. There is, however, enough to draw the conclusion that these were not fictitious lists drawn up for deceptive purposes.

It seems that much emphasis was placed upon the military strength of each of the tribes. This tribe of Issachar appears to have been known for its fighting men. These are listed as 22,600 at the time of David. Altogether there were 87,000 in the tribe.

**1 Chron. 7:6 The sons of Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and Jediael, three.**

**1 Chron. 7:7 And the sons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour; and were reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thousand and thirty and four.**

**1 Chron. 7:8 And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these are the sons of Becher.**

**1 Chron. 7:9 And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, was twenty thousand and two hundred.**

**1 Chron. 7:10 The sons also of Jediael; Bilhan; and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar.**

**1 Chron. 7:11 All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, were seventeen thousand and two hundred soldiers, fit to go out for war and battle.**

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1 Chron. 7:12 Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of Ir, and Hushim, the sons of Aher.

The record on the tribe of Benjamin is abbreviated here, but will be continued in the next chapter.

The numbers of fighting men are as follows:

Bela	22,034
Becher	20,200
Jediael	17,200

The tribe of Dan is not included in the totals found in this seventh chapter. We will not propose a reason for this omission.

1 Chron. 7:13 The sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.

Although Naphtali is listed as having four sons through Jacob's concubine Bilhah, no record is found here regarding the descendants of the four sons, or of the total numbers of fighting men.

1 Chron. 7:14 The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare: (but his concubine the Aramitess bare Machir the father of Gilead:

1 Chron. 7:15 And Machir took to wife the sister of Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name was Maachah;) and the name of the second was Zelophehad: and Zelophehad had daughters.

1 Chron. 7:16 And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam and Rakem.

1 Chron. 7:17 And the sons of Ulam; Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.

1 Chron. 7:18 And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah.

1 Chron. 7:19 And the sons of Shemidah were, Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam.

Since the tribe of Manasseh was split, with one half receiving territory on the east side of Jordan, and the other half receiving territory on the west side, we can foresee difficulties with the genealogical records. The reader should compare listings given in Numbers 26 and Joshua 17. We must admit that there are possible copyist transmission problems involved.

1 Chron. 7:20 And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son,

1 Chron. 7:21 And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.

1 Chron. 7:22 And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.

Disaster fell upon the sons of Ephraim when Ezer and Elead were killed by men from the land who came to take their cattle. Ephraim suffered bitter grief as a result of this loss.

1 Chron. 7:23 And when he went in to his wife, she conceived, and bare a son, and he called

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**his name Beriah, because it went evil with his house.**

Ephraim did have another son whom he named Beriah. The name Beriah was a constant reminder of the “misfortune” which had befallen his family.

**1 Chron. 7:24 (And his daughter was Sherah, who built Bethhoron the nether, and the upper, and Uzzenherah.)**

Beriah had a daughter, Sherah. This daughter was influential in the building of three cities.

**1 Chron. 7:25 And Rephah was his son, also Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son.**

**1 Chron. 7:26 Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son.**

**1 Chron. 7:27 Non his son, Jehoshuah his son.**

**1 Chron. 7:28 And their possessions and habitations were, Bethel and the towns thereof, and eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer, with the towns thereof; Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof:**

**1 Chron. 7:29 And by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Bethshean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel.**

The record is resumed as the lines of Ephraim and Manasseh are followed to the time of Joshua. Ephraim and Manasseh were brothers and were the sons of

Joseph, the son of Jacob. It is as if the record replaced Joseph with two tribes.

**1 Chron. 7:30** The sons of Asher; Imnah, and Isuah, and Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah their sister.

**1 Chron. 7:31** And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who is the father of Birzavith.

**1 Chron. 7:32** And Heber begat Japhlet, and Shomer, and Hotham, and Shua their sister.

**1 Chron. 7:33** And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath. These are the children of Japhlet.

**1 Chron. 7:34** And the sons of Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.

**1 Chron. 7:35** And the sons of his brother Helem; Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

**1 Chron. 7:36** The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,

**1 Chron. 7:37** Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and Ithran, and Beera.

**1 Chron. 7:38** And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.

**1 Chron. 7:39** And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia.

**1 Chron. 7:40** All these were the children of Asher, heads of their father's house, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And the number throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war and to battle was twenty and six thousand men.

Chapter seven concludes with the genealogy of the





tribe of Asher. Four sons and one daughter are given for Asher. The names of the sons were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi and Beriah. The name of the daughter was Serah.

The total number of men capable of battle is given as 26,000. Numbers 26:47 speaks of 53,400 fighting men for this tribe. Since some time had passed, it may be that the total had been sharply reduced.

## *Chapter 8*

Chapter seven had some information on the lineage of the tribe of Benjamin. Since Saul arose from this tribe, it was probably felt justified to be a bit more full. Thus we have additional facts concerning this tribe.

There are four separate locations that deal with this material. We have the present chapter. We have the sixth through twelfth verses of the previous chapter seven. We also have material from Genesis 46 and Numbers 26.

The tribe of Benjamin was found in Aijalon, Gath, Jerusalem and Gibeon. It is apparent that they moved from one region to another for various reasons.

**1 Chron. 8:1 Now Benjamin begat Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, and Aharah the third,**

**1 Chron. 8:2 Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.**

**1 Chron. 8:3 And the sons of Bela were, Addar, and Gera, and Abihud,**

**1 Chron. 8:4 And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah,**

**1 Chron. 8:5 And Gera, and Shephuphan, and Huram.**

It is strange that Gera is listed as a son of Bela in verse three and then again in verse five. This may be due to the tendency to list grandsons as sons in the genealogies.

**1 Chron. 8:6 And these are the sons of Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba, and they removed them to Manahath:**

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1 Chron. 8:7 And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud.

It is difficult to determine who removed whom in the statement of verse six. It may be that the Benjaminites caused the removal of those who were in Geba and caused them to move to Manahath.

It may also be that the Benjaminites themselves moved from Geba to Manahath. Conditions were unstable during this period of time.

1 Chron. 8:8 And Shaharaim begat children in the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara were his wives.

1 Chron. 8:9 And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham,

1 Chron. 8:10 And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. These were his sons, heads of the fathers.

1 Chron. 8:11 And of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal.

1 Chron. 8:12 The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shamed, who built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof:

Shaharaim succeeded in replacing some of the inhabitants of the land of Moab. He married two wives, Hushim and Baara. He seems to have divorced both of these wives and then married a third named Hodesh. By Hushim he produced two sons, Abitub and Elpaal. There is no mention of sons by Baara. By Hodesh there were seven sons, all of whom became heads of families. They were: Jobah, Zibia, Mesha, Shachia and Mirma.

Again it is strange that three sons of Elpaal built Ono and Lod. Towns with these names were in existence long before the time period being discussed here.

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There is a possibility of different cities with identical names.

**1 Chron. 8:13 Beriah also, and Shema, who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath:**

**1 Chron. 8:14 And Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth,**

**1 Chron. 8:15 And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Ader,**

**1 Chron. 8:16 And Michael, and Ispah, and Joha, the sons of Beriah;**

**1 Chron. 8:17 And Zebadiah, and Meshullam, and Hezeki, and Heber,**

**1 Chron. 8:18 Ishmerai also, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the sons of Elpaal;**

**1 Chron. 8:19 And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi,**

**1 Chron. 8:20 And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel,**

**1 Chron. 8:21 And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the sons of Shimhi;**

**1 Chron. 8:22 And Ishpan, and Heber, and Eliel,**

**1 Chron. 8:23 And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan,**

**1 Chron. 8:24 And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah,**

**1 Chron. 8:25 And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the sons of Shashak;**

**1 Chron. 8:26 And Shamsherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah,**

**1 Chron. 8:27 And Jaresiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the sons of Jeroham.**



**1 Chron. 8:28 These were heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief men. These dwelt in Jerusalem.**

Heads of fathers were described as “chief men.” A number of these chief men dwelt in the city of Jerusalem. We have a number of names found in verses thirteen through twenty-eight which are common names in Israel but which cannot be specifically connected with certain events.

**1 Chron. 8:29 And at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon; whose wife’s name was Maachah:**

**1 Chron. 8:30 And his firstborn son Abdon, and Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Nadab,**

**1 Chron. 8:31 And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zacher.**

**1 Chron. 8:32 And Mikloth begat Shimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them.**

The name of this father of Gibeon is not given in the Hebrew text, but is found in the Septuagint as Jeiel. Through his wife Maachah he produced Abdon, Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, Gedor, Ahio and Zacher.

**1 Chron. 8:33 And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishua, and Abinadab, and Eshbaal.**

In verse thirty we have the mention of Ner as the father of Kish and the grandfather of Saul.

**1 Chron. 8:34 And the son of Jonathan was Meribbaal; and Meribbaal begat Micah.**

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1 Chron. 8:35 And the sons of Micah were, Pithon, and Melech, and Tarea, and Ahaz.

1 Chron. 8:36 And Ahaz begat Jehoadah; and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza,

1 Chron. 8:37 And Moza begat Binea: Rapha was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son:

1 Chron. 8:38 And Azel had six sons, whose names are these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel.

1 Chron. 8:39 And the sons of Eshek his brother were, Ulam his firstborn, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.

1 Chron. 8:40 And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers, and had many sons, and sons' sons, an hundred and fifty. All these are of the sons of Benjamin.

We will find more about the family of Saul in the latter part of chapter nine and the early part of chapter ten. This takes the genealogical records well beyond Saul and even to the time of the Babylonian captivity.



Chapter 9

After having taken the land of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, the Israelites lived there until their lack of obedience to the Lord cause Him to allow first the northern kingdom to be taken into Assyrian captivity, and then the southern kingdom to be captured by the Babylonians and removed to Babylon for some seventy years.

This action on the part of Jehovah was taken to teach His people the importance of following His commandments.

1 Chron. 9:1 So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, who were carried away to Babylon for their transgression.

The seventy year period had now reached it's end and the decree of Cyrus had given permission for the captives to return to their homeland. The book of the kings is the record of events occurring during the years of Saul, David and Solomon. It is made perfectly clear that the reason for their time spent in bondage was their transgression against the will of the Lord.

1 Chron. 9:2 Now the first inhabitants that dwelt in their possessions in their cities were, the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the Nethinims.

There are four classes listed here.

The first class was made up of the common people. Heads of families were given special mention.

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The second class were those who dealt with the services at the tabernacle. They offered sacrifices and led in worship.

The third class was made up of those from the descendants of Levi who were not designated as priests. They did manual work associated with the tabernacle.

The fourth class was the porters or gatekeepers. They were charged with the opening and closing of the four gates, and took shifts in doing this type of work.

**1 Chron. 9:3 And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh;**

The fact that Ephraim and Manasseh are included in verse three is proof that Israel was to be thought of as one kingdom rather than two. The four tribes mentioned were a part of “all Israel.”

**1 Chron. 9:4 Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah.**

**1 Chron. 9:5 And of the Shilonites; Asaiah the firstborn, and his sons.**

**1 Chron. 9:6 And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.**

**1 Chron. 9:7 And of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah,**

**1 Chron. 9:8 And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephathiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah;**

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1 Chron. 9:9 And their brethren, according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six. All these men were chief of the fathers in the house of their fathers.

Verses four through nine deal with the common Israelites. The reader may wish to make comparison between the names and numbers included here with those found in chapter eleven of the book of Nehemiah. The two records vary somewhat. There are several possible reasons for the variance. It is not all to be attributed to copyist's errors.

1 Chron. 9:10 And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin,

1 Chron. 9:11 And Azariah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God;

1 Chron. 9:12 And Aadaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiai the son of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer;

1 Chron. 9:13 And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

Verses ten through thirteen list some of the more influential priests among the returning people. The last of these four verses declare that the names given are far short of being a complete list. There were 1,760 who were qualified for the work of the priesthood.

1 Chron. 9:14 And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari;

1 Chron. 9:15 And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph;

1 Chron. 9:16 And Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites.

Just as in the case of the priests, we can assume that the names given are not a complete listing. These given were men of influence such as Asaph and Merari. Asaph having been a leader in the song services.

1 Chron. 9:17 And the porters were, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum was the chief;

There were four porters or gatekeepers who were especially assigned to the four gates. Shallum was the head of the four. It should be noted that the words “and their brethren” are a part of the verse above. As in the other lists, there were many who were not actually named, but who served in the office of gatekeepers.

1 Chron. 9:18 Who hitherto waited in the king’s gate eastward: they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi.

1 Chron. 9:19 And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being
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**over the host of the LORD, were keepers of the entry.**

**1 Chron. 9:20 And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the LORD was with him.**

**1 Chron. 9:21 And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

**1 Chron. 9:22 All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.**

The office of the Nethenim or porters had been established from the time of Samuel and of David.

It is best that we mention here the hope which may be found in God's covenants with His people. It is true that when men break their part of the covenant, they may be punished severely for their disobedience, but it is just as true that those who are willing to commit themselves to the Lord will never be without hope. After suffering the loss of freedom for some seventy years, descendants of the original families assigned to certain tasks are now found being reassigned to similar duties.

**1 Chron. 9:23 So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the LORD, namely, the house of the tabernacle, by wards.**

**1 Chron. 9:24 In four quarters were the porters, toward the east, west, north, and south.**

**1 Chron. 9:25 And their brethren, which were**

**in their villages, were to come after seven days from time to time with them.**

The porters worked in seven day assignments. At the end of seven days, another group would relieve them and take their place.

**1 Chron. 9:26 For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God.**

**1 Chron. 9:27 And they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them.**

**1 Chron. 9:28 And certain of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale.**

**1 Chron. 9:29 Some of them also were appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices.**

The contributions and the keeping of the articles used in the services were supervised by these porters. They needed to be very trustworthy. Many of the articles used in the services were extremely valuable. These articles were to be carefully counted both before and after they were used.

The porters were also to see that the materials used in the services, such as wine, oil, frankincense and myrrh were ready when needed.

**1 Chron. 9:30 And some of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.**



Only the priests were allowed to prepare the ointment which was used for sanctifying that which was holy. This may remind us that Christians in these latter days have a special responsibility to keep themselves pure. We are told to “Be ye holy, for I am holy.”

**1 Chron. 9:31 And Mattithiah, one of the Levites, who was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the set office over the things that were made in the pans.**

**1 Chron. 9:32 And other of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were over the shewbread, to prepare it every sabbath.**

That which was made in the pans was the shewbread. Mattithiah and those who served with him were to see that the shewbread was properly prepared and ready when needed.

**1 Chron. 9:33 And these are the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, who remaining in the chambers were free: for they were employed in that work day and night.**

The singers were always present in the worship chambers offering praise to God. These services continued throughout the entire twenty-four hours, both night and day. These singers did not have other duties since they were occupied in constant praise.

The reader will recall that Christians are commanded to “Pray without ceasing.” We do not take vacations from the worship of our Creator.

**1 Chron. 9:34** These chief fathers of the Levites were chief throughout their generations; these dwelt at Jerusalem.

Jerusalem became the dwelling place of the heads of the Levites.

**1 Chron. 9:35** And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wife's name was Maachah:

**1 Chron. 9:36** And his firstborn son Abdon, then Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Ner, and Nadab.

**1 Chron. 9:37** And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zechariah, and Mikloth.

**1 Chron. 9:38** And Mikloth begat Shimeam. And they also dwelt with their brethren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren.

These last verses of the chapter are almost a duplicate of chapter eight, verses 29-38. This may seem strange, but there is ample reason for the repetition. This is a list of the genealogy of Saul, the first king of Israel. Saul's death will be a major item in chapter ten of the present book, which is just ahead.

**1 Chron. 9:39** And Ner begat Kish; and Kish begat Saul; and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchishua, and Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

It must be noted here that Kish is said in this verse to be the son of Kish, while in verse thirty-six he is said to be the brother of Kish. The present writer does not know the answer to this problem. Several have been suggested, but the evidence is inconclusive.



**1 Chron. 9:40 And the son of Jonathan was Meribbaal: and Meribbaal begat Micah.**

**1 Chron. 9:41 And the sons of Micah were, Pithon, and Melech, and Tahrea, and Ahaz.**

**1 Chron. 9:42 And Ahaz begat Jarah; and Jarah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza;**

**1 Chron. 9:43 And Moza begat Binea; and Rephaiah his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son.**

**1 Chron. 9:44 And Azel had six sons, whose names are these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan: these were the sons of Azel.**

These last four verses bring us to the eighth generation from Saul. In chapter ten we will move on to a consideration of the life and lineage of king David.

## *Chapter 10*

It is interesting that the reign of Saul is treated at length in the Bible books of Samuel and Kings, yet is touched on very lightly in the books of Chronicles. It is almost as if the compiler of the Chronicles was hesitant to praise one who had lived and died as Saul did. He would spend much more time with the reigns of David and Solomon.

The intent of the books of Chronicles is apparently to allow Israel to recall God's providential supervision over the nation and encourage Israel to look forward to a time when all of the past actions and covenant relationships would lead to victory over the forces of Satan.

**1 Chron. 10:1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.**

From the time Israel entered into the land of Canaan, the Philistines were a grievous foe. Joshua and Caleb had brought back reports of giants in the land. In the battle at hand, the Philistines had prevailed. Israel had been forced to flee for their lives.

**1 Chron. 10:2 And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul.**

It is always a goal of opposing armies to destroy the commander in chief of the enemy. The Philistines were not satisfied to put Israel in rout. They were determined





to eliminate Saul and his family.. They succeeded in killing Jonathan, Malchishua and Abinadab, all of whom were sons of Saul.

**1 Chron. 10:3 And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers.**

Bows and arrows were the weapons of the day. The Philistines were capable in their use. They managed to find their target and wounded Saul. He knew he was helpless and was about to be taken by them. He feared that he might be severely tortured.

**1 Chron. 10:4 Then said Saul to his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.**

Saul thought it was far better to die at the hands of his armor bearer than to fall into the hands of the Philistines. He commanded the armor bearer to thrust the sword through him. This would prevent the Philistines, who were not a part of the covenant, from taking pleasure in humiliating him.

Even though the armor bearer had been commanded to kill his master, he would not obey because it was such an unthinkable thing that he should kill the king. Saul found it necessary to commit suicide by placing his sword against the ground and falling upon it.

**1 Chron. 10:5 And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.**

Saul was dead. When the armor bearer was convinced that this was the case, he committed suicide just as his master had done.

**1 Chron. 10:6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.**

The three sons of Saul who died here were not all he had. Mephibosheth was also a son, but probably was not considered because he was not physically able to serve as king.

**1 Chron. 10:7 And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.**

The Philistines had won such a complete victory over Israel that Israel abandoned the cities in which they had dwelt and the Philistines took their places. The leadership of Israel had proven inadequate.

**1 Chron. 10:8 And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.**

The stripping of the defeated enemy was a sign of absolute victory. Sometimes valuable spoils were obtained from a fallen foe.

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1 Chron. 10:9 And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people.

The scene becomes gruesome. Saul's armor was removed from him and his head was severed from his body. The Philistines then sent word to those places where their idols were worshiped. Their people gloated over their success against the men of Jehovah.

1 Chron. 10:10 And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.

They took the armor of Saul and placed it in the place where they worshiped their own gods. His head was fastened to the wall in the temple of their god Dagon, who was supposedly half man and half fish.

1 Chron. 10:11 And when all Jabeshgilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul,

1 Chron. 10:12 They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

In the past the people of Jabeshgilead had been delivered from the Ammonites by Saul and his men. When they heard of the humiliation which the Philistines had heaped upon Saul, they came and rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons. They took the remains to their own camp and gave the remains a decent burial.

1 Chron. 10:13 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;

1 Chron. 10:14 And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

These last two verses may explain the basic reason why Saul's reign is treated so briefly in the books of I and II Chronicles. The king had committed serious sins against the will of God. He had failed to kill king Agag when he was told to kill all of the Amalekites. He became so jealous of David that he repeatedly tried to kill him. He also went to the witch of Endor to gain information about the future.

The Lord therefore allowed him to be slain and raised David to the throne of Israel.



Chapter 11

Beginning at this point the writer of Chronicles will pick up the reign of David. This is very special to him since David was to be a type of Christ. While David ruled over a physical kingdom, Christ would rule over a spiritual kingdom. The promise had been made that David's dynasty would be everlasting. Christ came through the lineage of David and will rule over the spiritual kingdom of God forever.

The events which occur during the rule of David are often bloody and difficult to visualize in our mind's eye. Nevertheless, David did conquer the territory which God intended. The spiritual war in which Christ is the Commander in Chief is at times just as gruesome as the conflicts in the time of David. But the time will come when anti-Christian forces will be conquered just as completely as were the foes of God in David's time.

1 Chron. 11:1 Then all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.

The terms "all Israel" will be found repeatedly in the books of Chronicles. There is no more northern and southern kingdom. There is to be but one domain. Those who might have opposed David in the past now found it advantageous to give him their support. After all he was of the lineage of Abraham just as they were. He had proven himself a successful leader and God had given every indication that this was His choice as a successor for Saul who was now dead.

1 Chron. 11:2 And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out

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**and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.**

During the time when Saul was king it had been David who stepped up and led the people. God had therefore promised that David would now be their ruler and shepherd. The people were quite ready to see him anointed as king.

**1 Chron. 11:3 Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron; and David made a covenant with them in Hebron before the LORD; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel.**

David had already been ruling over some of the people from the city of Hebron. Now the elders of all Israel came and declared David their king. This was according to the Word of God as Samuel had expressed it. (See I Samuel 16:1, 12-13.)

*1Sa 16:1 And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.*

*1Sa 16:12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.*

*1Sa 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.*



**1 Chron. 11:4 And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus; where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land.**

There was a need for a new capitol of Israel. David and all Israel decided to move the center of government to Jerusalem instead of Hebron. This was more centrally located, and also had better natural defenses.

However, there was an obstacle. The Jebusites who had dwelt in Jerusalem for a long time had proven impossible to dislodge in the past. When Joshua was told to drive the inhabitants out of the land of Canaan, the city of Jerusalem had held fast. Could it be taken now?

**1 Chron. 11:5 And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David.**

The Jebusites were not about to leave without resistance. The task of overcoming them would be formidable. David and his men did manage to take the portion of the city which was known as Zion and later became known as the “City of David.” But much of Jerusalem remained in the hands of the Jebusites.

**1 Chron. 11:6 And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief.**

David made a promise to his men that the one who took the lead in overcoming the Jebusites would be appointed as captain of his forces. Joab took the challenge and was thus appoint as their chief.

**1 Chron. 11:7 And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it the city of David.**

The parallel record in the writings of Samuel give details which are not included here. It seems that the warriors were able to move up into the main city through water aquaducts and overwhelm the Jebusites.

**1 Chron. 11:8 And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city.**

David took responsibility for the repair of part of the city, and Joab, his general supervised the remainder of it.

**1 Chron. 11:9 So David waxed greater and greater: for the LORD of hosts was with him.**

While Saul had fallen far short of the expectations of a king of Israel, David lived in such manner that God blessed him and allowed him to grow stronger, even as Saul had become weaker and been rejected.

**1 Chron. 11:10 These also are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom, and with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel.**

When this verse speaks of David's "mighty men" it is not talking about his entire army. There were a chosen few who had exceeded the rest in courage and accomplishments. Some words of appreciation are added





in the record for these exceptionally valiant fighting men.

**1 Chron. 11:11 And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam, an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred slain by him at one time.**

Jashobeam was a chief among the captains. He had earned respect by slaying three hundred of the enemy in one battle.

**1 Chron. 11:12 And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who was one of the three mighties.**

**1 Chron. 11:13 He was with David at Pasdammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines.**

Also Eleazar was one of the three mighty men. He distinguished himself in a battle against the Philistines. Most of the Israelites had retreated from before the enemy.

**1 Chron. 11:14 And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the LORD saved them by a great deliverance.**

Eleazar stood firm with David in the midst of a field of barley. With the help of the Lord the Philistines were defeated.

The reader will note that only two of the first three mighty men are named above. There is much conjecture about the identity of the third mighty man.

**1 Chron. 11:15 Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim.**

**1 Chron. 11:16 And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison was then at Bethlehem.**

During the fighting with the Philistines, three of the thirty captains of David's forces entered into a cave known as the "Cave of Adullam." David was with them. The Philistines were encamped between these men and a water source at Bethlehem.

**1 Chron. 11:17 And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that is at the gate!**

David spoke aloud and expressed his desire for a drink of water from the well at the gate of Bethlehem. Some believe this was a test on his part to determine just how trustworthy these men were. That is a doubtful explanation. It is more likely that he spoke out loud when he should have kept his thoughts to himself. If the men did set out to get the water, they were placing their lives in serious danger.

**1 Chron. 11:18 And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took**



**it, and brought it to David: but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the LORD.**

The three who were with David broke through the Philistine forces and drew the water David had longed for from the well. They returned and offered it to David. We can see why they are listed in this record of the “mighty men.”

**1 Chron. 11:19 And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest.**

David realized the great danger in which the three men had placed their lives. He decided that he could not with good conscience drink the water they had brought to him. We can thus see the respect David’s men had for him, and also that which he had for them.

**1 Chron. 11:20 And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew them, and had a name among the three.**

What three are we discussing here. Is it the three which included Jehoshabeam and Eleazar, and was Joab the third of that group? Jehoshabeam was said to have slain three hundred. Now we have Abishai slaying three hundred. The three hundred which Jehoshabeam slew were during battle against the Jebusites. The three hundred whom Abishai slew were Philistines.

This present commentator will frankly admit that he is unable to separate these events into an orderly sequence.

**1 Chron. 11:21 Of the three, he was more honourable than the two; for he was their captain: howbeit he attained not to the first three.**

The puzzle above is not the end of the matter. We are now told that Abishai was more honorable than the other two and was thus accepted as captain of the three. Still, he did not attain to the first three. I can only conclude that there were two groups of three mighty men. One consisted of Joab, Jehoshabeam and Eleazar. The other consisted of Abishai and two others whose names are not given at this point. Abishai could then have been the captain of the second three, and still not have qualified as equal in efficiency to the first three.

Perhaps the emphasis should not be put upon every name of each of the groups. The chapter seems to be attempting to point out numerous men who were extremely dedicated to their new king.

**1 Chron. 11:22 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts; he slew two lionlike men of Moab: also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day.**

Benaiah must be added to the list of mighty men. He killed two ferocious men of the Moabites. In addition he killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day. One has suggested that only Jehovah could get a man and a lion together in a pit on a snowy day in Israel.



**1 Chron. 11:23 And he slew an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand was a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear.**

Now we have another feat added to those which Benaiah had already accomplished. He killed an Egyptian who was five cubits high. Since a cubit is commonly considered to be about eighteen inches, this Egyptian would have been about seven and one half feet tall. He carried a spear which was like a heavy beam used by weavers of cloth. Benaiah treated this gigantic man as if he were a child. He managed to take the spear from him and kill the man with his own spear.

**1 Chron. 11:24 These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighties.**

**1 Chron. 11:25 Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the first three: and David set him over his guard.**

As a result of the above achievements, Benaiah was recognized as a mighty man, who belonged in the list of the thirty mighty man, but was not considered the equal of the three greatest. David honored his achievements by appointing him to his own personal bodyguard.

**1 Chron. 11:26 Also the valiant men of the armies were, Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan the son of Dodo of Bethlehem,**

**1 Chron. 11:27 Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite,**

**1 Chron. 11:28 Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite,**

1 Chron. 11:29 Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite,

1 Chron. 11:30 Maharai the Netophathite, Heled the son of Baanah the Netophathite,

1 Chron. 11:31 Ithai the son of Ribai of Gibeah, that pertained to the children of Benjamin, Benaiah the Pirathonite,

1 Chron. 11:32 Hurai of the brooks of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite,

1 Chron. 11:33 Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite,

1 Chron. 11:34 The sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite,

1 Chron. 11:35 Ahiam the son of Sacar the Hararite, Eliphal the son of Ur,

1 Chron. 11:36 Hephher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite,

1 Chron. 11:37 Hezro the Carmelite, Naarai the son of Ezbai,

1 Chron. 11:38 Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar the son of Haggeri,

1 Chron. 11:39 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armourbearer of Joab the son of Zeruah,

1 Chron. 11:40 Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,

1 Chron. 11:41 Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai,

1 Chron. 11:42 Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him,

1 Chron. 11:43 Hanan the son of Maachah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite,

1 Chron. 11:44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama

**and Jehiel the sons of Hothan the Aroerite,**

**1 Chron. 11:45 Jediael the son of Shimri, and  
Joha his brother, the Tizite,**

**1 Chron. 11:46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai,  
and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah  
the Moabite,**

**1 Chron. 11:47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jasiel the  
Mesobaite.**

There are several names in verses twenty-six through forty-seven which will be recognized from their appearance in other Bible passages, for example Uriah the Hittite.

The reader might profitably compare the list here with the list given in 2 Samuel 23:8-39. The list here contains thirty-one names. The list in 2 Samuel contains thirty. Most of the names are the same, but there are some differences. This may be due to the fact that some would have dropped out and other added as time passed.

Overall we can come to the conclusion that David had some very capable men supporting him, and that the Almighty arm of the Lord was more important than all other combined.

## Chapter 12

One thing the careful reader will discover about the material in this chapter is that it is not in chronological sequence. Some of what is included takes place before the death of Saul. This is not expected since we have already been told of that king's expiration. The present chapter is focused upon the steadily increasing numbers of fighting men who volunteered to serve under David. Some of these were even from Saul's own tribe of Benjamin.

There were perhaps three different locations at which these volunteers came to David to offer their services. Some came while he was at Ziklag. Some came while he was in a stronghold in the wilderness, and some came when he had been declared king in Hebron. If this is not kept in mind the events of the chapter can become extremely confusing. The compiler was far more interested in the development of the army supporting David than he was in when and where each delegation volunteered their services.

**1 Chron. 12:1 Now these are they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of Kish: and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war.**

King Achish of Gath gave David the city of Ziklag while Saul was still alive. David had even offered help to the Philistines against Saul, but some of the Philistines were suspicious that he would turn on them at some later time.

Saul had proven to be far less desirable as a king than what Israel had envisioned when they pleaded

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with the Lord to give them a king like the nations around them. Some of those who were disillusioned with Saul left him and joined David.

1 Chron. 12:2 They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows out of a bow, even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

Bows and arrows, swords and shields, bucklers and slings were the weapons of the day. These men who came to David were skilled in the use of these weapons. Their marksmanship was most impressive, plus the fact that they were able to use both the left and the right hand.

It would hardly have been expected that men from Saul's own tribe of Benjamin would desert him and serve with David, but that is just what happened.

1 Chron. 12:3 The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite; and Jeziel, and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite.

1 Chron. 12:4 And Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabad the Gederathite,

1 Chron. 12:5 Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite,

1 Chron. 12:6 Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites,

1 Chron. 12:7 And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

One may find that the names of some of these men are identical with names found in other places. This is not proof that it is the same individual. We have many named John Brown in the world today.

1 Chron. 12:8 And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains;

Now it is mentioned that some of the Gadites joined forces with David in a stronghold of the wilderness. This is probably a different time than that described in verses one through seven.

1 Chron. 12:9 Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third,

1 Chron. 12:10 Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,

1 Chron. 12:11 Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,

1 Chron. 12:12 Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,

1 Chron. 12:13 Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh.

1 Chron. 12:14 These were of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least was over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.

The men mentioned in verses nine through fourteen were commanders. They would have been accompanied by those who were under their orders.



1 Chron. 12:15 These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflown all his banks; and they put to flight all them of the valleys, both toward the east, and toward the west.

These men had braved the flood waters of the Jordan river to join ranks with David. They struck fear into the hearts of the enemies of Israel on both sides of the Jordan.

1 Chron. 12:16 And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David.

1 Chron. 12:17 And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them, If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall be knit unto you: but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it.

David had mixed feelings about accepting these men. He was somewhat fearful that they might betray him later. He promised them his own loyalty if they had come in single mindedness. But, he warned them that if they had come to cause him trouble, God would take note and punish them for doing so.

1 Chron. 12:18 Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.

Amasai was the leader of these volunteers. He replied through the Spirit of God that they had come in peace and not in an effort to betray David. David responded by placing some of them in positions of great responsibility.

1 Chron. 12:19 And there fell some of Manasseh to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle: but they helped them not: for the lords of the Philistines upon advisement sent him away, saying, He will fall to his master Saul to the jeopardy of our heads.

At this time David was ready to help the Philistines in a battle against Saul. The Philistines did not trust him and sent David and his men away for fear of betrayal.

1 Chron. 12:20 As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediahel, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh.

1 Chron. 12:21 And they helped David against the band of the rovers: for they were all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host.

1 Chron. 12:22 For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God.

One tribe after another provided men and captains until the number of men available was a vast number, reminiscent of the number of angels serving the Lord in heaven.



1 Chron. 12:23 And these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD.

At the time David was acclaimed king in Hebron, there were additional men who were ready to fight under his leadership. God had made it clear that He was going to replace Saul with David as king of Israel. This was becoming a reality.

We will now examine a listing of the tribes, with the number of men who had volunteered to fight for the Lord under the command of David.

1 Chron. 12:24 The children of Judah that bare shield and spear were six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed to the war.

1 Chron. 12:25 Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred.

1 Chron. 12:26 Of the children of Levi four thousand and six hundred.

1 Chron. 12:27 And Jehoiada was the leader of the Aaronites, and with him were three thousand and seven hundred;

1 Chron. 12:28 And Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains.

1 Chron. 12:29 And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand: for hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul.

1 Chron. 12:30 And of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men

of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers.

1 Chron. 12:31 And of the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name, to come and make David king.

1 Chron. 12:32 And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.

1 Chron. 12:33 Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart.

1 Chron. 12:34 And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them with shield and spear thirty and seven thousand.

1 Chron. 12:35 And of the Danites expert in war twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.

1 Chron. 12:36 And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand.

1 Chron. 12:37 And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.

Let us make a tally of the tribes and the number of men which each had supplied for this new unified army of Israel.

<u>Judah</u>	6,800
<u>Simeon</u>	7,100
<u>Levi</u>	4,600
<u>Aaron</u>	3,700

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|                                          |                |
|------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <u>Benjamin</u>                          | <u>3,000</u>   |
| <u>Ephraim</u>                           | <u>20,800</u>  |
| <u>Manasseh (West Side)</u>              | <u>18,000</u>  |
| <u>Issachar</u>                          | <u>200</u>     |
| <u>Zebulun</u>                           | <u>50,000</u>  |
| <u>Naphtali</u>                          | <u>38,000</u>  |
| <u>Dan</u>                               | <u>28,600</u>  |
| <u>Asher</u>                             | <u>40,000</u>  |
| <u>Reuben, Gad &amp; Manasseh (East)</u> | <u>120,000</u> |

We have a total here of approximately 340,000 men. David started with 400 when he fled from Saul. At the end of his life he had enrolled 1,300,000. (See 2 Samuel 24:9). We can hardly fail to be impressed with the fact that these men had come from all Israel. The Kingdom of Israel had been unified once more.

*2Sa 24:9 And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.*

**1 Chron. 12:38 All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king.**

To say that these men could “keep rank” means that they would not be panicked if opposition became strong.

**1 Chron. 12:39 And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them.**

A great celebration was in order. A feast was prepared and lasted for a period of three days.

**1 Chron. 12:40 Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel.**

Such a multitude of persons would require vast amounts of food to supply such a feast. To supply this food, the tribes of Issachar, Zebulun and Naphtali, who were near the feast area brought much food of great variety. There was great joy. There was a new king and a seemingly bright future, assuming loyalty to the Lord.





## *Chapter 13*

David had now replaced Saul as king of Israel. He was recognized as king by the entire nation. He had a massive army for support. Now he wished to make Jerusalem the capitol city of the nation.

David was very capable in a number of areas. He was an accomplished warrior. He was a religious leader, and he was effective in the field of politics. These qualities were now to be used in the development of the nation of Israel.

**1 Chron. 13:1 And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.**

David was neither a tyrant nor a dictator. He believed in consultation with wise and strong men before making highly important decisions. There was a need to build unity among the Hebrews. Thus he made contact with respected men from every corner of the land. These captains of hundreds and captains of thousands could bring the unity which he desired. This contact was probably made in some cases by sending messengers to meet with the other leaders. In other cases they made have been called to gather in Jerusalem.

**1 Chron. 13:2 And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:**

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The Hebrew words translated as “Lord” and “God” are normally not combined in the same statement in the Bible. God is taken from “Elohim.” Lord is taken from “Yahweh.”

David wanted to see if the rest of the leaders agreed with him that it would be in harmony with the will of the Lord, God, to gather the priests and Levites, as well as all of the people who could come, that the ark might be moved from Kirjath-Jearim to Jerusalem.

Why was the ark in Kirjath-jearim rather than in Jerusalem? It had been captured by the Philistines. The idolatrous Philistines suffered much while the ark was among them. They ultimately decided to send the ark back, along with gifts of golden mice and tumors. They felt that perhaps this would remedy the curses of mice and tumors which had struck them. The ark was then lodged in Bethshemesh. This resulted in a number of deaths when the people did not properly respect it. The ark was then moved to the house of Abinadab, in Kirjath-jearim, a village just a few miles from Jerusalem. This is where we find it as David began his reign.

Records from the book of 2 Samuel 6 give more details of what is to take place next.

1 Chron. 13:3 And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul.

David felt the need to have the ark where it was possible to utilize it in determining God’s will and securing His blessings on future actions. This had been



neglected while Saul was ruling. The results had been dismal.

1 Chron. 13:4 And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

1 Chron. 13:5 So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim.

Both the leaders and the people agreed that moving the ark from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem was a wise thing to do. As many of the Israelites as were willing and able were assembled. They came from the border of Egypt to the northern extremities to join in the procedure.

1 Chron. 13:6 And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

The large gathering of people went to Kirjath-jearim to move it. They were glad because it was between the cherubim which rested on each end of the ark that God communicated with His people.

1 Chron. 13:7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

A major mistake was made. God had given the

instructions for the building of the ark, and also for the manner in which it was to be moved. He had instructed them that rings were to be fastened to the sides of the ark, through which poles could be inserted and the ark could then be carried on the shoulders of the priests.

The poles were discarded on this occasion and the ark was placed on a new cart, obviously prepared just for this purpose. As they moved forward, Uzza and Ahio drove the oxen that pulled the cart.

1 Chron. 13:8 And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

In the Old Testament the use of instruments in the worship of God was approved. David played the harp. Other instruments were used on numerous occasions. Such is not the case in the New Testament. There we are told to SING...

This must have been an impressive parade. The musicians were playing with all their might. There was singing and merry making. The ark was going to Jerusalem.

1 Chron. 13:9 And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

As they moved along, the oxen stumbled and the cart was made to lurch. There was danger that the ark would fall to the ground. With perfectly good intentions, Uzza reached out to steady the ark. He touched it!

If the ark had been carried using the rings and



poles, and had rested on the shoulders of the priests, this problem could have been prevented. When God instructs men concerning His will, it is pure foolishness to disregard those instructions, even if they do not appear rational to men. He can see the end from the beginning, and He knows the consequences of every thought, word and deed.

1 Chron. 13:10 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

Does it seem cruel on the part of Jehovah that He caused a man who was trying to do right to lose his life as a result? It seemed that way to David. He was very unhappy when he saw what had happened.

There have been many times when men thought they were doing right, even though they disregarded God's instructions. Every man and woman ought to pray diligently that they may know the truth and follow it. Hear the Lord, Jesus Christ (John 8:32.)

Joh 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

Joh 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

1 Chron. 13:11 And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perezuzza to this day.

Perez means to break forth. Perezuzza was a proper name for this place. It was there that Uzza broke forth against God's commands. It was also the place where God broke through upon Uzza.

1 Chron. 13:12 And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?

David should not have asked the question which he asked in this verse. He should have known that the people had ignored God's instructions. The answer to David's question is that "If the ark is carried in the manner which God specified, there will be no problem."

1 Chron. 13:13 So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obedom the Gittite.

David's fear of the danger involved in moving the ark caused him to carry it into the house of Obedom, very close to Jerusalem, but not within the city.

1 Chron. 13:14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obedom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obedom, and all that he had.

The ark remained in the house of Obedom for three months, during which there were no catastrophes. In fact, it was just the opposite. God blessed the house of Obedom. It seems obvious that this man and his family had learned better than to touch the sacred ark.



Chapter 14

With slight variations the material presented in this chapter is also found in 2 Samuel 5. Israel is getting closer to her glory days as David demonstrates leadership which Saul had not shown. In this chapter we find the constant threat of the Philistines nearly eliminated as Israel, with the help of the Lord, defeats them twice in decided fashion.

1 Chron. 14:1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, to build him an house.

Tyre was located on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It was now sharing the shoreline and the shipping opportunities with Israel. Hiram seems to have concluded that cooperation with Israel would be to their mutual advantage. He had materials which Israel needed and He could help Israel by making it easier for her to export that which she produced.

The Phoenicians were known for their skill in building ships and woodwork of various kinds. Hiram sent both materials and workers to build a house for David. The word “house” which is used here can designate a palace as well as a house. David’s house was to be an impressive structure.

1 Chron. 14:2 And David perceived that the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel, for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel.

Such things as the help from Hiram and the increasing security of the nation convinced David that

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the Lord must be pleased with his rule, and was taking care of His people.

**1 Chron. 14:3 And David took more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters.**

Certainly the taking of multiple wives and concubines has never been pleasing to God. In the beginning God created one man and one woman. That was to be the plan until the end of time. David may have seen his harem as an evidence of God's blessings. It was not!

**1 Chron. 14:4 Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon,**

**1 Chron. 14:5 And Ibhar, and Elishua, and Elpalet,**

**1 Chron. 14:6 And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,**

**1 Chron. 14:7 And Elishama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet.**

There are other lists of David's children which do not agree with this one. For example, Tamar was a daughter, and she is not listed here. The total number of sons is larger than the number listed here. Solomon's name is introduced here and takes a prominent place in the upcoming history of the nation.

**1 Chron. 14:8 And when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard of it, and went out against them.**

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The Philistines did not give up easily. The power of Israel was becoming increasingly greater. When they heard that the Israelites had united under the rule of David, they were ready to prove they remained superior and were capable of dominating the land. They gathered their army and set out to do battle.

David received word of their actions and called the warriors of Israel out to meet the Philistines.

1 Chron. 14:9 And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

The first battle was to be fought in the valley of Rephaim which lay southwest of the city of Jerusalem. We can imagine that when their forces were spread out in the valley David must have wondered if God would be with Israel in a conflict.

1 Chron. 14:10 And David enquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? And wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand.

While Saul had gone to enquire from the witch of Endor, and had thus angered the Lord. David consulted with the Lord. We are not told how this was done, but the ark, with the cherubim was nearby and could have been used.

God informed David that He would be with Israel in the upcoming battle. He was not to hesitate in facing the Philistines.

1 Chron. 14:11 So they came up to Baalperazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place Baalperazim.

Perazim means to “break forth.” With the aid of Jehovah, the Israelites defeated the Philistines. The Philistines worshiped Baal. The place where the battle was fought became known as Baalperazim, the place where God broke forth on Baal.

1 Chron. 14:12 And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

The idols of these enemies of Israel were often made of silver or gold. Sometimes of wood or stone. David did not collect the idols which the defeated Philistines left behind as they fled in defeat. He commanded that the idols be burned with fire. There was to be no temptation for Israel to worship them.

1 Chron. 14:13 And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

The Philistines were still not completely convinced of their inferiority. They reassembled in the valley and prepared to challenge Israel again.

1 Chron. 14:14 Therefore David enquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

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Just as he had done previously, David inquired of God whether or not he should go out to meet them. The contrast between Saul's independent attitude and David's attitude of humility before the Lord is once more seen.

God answered that the response to the Philistines was to be different this time. They were first to turn away from them. Then, when they came to mulberry trees, they were to wait for a signal from God.

**1 Chron. 14:15 And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines.**

When they heard a sound of movement in the mulberry trees, they would know God was marching with them into the battle. When God is for us, who can succeed against us.

**1 Chron. 14:16 David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer.**

**1 Chron. 14:17 And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.**

David did just as God commanded him to do. When he did so, God brought victory to Israel. The Philistine army was defeated from one end of the land to the other. All other surrounding nations heard of the rout of the Philistines, and David's fame became widespread.

## *Chapter 15*

The main point of this chapter is a description of the movement of the ark from the house of Obededom to the city of Jerusalem. Because of lack of respect for God's instructions, the previous effort to bring the ark to Jerusalem had resulted in the death of Uzzah.

David had not discarded his intention to move the ark to Jerusalem, but he was now ready to be ultra cautious in observing the will of the Lord.

**1 Chron. 15:1 And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.**

Sometimes the city of David refers to a part of the entire city of Jerusalem. At other times it refers to the city as a whole. The present reference seems more likely to refer to the city as a whole.

David had used the aid of Hiram's workmen to build a house for himself. Now he prepared a housing for the ark. It is not certain whether the tent is the place, or was to rest in the place. Either way, there was to be a tent prepared for its resting place. The tent would later give way to a site in the Most Holy Place of the temple.

**1 Chron. 15:2 Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.**

There were two basic reasons why God was angered at the time when Uzzah lost his life. First, it was only

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the Levites who had been designated to carry the ark. Second, the ark was to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites and not on a new cart pulled by oxen. (See Numbers 4:15 and Exodus 25:10-15.)

Num 4:15 And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.

Exo 25:10 And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

Exo 25:11 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.

Exo 25:12 And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it.

Exo 25:13 And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold.

Exo 25:14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.

Exo 25:15 The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it.

The ark was constructed with a ring on each corner through which staves could be inserted. When it was

moved these staves were to rest on the shoulders of the Kothathite priests. It was not to be touched by human hands.

Why do men ignore instructions which God has made so clear? There may be several reasons. One which cannot be overlooked is lack of faith in the Word of the Lord. That which may seem insignificant to us, may be of extremely great significance to Him.

David was making it abundantly clear that those mistakes were going to be corrected this time. The ark would be carried on the shoulders of Levites, using the staves which God had commanded.

1 Chron. 15:3 And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD unto his place, which he had prepared for it.

This was not a simple parade. A massive crowd was brought together to celebrate the placement of the ark in the city of Jerusalem.

1 Chron. 15:4 And David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites:

1 Chron. 15:5 Of the sons of Kohath; Uriel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twenty:

1 Chron. 15:6 Of the sons of Merari; Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty:

1 Chron. 15:7 Of the sons of Gershon; Joel the chief and his brethren an hundred and thirty:

The sons of the three priestly tribes totaled some some four hundred and eighty persons.



1 Chron. 15:8 Of the sons of Elizaphan; Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred:

1 Chron. 15:9 Of the sons of Hebron; Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourscore:

1 Chron. 15:10 Of the sons of Uzziel; Amminadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve.

1 Chron. 15:11 And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab,

1 Chron. 15:12 And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it.

Those mentioned above were prominent chiefs of the Levites. David charged them with sanctifying themselves and also those they supervised, in preparation for their upcoming tasks. To sanctify is to set one's self apart from anything that might contaminate one with that which is unholy.

1 Chron. 15:13 For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.

As pointed out before, the due order was to use only the Levites to carry the ark, and for them to bear it along on their shoulders, using the staves inserted in the ring on the four corners of the ark. David intended to do it right!

1 Chron. 15:14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.

1 Chron. 15:15 And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the LORD.

God's instructions were followed to the letter!

1 Chron. 15:16 And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.

This entire event was to be a most joyous occasion. Singing, and instrumental music were to be heard as the procession moved along.

The fact that instruments of music accompanied the singing here does not justify the use of it in worship in the New Testament age. The command now is to "sing and make melody in the heart." There is no example in the New Testament for the use of instruments of music. Let us be silent where the Bible is silent.

1 Chron. 15:17 So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah;

Three master musicians were appointed. They were Heman, Asaph and Ethan.



1 Chron. 15:18 And with them their brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obedom, and Jeiel, the porters.

There is debate as to the meaning of the term “second degree.” Some see this as a rank a bit lower in importance than that of the first three. Others think it has to do with that pitch at which these men sang.

1 Chron. 15:19 So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed to sound with cymbals of brass;

Cymbals have always served to catch attention. We have no difficulty in understanding how they might have been used by these three leaders.

1 Chron. 15:20 And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on Alamoth;

The psalteries are thought to be stringed instruments, related to the harp. One reference in the scriptures mentions a psaltery with ten strings.

1 Chron. 15:21 And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obedom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith to excel.

The harp is mentioned many times. David was an expert on the use of the harp. It was very often used in combination with vocal music.

1 Chron. 15:22 And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skilful.

This man was assigned to supervise the singing because of his ability and knowledge of the vocal music.

1 Chron. 15:23 And Berechiah and Elkanah were doorkeepers for the ark.

The assignment of these two individuals does not seem to be equal in importance to that of the musicians. They seem to have been guards at the entrance to the tent which David had prepared for the ark.

1 Chron. 15:24 And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God: and Obededom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark.

Here we have more musical instruments. This time it is trumpets. The trumpeters went ahead of the ark and called attention to the importance of the ceremony. Trumpets were also used to send men into battle, and to announce major feasts.

1 Chron. 15:25 So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the house of Obededom with joy.

1 Chron. 15:26 And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the

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**covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams.**

The joy that prevailed was very great. The present passage does not tell some of the details mentioned. We need to compare 2 Samuel 6: 13 to see more.

As soon as it was evident that God was pleased with the procession this time, a sacrifice was offered.

*2Sa 6:13 And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.*

It is not clear as to whether this means that after they had gone six paces, they offered the above sacrifices a single time, whether they did this every time they had gone another six paces. The first suggestion is more probable.

**1 Chron. 15:27 And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers: David also had upon him an ephod of linen.**

David, and also the Levites were clothed in robes of fine linen. God expected His priesthood to be held in high esteem. As king, David wore such clothing. David's service as king and priest looks forward to the present functions of Jesus as Priest, Prophet and King.

**1 Chron. 15:28 Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting,**

**and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.**

**1 Chron. 15:29 And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal, the daughter of Saul looking out at a window saw king David dancing and playing: and she despised him in her heart.**

David's wife, Michal, had not joined the ceremony. She was watching from a window and saw David dancing and playing. This caused her to lose respect for him. Again we need to compare a passage from 2 Samuel 6, which will shed a bit more light.

*2Sa 6:20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!*

Michal went childless as a result of her attitude here.

*2Sa 6:23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.*

Was it her attitude toward her husband, or her attitude toward the Lord which caused her barrenness? God seems to have excused David for his exposure, seeing it as a side effect of the joy he felt at the arrival of the ark in Jerusalem.

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Chapter 16

The largest portion of this chapter deals with a psalm which David gave to Asaph with the charge that it be used in the worship services led by the Levites.

1 Chron. 16:1 So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God.

David had built a tent to house the ark. It was now placed in that tent in the city of David. We will take note of a difficulty when we comment on verse thirty-nine. The reader will be referred back to this verse in the course of comments made there. The question concerns whether the ark and the tabernacle were separated.

Burnt offerings and peace offerings were an integral part of the worship which had been practiced from the time of Moses. Both of these types of offerings were intended to solidify the relationship between the Lord and His people. They were to be continued until God's instructions declared them to be replaced.

1 Chron. 16:2 And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD.

The blessings which David called for were only called for by Him. It was the Lord who had the power to honor the request. If He was pleased by that which the people were doing, He would respond.



1 Chron. 16:3 And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.

It was a time of great joy. David made it a festive occasion by distributing both food and drink to the multitude. As king, he would have had access to sources for both.

Wine is mentioned repeatedly in the Old Testament as a drink. The wine used at that time by God's faithful was very low in alcohol content. It did have enough to aid in it's preservation in a hot climate. But, as in New Testament days, God's people were not to be "drunken with wine."

1 Chron. 16:4 And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel:

The worship services were to be managed by the Levites. The instructions and assignments of various groups of these people were being given to assure orderly behavior during such activities.

Three goals were true of worship in that day, just as they should still be a part of present day worship. There should be thanks offered to God for His providential care. There should be praise offered to God for His greatness and glory. There should be a remembrance of His guidance and support through the ages.

1 Chron. 16:5 Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel,



and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obedom: and Jeiel with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals;

1 Chron. 16:6 Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

The name of Asaph appears over and over in connection with the singers and musicians. He was but one of the three leaders in this area, but he took the lead role among the three.

Again we have a list of the types of instruments which were used in the worship. This included psalteries, harps, cymbals and trumpets.

1 Chron. 16:7 Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the LORD into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

David had apparently written this psalm under the inspiration of Jehovah. He then placed it in the hands of Asaph and his fellow singers that they might give praise, thanksgiving and glory to the Creator.

The psalm has portions which are nearly identical with several of the psalms in the present book of the Bible titled with that name. They are:

Psalm 105, Psalm 96, and Psalm 106.

1 Chron. 16:8 Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.

1 Chron. 16:9 Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.

1 Chron. 16:10 Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

1 Chron. 16:11 Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.

1 Chron. 16:12 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

These first verses concentrate on giving thanks to God and glorifying him before others. Should those of today have any less reason to do the same? Not by any means! We have even more reason than they.

1 Chron. 16:13 O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

1 Chron. 16:14 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

1 Chron. 16:15 Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations;

1 Chron. 16:16 Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac;

1 Chron. 16:17 And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant,

The attention of those who participated in the singing and also the hearing of this psalm was to be focused upon the wondrous covenant which the Lord had made with His chosen people. That covenant had been made with Abraham. It had been confirmed in the days of Isaac and Jacob. It had been held up before the entire people of Israel through centuries. The agreement that God will care for his faithful, and that His people are to love and obey Him will last until time has melted into eternity.

1 Chron. 16:18 Saying, Unto thee will I give the

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**land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance;**

**1 Chron. 16:19 When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.**

**1 Chron. 16:20 And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people;**

**1 Chron. 16:21 He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes,**

**1 Chron. 16:22 Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.**

God had honored His promises. He had given Israel the land of Canaan as an inheritance. They had grown from one family to many thousands. No nation had harmed them as long as they remained faithful.

Who are God's anointed? Are we talking only about the leaders, or are all of those who dedicate their lives to Him counted among the anointed? The anointed and the prophets are mentioned separately here. It is the humble opinion of the present writer that all of God's faithful are considered to be His anointed. He has cared for them, and He will continue doing so.

**1 Chron. 16:23 Sing unto the LORD, all the earth; shew forth from day to day his salvation.**

**1 Chron. 16:24 Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.**

**1 Chron. 16:25 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised: he also is to be feared above all gods.**

**1 Chron. 16:26 For all the gods of the people are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.**

Since God had preserved His people by many wondrous works, it was only reasonable that they let others know of His goodness. The heathen are those who had not been His people in days gone by. They needed to know of the need to depend upon Him. Their man-made idols could do absolutely nothing to guide and protect them. They might have made idols. He had made the heaven and the earth and all that is therein.

**1 Chron. 16:27 Glory and honour are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place.**

**1 Chron. 16:28 Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.**

**1 Chron. 16:29 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.**

**1 Chron. 16:30 Fear before him, all the earth: the world also shall be stable, that it be not moved.**

**1 Chron. 16:31 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The LORD reigneth.**

What are men to tell the heathen? They are to tell that God is the source of gladness and joy, of glory and strength, of all that is holy. All the universe is obligated to give Him honor and to humble themselves before His majesty. His name is to be presented to the hearts of all men of every nation.

We see this principle even more vividly in the great commission which Jesus gave to his apostles. The gospel of Jesus Christ is to be preached to all men, regardless of race, time or place of residence.

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1 Chron. 16:32 Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein.

1 Chron. 16:33 Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the LORD, because he cometh to judge the earth.

1 Chron. 16:34 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

There is no excuse for any scientist to ignore the glory of the Lord. Every molecule of water in the sea was produced by Him. Every fish, every fowl, and every man and beast tell of His intellectual power. The sun, moon and stars cry out with the message that God is everywhere.

1 Chron. 16:35 And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.

1 Chron. 16:36 Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.

The psalm comes to a close by urging the family of God to call out to Him for protection from those who have set themselves against both Him and His people.

There is reason to believe David either read this psalm in the presence of the people when he gave it to Asaph, or Asaph and the singers sang it aloud where the people could hear and add their amen.

1 Chron. 16:37 So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every

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**day's work required:**

**1 Chron. 16:38 And Obededom with their brethren, threescore and eight; Obededom also the son of Jeduthun and Hosah to be porters:**

Asaph and the singers had received their assignments. That portion of the services to God was laid out in easily understandable terms. Obededom and his brethren were to help in various ways.

**1 Chron. 16:39 And Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place that was at Gibeon,**

It was mentioned back in verse one of this chapter that there is some mystery connected with the separation of the ark of the covenant and the high place at Gibeon. In verse one and other places it is said that David built a tent to house the ark. Then when the ark arrived at it's destination David set it in it's place in the tent which David had pitched for it.

Now we find that Zadok and his brethren the priests were before the tabernacle of the Lord at the high place in Gibeon. Was the ark in the city of David in Jerusalem, and the tabernacle in the high place at Gibeon? Gibeon was located about five miles from the city of Jerusalem. There is no mention of the ark being moved from Jerusalem to Gibeon.

One possible explanation is that there may have been two tabernacles, one in Jerusalem and another in Gibeon. This would bring a need for two high priests. Those who support the two tabernacle position believe that Zadok was serving as a high priest at Gibeon, and Abiathar was high priest in Jerusalem. Both Abiathar



and Zadok are mentioned together a number of times. However, when this is done, Zadok's name is mentioned first. The reader is left to form his own conclusions on this issue.

**1 Chron. 16:40 To offer burnt offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt offering continually morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel;**

**1 Chron. 16:41 And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy endureth for ever;**

**1 Chron. 16:42 And with them Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun were porters.**

**1 Chron. 16:43 And all the people departed every man to his house: and David returned to bless his house.**

The arrangements had been made for the continual worship of the Lord. The priests and Levites had been given their assignments. The people were expected to follow their leadership.

One note must be added. Does the use of instrumental music in Old Testament services justify their use in New Testament times. It might be revealing to the reader to examine the comments made by Adam Clarke in respect to this question. He is very explicit in his opposition to the use of the instruments. His position is presented as a part of his remarks on the chapter at hand.

## Chapter 17

David expresses the desire to build God a house for worship. He is denied his request, but is told that God will build him a house which will last forever.

**1 Chron. 17:1 Now it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD remaineth under curtains.**

We do not know just how much time passed between the events of the last chapter and those taking place in this one. It could have been long enough for David to meditate upon possible needs.

David sat in his own house, or palace, beautifully furnished in cedar. It was no doubt magnificent. As he reflected upon the blessings which had come to him and his people, his mind turned to the ark of the covenant. It was housed under a tent. This caused him to confer with Nathan the prophet. The reader will recall that Nathan was the prophet who came to David after he had taken Bathsheba from her husband Uriah and told David the parable of the little ewe lamb. He had said, "Thou art the man." This had not caused David to avoid Nathan. It appears that it had instilled confidence in him that Nathan could give him truthful advice from the Lord. Thus he conferred with Nathan about the present concern.

**1 Chron. 17:2 Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee.**

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Even a prophet of God can be mistaken when following his own reasoning power. It seemed to Nathan that what David had suggested would be approved of God.

1 Chron. 17:3 And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

1 Chron. 17:4 Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in:

Nathan's words changed abruptly when he found that God was not pleased with the suggestion. Men today sometimes preach things from the pulpit that are contrary to the will of God. When they find that they have been wrong, the only safe and honorable thing to do is change immediately and turn from that which is false to that which is true.

Nathan was told to command David not to build a house for the ark.

1 Chron. 17:5 For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.

A tabernacle, or tent, implies change. God made it clear that from the time he had brought Israel out of Egypt, He had dwelt in a tabernacle. That tabernacle had been moved from place to place as His people spent those forty years of wilderness wandering.

1 Chron. 17:6 Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of

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**Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars?**

At no time during those years up to the time of David had the Lord ever commanded the leaders of the people to build Him an impressive house finished in cedar.

**1 Chron. 17:7 Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, even from following the sheep, that thou shouldest be ruler over my people Israel:**

David was reminded that he was a shepherd when the Lord chose him to become ruler of Israel. Those memories of herding sheep in the pastures would be a strong part of David's memories through his entire life. God was appealing to a very sentimental side of the king.

**1 Chron. 17:8 And I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth.**

God had not only chosen David, He had protected him and guided him. No enemy had been able to successfully conquer him. The name of David had taken its place among the greatest on earth. This had only been possible through the all-powerful arm of the Lord.





**1 Chron. 17:9 Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning,**

The ark had been brought to the Jerusalem area. It represented the presence of God among His people. As long as the people heard and obeyed His will, they and the ark would be planted in Canaan. No enemy would be able to move them.

**1 Chron. 17:10 And since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel. Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee that the LORD will build thee an house.**

Now the message continues with one of the most precious promises in the entire book of scripture. The Lord was going to build a house for David. David would not be permitted to build the house, but it would be built when the time arrived.

**1 Chron. 17:11 And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.**

**1 Chron. 17:12 He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever.**

As is so often true in the Word of God, there is a spiritual concept in back of the material surface. There are two kinds of houses. One is the kind in which David



was dwelling, made of cedar. The other is a family with a father.

God's promise was that though David would not build Him a temple in Jerusalem. David would produce the seed which would build a spiritual that would rule God's family forever. That seed was, of course, the Christ who was to become King of kings.

The reader would do well here to consider the promise made to Abraham many years before this.

*Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:*

*Gen 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*

*Gen 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

**1 Chron. 17:13 I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee:**

**1 Chron. 17:14 But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.**

In a very special sense, this King would be the Son of God. Saul had been taken away as king, and had been replaced by David. Christ would never be replaced. He was to be the eternal Ruler of the house of God.

**1 Chron. 17:15 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.**

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Nathan the prophet faithfully conveyed the message of the Lord to David. What an impression this combination of denial and promise must have made on the mind of this earthly king!

1 Chron. 17:16 And David the king came and sat before the LORD, and said, Who am I, O LORD God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

1 Chron. 17:17 And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O LORD God.

David had difficulty in understanding why God would have chosen him and his house for such a momentous future. He felt that he was not deserving of such honor. God was treating him as if he was one of the great men of all time. It would not be a difficult thing for God to bring about, but it laid a tremendous responsibility on a former herder of sheep.

1 Chron. 17:18 What can David speak more to thee for the honour of thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant.

The king was at a loss for words. Though it was difficult for him to understand, he realized that the Lord knew him better than he knew himself. If God would be with him, he would do his best.

1 Chron. 17:19 O LORD, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done

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**all this greatness, in making known all these great things.**

He spoke of himself as a servant. And indeed he was. All men, no matter how great they are among their fellow men, are properly only servants of the one who allowed them to come into being. How wonderful it was that God would reveal these great and wonderful plans for His people.

**1 Chron. 17:20 O LORD, there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.**

The heathen might call upon a hundred idols shaped with the hands of men. They should be recognizing that there is but one God. All other claimants are falsifiers.

**1 Chron. 17:21 And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt?**

David realized the Lord was talking about His people rather than the material temple. What he did not realize was that the new Israel which God had in mind was to welcome men of every earthly nation to become citizens of the one spiritual nation of Israel. Nor did he realize that the enemies who had been conquered by earthly Israel were but typical of the antichristian

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forces which would one day fall before the King of kings and His spiritual army.

1 Chron. 17:22 For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and thou, LORD, becamest their God.

It was for the mutual benefit of both the Lord and His people that they had been brought into existence. From the beginning, He had promised to be their God if they would be His people. He had not forgotten that fact, nor would He.

1 Chron. 17:23 Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and concerning his house be established for ever, and do as thou hast said.

1 Chron. 17:24 Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The LORD of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel: and let the house of David thy servant be established before thee.

There was no complaint on the part of David that he had been told he was not to build a temple for His God. He was delighted to do as God willed. If God wished to use his seed in building an everlasting house, he would cooperate to the best of his ability. The most important thing was that God's honor and glory be proclaimed and respected to the end of time.

1 Chron. 17:25 For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee.

The promise of God to build a house which would arise from the seed of David had caused the king to humble himself and pray for the help of the All wise and All powerful Maker of heaven and earth and sea, with all that fills them.

1 Chron. 17:26 And now, LORD, thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:

1 Chron. 17:27 Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, O LORD, and it shall be blessed for ever.

It was the will of God that these great blessings be offered to mankind through the house of David. It would, however, require the everlasting mercy and grace of God to bring this about. David and those of his house would need divine help at every step.



Chapter 18

God was pleased with David as ruler of His people. He had promised to protect him and drive out his enemies as long as Israel was faithful to Him. This chapter tells us of the keeping of that promise.

1 Chron. 18:1 Now after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines.

The Philistines had been one of the most persistent enemies of Israel from the time they entered the promised land until the time of David. The victory over this foe was the first listed in this series of victories. With the help of the Lord, the fiercest of enemies can be overcome. Gath had been a headquarters for the Philistines. With the loss of this city, resistance came to a standstill.

1 Chron. 18:2 And he smote Moab; and the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.

Next on the list was the Moabites. The Philistines had been concentrated near the Mediterranean. The Moabites were on the east side of the Jordan river. The gifts the Moabites brought were not because of their great love for David. They were tribute paid to one more powerful than themselves.

1 Chron. 18:3 And David smote Hadarezer king of Zobah unto Hamath, as he went to stablish his dominion by the river Euphrates.

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Zobah was further north on the east side of the Jordan. These people are not mentioned as much as the Moabites and Edomites, but were strong and well armed.

**1 Chron. 18:4 And David took from him a thousand chariots, and seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand footmen: David also houghed all the chariot horses, but reserved of them an hundred chariots.**

The captured chariots, horsemen and footmen could be utilized in one way or another, The humans could be made bondservants. The equipment could be added to that already possessed by Israel.

Since all of the horses were not needed by Israel, they were rendered useless for military purposes by cutting through the tendons just above the hoof area.

**1 Chron. 18:5 And when the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadarezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men.**

The Syrians were even farther north than were those of Zobah. They were concerned over the spread of Israel's power and attempted to help Zobah. This was unsuccessful. They lost twenty-two thousand of their men.

**1 Chron. 18:6 Then David put garrisons in Syria-damascus; and the Syrians became David's servants, and brought gifts. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.**

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Some of David's forces were placed in key locations in Syria. The Syrians then found it to their advantage to offer tribute to David and his men.

1 Chron. 18:7 And David took the shields of gold that were on the servants of Hadarezer, and brought them to Jerusalem.

1 Chron. 18:8 Likewise from Tibhath, and from Chun, cities of Hadarezer, brought David very much brass, wherewith Solomon made the brasen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.

Zobah was wealthy enough that there were shields with gold in their possession. This does not necessarily mean the shields were of solid gold. Still, there must have been a sizable amount for David to have felt it profitable to take it to Jerusalem. Brass is partly composed of copper. With the gold and the copper or brass, Solomon would later mold the furniture of the temple area.

1 Chron. 18:9 Now when Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the host of Hadarezer king of Zobah;

1 Chron. 18:10 He sent Hadoram his son to king David, to enquire of his welfare, and to congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him; (for Hadarezer had war with Tou;) and with him all manner of vessels of gold and silver and brass.

In the same general area as Zobah lay the city of Hamath. The king of Hamath had two reasons for bringing gifts to David. First, he had been involved

in a war with Zobah. David's victory over that place relieved Tou of having to fight Zobah. Second, it was good politics to gain the favor of such a successful military commander as David was.

1 Chron. 18:11 Them also king David dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all these nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek.

These tribute gifts from various conquered powers were dedicated to God, and much of this treasure was used in the later construction of Solomon's temple. David was not to build the temple. That did not prevent him from gathering materials.

1 Chron. 18:12 Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruah slew of the Edomites in the valley of salt eighteen thousand.

The valley of salt was in the extreme south of Palestine. This was the land of the Edomites. When Israel had tried to enter Canaan long before this, Edom had forced them to go around rather than through their territory. The case was quite a contrast this time. The men of Israel, under Abishai slew eighteen thousand of the Edomites.

1 Chron. 18:13 And he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David's servants. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

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**1 Chron. 18:14 So David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice among all his people.**

Some of Israel's forces were assigned to keeping control in the land of Edom. Thus we can see how thoroughly the Lord kept His promise of success for David and his people. David responded by ruling well and bringing order to not only the Israelites, but also to the localities which they conquered. That territory stretched from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates northwest of Canaan.

**1 Chron. 18:15 And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, recorder.**

Joab became commander in chief of the military. Jehoshaphat was made historian.

**1 Chron. 18:16 And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Abimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Shavsha was scribe;**

Zadok and Abiathar became chief priests. Shavsha was responsible for the copying of the law.

**1 Chron. 18:17 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and the sons of David were chief about the king.**

The Cherethites and the Pelethites were career military personnel. Benaiah was placed in charge of them to maintain order in the land. David's own sons

became administrators in the kingdom. Some versions translate the word “chief” as priest. The King James version above is preferable.

The heart of this chapter then is the phenomenal success which came to David during his initial days as king of Israel.



## *Chapter 19*

We now have a report of a very embarrassing event which was experienced by Israelite messengers sent to the king of the Ammonites. This led to an all out battle between Israel and the Ammonites. Since the Ammonites called for the Syrians to help them the conflict became fairly widespread.

**1 Chron. 19:1 Now it came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead.**

Israel moves almost directly from one battle to another. As soon as they have defeated one nation, another takes its place.

**1 Chron. 19:2 And David said, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father shewed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon to Hanun, to comfort him.**

It seems that while Nahash was king of Ammon he had shown some favor to David or his people. It would have been far less expensive to life and happiness if that attitude had continued. But Nahash had died and his son Hanun had replaced him on the throne. Even so, David wished to let his gratitude be made known to Hanun. He therefore sent a delegation of respected messengers to Hanun for the purpose. They intended to extend comforting words to the Ammonite king.



**1 Chron. 19:3 But the princes of the children of Ammon said to Hanun, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? are not his servants come unto thee for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land?**

When the high level advisors of Hanun realized the men were sent from David, they cautioned their king that these men were probably there not to give consolation, but to spy out the land and find its weaknesses so they could overthrow it and add it to their own land. The word of David's successes in battle had gotten around. If David had conquered other nations he might very well have his eye set on their land.

**1 Chron. 19:4 Wherefore Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut off their garments in the midst hard by their buttocks, and sent them away.**

King Hanun believed his advisors and decided to teach these messengers a lesson. He had their beards shaved and their garments cut off clear up to their buttocks.

This would have been behavior of the most insulting and embarrassing kind for men of that time and place. Men in that part of the world have long felt that their beards were a sign of their manhood. Servants might be shaved, but free men allowed their beards to grow without even trimming.

To add insult to injury, the Ammonites also cut off their robes short enough to expose their nakedness to



any who saw them. The english words here do not make the case quite as vivid as the Hebrew. The original language clearly says their private parts were visible. Then the messengers were excused to get home through mockery by onlookers, and facing horrid shame when they arrived at their neighbor-hoods.

**1 Chron. 19:5 Then there went certain, and told David how the men were served. And he sent to meet them: for the men were greatly ashamed. And the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.**

The word got back to David that his messengers had been treated shamefully. He felt compassion for them and told them to stop at Jericho which was a smaller town. They were to wait there until their beards were grown back. They could have obtained new clothing without much trouble. They could not grow new beards in two or three days.

**1 Chron. 19:6 And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syriamaachah, and out of Zobah.**

David was not the type of man to disregard this kind of treatment. It was not only an insult to the messengers. It was a slap in the face for the whole nation of Israel. He let it be known that action was called for.

When the Ammonites found out Israel was ready to retaliate in force, they not only amassed their own army,

but hired mercenary soldiers from out of Syria and the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Both Zobah and Syria came to the aid of the Ammonites.

**1 Chron. 19:7 So they hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle.**

This was no small army the Ammonites had put together. Thirty-two thousand chariots was a sizable military force. The amount of one thousand talents of silver would command the attention of a large number of men who fought for the money and did not concern themselves about the cause for which they were in combat.

**1 Chron. 19:8 And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men.**

**1 Chron. 19:9 And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of the city: and the kings that were come were by themselves in the field.**

Things were not looking too good for Israel. Large numbers of the Ammonite soldiers stood at the gates of the city of Rabbah to defend it. The paid soldiers were scattered out over a large area. There was the possibility that Israel could have found themselves completely surrounded.

**1 Chron. 19:10 Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he**

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chose out of all the choice of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians.

Joab was an experienced military leader. He devised the best plan he could think of. He first selected some of the very choicest soldiers of the Israeli army and placed them in opposition to the mercenaries. He was aware of the fact that paid soldiers from another country than the one which had hired them would be less effective than the Ammonites themselves would be.

1 Chron. 19:11 And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of Abishai his brother, and they set themselves in array against the children of Ammon.

1 Chron. 19:12 And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee.

Joab then assigned the rest of his own forces to Abishai, and made an agreement with Abishai that whichever of them found themselves overmatched could call for help from the other group.

1 Chron. 19:13 Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the LORD do that which is good in his sight.

The battle would not be easy. Much courage would be needed, but if every man behaved himself valiantly, there was reason to believe the cause would be defended.

Joab advised his warriors that if they were on the right side of the issue, the Lord would see that all went well.

That advice holds in every day and place. The servant of God must do all he is capable of doing and then pray for God to see that righteousness prevails.

1 Chron. 19:14 So Joab and the people that were with him drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and they fled before him.

When Joab's fine soldiers met the hired soldiers from the non Ammonite nations, those opponents were quickly demoralized and began to retreat. They were not interested in getting killed. They had enrolled for the money.

1 Chron. 19:15 And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

The flight of the Syrian forces fleeing before Joab's men caused two results. The Ammonites knew the battle was practically over. They fled along with the retreating Syrians. the Ammonites holed up in the city of Rabbah which was a walled city.

1 Chron. 19:16 And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that were beyond the river: and Shophach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them.

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The Syrians were not quite ready to completely abandon the war. They knew there were others who could be called up to reinforce them. They called for such help and even went so far as to call one of the captains of their army to direct them in the fighting.

**1 Chron. 19:17 And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set the battle in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him.**

David also had men who had not been recruited before this. He called for them to come into the fray on Israel's side. The war resumed at a higher pitch than before.

**1 Chron. 19:18 But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand men which fought in chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shophach the captain of the host.**

The strength and attitude of the Israeli forces had been aided by the Lord. The Syrians were routed. Seven thousand of the chariot men were destroyed. Forty thousand men on foot met the same fate. This included Shophach, the leader who had come from the Syrian headquarters.

**1 Chron. 19:19 And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.**

When the Syrians saw that David's men were too strong for them, they agreed to stop the fighting. Nor would Syria ever be able to call upon them in the future for help. Both the Ammonites and the Syrians had gained immense respect for the Israelites and their God.

*A closing note.* When David had expressed his desire to build a house (temple) for the Lord, he was informed that he did not have permission because he had been a man of war. (See I Chronicles 28:2-3.)

*1 Chron. 28:2 Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building:*

*1 Chron. 28:3 But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.*

From the reading of the last few chapter one can hardly disagree with the Lord's statement that David had been a man of war. God would wait for a man who had not been involved in as much bloodshed as had David. Solomon, David's son would be that man.

## Chapter 20

There are two basic topics handled in chapter twenty. The first is the battle against the Ammonites. The second is a series of battles with the Philistines.

**1 Chron. 20:1 And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.**

Many of the Ammonites had retreated previously into their capitol city of Rabbah. They were allowed to remain there through the cold of the winter months. When better weather arrived Joab mustered his forces and took the city. The land of the Ammonites was laid waste and the people were treated very cruelly. Note verse three.

**1 Chron. 20:2 And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it; and it was set upon David's head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city.**

This verse seems clear in saying the crown of the king of the Ammonites was taken from him and placed on the head of David. However, a talent is a large amount of weight. Some have suggested that the word which is translated as "king" may have been confused with another word meaning idol. In that case we can

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see more possibility of a crown of that size. Yet we are told that David wore it. The crown was of great value, not only because it had much gold, but because there were precious gems embedded in it.

As David wore the crown valuable materials which had been taken from the Ammonites were presented to him. It was then taken out of the city of Rabbah and was no doubt dedicated to the God of Israel.

1 Chron. 20:3 And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

What a hideous way to treat the captives of the battle. This does not limit the cruelty to the armed forces of Ammon. It includes women and children who were captivated. Their bodies were actually ripped to pieces by these farming tools.

Right at this point there is a sharp difference between the report of the writer of the Chronicles and the writer of the books of Samuel. While David remained at Jerusalem when Joab and Abishai led the army against the Ammonites, the king saw Bathsheba bathing. He took her for himself and then when it was found that she was pregnant, he gave orders for Uriah, her husband to be placed in the heat of the battle. Uriah was killed, along with a number of other Israelites who might have survived if the order had not been given.

The writer of Chronicles could hardly have failed to know of David's sin. Why then did he not mention it? There are two reasons which jump out at us. He had avoided other actions in the life of David which had



stained his character. It is quite possible that he was ashamed of what the king had done. He also was far more interested in the spread of the kingdom of Israel than he was in David's private life.

1 Chron. 20:4 And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the children of the giant: and they were subdued.

The city of Gezer was near the Mediterranean sea in the northern part of Canaan. The Philistines were known to be persons of great size. When the spies returned from examining the land after the wilderness wanderings, they reported there were giants in the land. Since the next verse mentions that the brother of Goliath was killed in one of these battles, it seems that the giant mentioned here was Goliath and that Sippai was one of the sons of Goliath.

1 Chron. 20:5 And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear staff was like a weaver's beam.

There were at least three battles with the Philistines. In the one recorded in the present verse, Lahmi, the brother of Goliath was slain.

1 Chron. 20:6 And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot and he also was the son of the giant.

In yet a third battle at the city of Gath, another son of Goliath was killed. He is described as not only being of great size, but also having physical abnormalities which might have made him even more dangerous. His name is not given.

1 Chron. 20:7 But when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea David's brother slew him.

Jonathan, a nephew of David, was the one credited with the elimination of this warrior.

1 Chron. 20:8 These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

Two of the above relatives of the giant were sons. The third was a brother.

Even the staunchest of conservatives admit to difficulties when the books of Samuel are compared with I Chronicles. I do not wish to undermine the faith of either the believer in the Bible as the Word of God, nor the one who is honestly trying to seek out spiritual truth and determine whether the Bible should be trusted. I do wonder if the original record may have been embellished by humans who had difficulty in transmitting the actual circumstances involved in such events as those we are considering.

I pray that this does not leave the reader with the conclusion that if there is a difficulty at any point in the Bible, none of it can be accepted as the Word of the Lord of heaven and earth. There is no other book in the world which begins to approach the dependability of the Holy Scriptures inspired by Jehovah our God.

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## *Chapter 21*

In this chapter we find David calling for a census of the fighting men of Israel. This is a serious mistake. After repenting, he is told to build an altar upon which he can offer burnt offerings and sacrifices.

### **1 Chron. 21:1 And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.**

There are complications in this very first verse. In the parallel account in the twenty-fourth chapter of 2 Samuel, we find that God was angry with Israel and He moved David to take the census. This is probably another of those instances in which God is said to have done what He allowed to be done. David allowed himself to be used by Satan for actions that angered the Lord.

Why would the Lord be angry with Israel as a result of David's decision to take a census? There are several possibilities.

1. It could have been pride on the part of David after the great military successes he had enjoyed.

2. It could have been preparation for another war which God did not support.

3. It could have been that David had not consulted the Lord and offered sacrifices before ordering the count.

4. It could have been an indication on the part of David that he was depending on the strength of his army rather than on God.

Your present commentator feels the last of the four is the most likely. Reason for this position will be presented later in the chapter.

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1 Chron. 21:2 And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.

David could have ordered non-military men to take the count. He chose to give Joab the responsibility.

1 Chron. 21:3 And Joab answered, The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

It seems that Joab felt David's motive for asking a count was an evaluation of the military power of the nation. In Joab's mind, it did not matter as to the number of soldiers available. The most important consideration was the support of the Lord.

1 Chron. 21:4 Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

David was stubborn and persistent. Joab objected but did as he was charged. He made the count throughout the entire nation and then came to report his results to the king.

1 Chron. 21:5 And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of

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**Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword.**

He found that there were a thousand thousand fighting men available in Israel. One thousand thousand is a million. There were one hundred thousand in additon. He also found there were four hundred sixty thousand plus ten thousand available from Judah. Thus we have:

1,;100,000 from Israel.

470,000 from Judah.

1,570,000 Total.

We indicated we would explain why we felt that David was interested in military strength rather than a census for taxation purpose. The strong emphasis upon the ability of the ones counted to draw the sword is strong evidence. Hopefully there would be no need to draw swords in collecting taxes.

**1 Chron. 21:6 But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.**

Levi was the priestly tribe and would have been omitted for that reason. Benjamin had already been chastised heavily in the recent past and had lost many out of a tribe which was already small.

**1 Chron. 21:7 And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.**

**1 Chron. 21:8 And David said unto God, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.**

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When the Lord indicated His anger at what had been done, He began to punish them. David knew it was his fault that the anger had been aroused. He did not want to see the people punished when he was the sinner. He prayed and confessed his wrong doing. He asked that God forgive him of his sin. It had been a very foolish thing to do.

1 Chron. 21:9 And the LORD spake unto Gad, David's seer, saying,

1 Chron. 21:10 Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things: choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

When God wished to convey His will in that time He sometimes used a seer who received the message and then conveyed it to the person who was to heed it. In this case He chose Gad. This man had been an advisor to David at other times. He was to tell David some punishment must be experienced. Most of the time God did not give any choices. This time He offered three.

1 Chron. 21:11 So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Choose thee

1 Chron. 21:12 Either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.

The three choices were:

1. Three years of famine among the people.

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2. Three months of fleeing from Israel's foes.
3. Three days of disease or pestilence in Israel.

**1 Chron. 21:13 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.**

David declared that the choices were too difficult for him to make. He knew God was merciful and David would rather the Lord make the decision than himself. He did feel that punishment at the hands of men might be unmerciful.

**1 Chron. 21:14 So the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men.**

The ultimate choice was pestilence among the people. This sounds very much like some of the plagues which fell upon the Egyptians to force them to release Israel from bondage. Is this only a coincidence? Seventy thousand men lost their lives.

**1 Chron. 21:15 And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.**

An angel had been sent to wreak destruction on the city of Jerusalem. At that point God commanded

the angel to cease. The punishment was sufficient. The angel was sent to a threshing floor owned by an individual named Ornan who was one of the residents of Jerusalem even before Israel entered the land.

**1 Chron. 21:16 And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.**

David and the elders of Israel had clothed themselves in sackcloth and were beseeching the Lord for mercy. As David lifted up his face toward heaven, he saw the angel of the Lord with a sword drawn and stretched out over the city of Jerusalem. The entire group fell upon their knees and placed their faces touching the ground.

**1 Chron. 21:17 And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.**

David pleaded with God not to continue the punishment of the people. It was he who had sinned and not the people. The punishment should be limited to him and his house.

**1 Chron. 21:18 Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David**

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should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

David's pleading was heard. The plague ceased. David was told to go to the threshing floor where the angel had been sent before. He was to set up an altar at that place. This threshing floor was located on Mount Moriah where Abraham had offered to sacrifice his son Isaac before God stopped him. It was also the location upon which Solomon would later have the temple built.

1 Chron. 21:19 And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the LORD.

1 Chron. 21:20 And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

David obeyed the command which had been given him through God the seer. When he arrived at the threshing floor, Ornan and his sons had already seen the angel and had hidden themselves.

1 Chron. 21:21 And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshingfloor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.

When Ornan saw David coming he left the threshing floor and went to meet him. In honor of the king, he bowed deeply before him.

1 Chron. 21:22 Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshingfloor, that I may

build an altar therein unto the LORD: thou shalt grant it me for the full price: that the plague may be stayed from the people.

David explained to Ornan why he had come. He wanted to buy the threshing floor and build an altar there unto God. This would bring an end to the plague which had destroyed so many already. He also explained that he did not wish to simply take it from Ornan. He wanted to pay what the threshing floor was worth.

We can imagine that Ornan was pleased at the thought of the cessation of the horrible plague. Although he was still alive, he could well lose his life to the pestilence if it was not stopped.

1 Chron. 21:23 And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat offering; I give it all.

Ornan was more than willing to sell the floor to David for the purpose he had heard from the king. He would go much farther. He would give the floor in order that the altar might be built. He also offered the oxen to be used as offerings on the altar, and the wooden instruments used in threshing could be fuel for the fire on the altar. This offer might have been only a matter of courtesy which he knew would be rejected, but it certainly seems genuine.

1 Chron. 21:24 And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost.

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**1 Chron. 21:25 So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.**

David would have none of Ornan's generous offer. It would be no sacrifice on his part if the threshing floor did not cost him anything.

The word sacrifice implies that the one who is doing the sacrificing is giving up something which was of value to him. David understood that, and we should also understand all these centuries later.

**1 Chron. 21:26 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.**

The agreement was made and David paid Ornan six hundred shekels of gold for the property. He then built the altar and offered both burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord.

It is the building of this altar and the sacrifices which David made here that cause some to believe at least a part of the reason for God's anger at the taking of the census was the lack of such an offering beforehand.

**1 Chron. 21:27 And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.**

The offerings were satisfactory to God. The angel was commanded to bring a halt to the plague.

**1 Chron. 21:28** At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

**1 Chron. 21:29** For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon.

From that time on David offered his sacrifices at the altar on the site of the threshing floor. The tabernacle which had been carried through the wilderness was still at Gibeon, but David was fearful of going to Gibeon because of God's command to build the altar on Mount Moriah.

**1 Chron. 21:30** But David could not go before it to enquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

He was fearful that if he offered at Gibeon God would return the plague upon the city of Jerusalem.



## *Chapter 22*

The remainder of the book of 1 Chronicles is devoted to the building of the temple and the last days and death of king David. Whereas most of the book thus far has had parallel passages in either the books of Samuel or Kings, these chapters stand by themselves.

**1 Chron. 22:1 Then David said, This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.**

The threshing floor of Ornan, sometimes called Araunah, had been purchased by the king. He now declared that this was to be the future place of sacrifices and offerings and was to be the location of a house devoted to God. The ark had been transported from place to place in days gone by. It would soon be settled in the house which was to be built.

**1 Chron. 22:2 And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God.**

The strangers that were in the land were either natives who had lived in Canaan and had accepted the religion of the Lord, or were from other nations and had become proselytes. They were permitted to live in the land but were used as manual laborers for just such projects as the one which lay ahead.

A part of the work was to shape marble or limestone for the house of the Lord.



**1 Chron. 22:3 And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight;**

David began to gather materials for the temple. He had not been permitted to do the actual building, but that did not prevent him from bringing the ingredients together in order that it could be erected by others.

These were the days in which iron was much less abundant than it is presently. It was known that iron nails could make the proposed building more durable. Doors, gates and corner braces could be made of iron. Brass was accumulated to the extent that time was not taken to weigh it.

**1 Chron. 22:4 Also cedar trees in abundance: for the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.**

The cities of Tyre and Sidon were famous for the men there who were skilled in the use of cedar wood for ships and other building projects. Those cities provided large quantities of cedar logs.

**1 Chron. 22:5 And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be builded for the LORD must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abund-antly before his death.**

We do not know the exact age of Solomon at this time. He was still young enough that David felt there



was time for collecting much of the materials before Solomon would have the experience to supervise the building.

This house of the Lord was to be as magnificent as humanly possible. It was to be famous in every country. It's glory was to be known for ages to come.

**1 Chron. 22:6 Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Israel.**

When David felt the time was right, he called for Solomon to give him a solemn charge as to what was expected of him. He was the one chosen to do the building.

**1 Chron. 22:7 And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God:**

David made it clear that he would have loved to take charge of the building personally, but the Lord had forbidden that. We catch a glimpse of a much more humble spirit in David than had been the case when he ignored Gad the prophet.

**1 Chron. 22:8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.**

The reason God had forbidden him to do the building was that he had been a man of war and the shedding of

blood. This was not a condemnation of David. God had used him as one who was to subdue the nations of the area. This had involved bloodshed.

What God was saying was that he wanted this new temple to be built by one who was known for peace rather than war. Even Solomon's name was taken from Shalom, meaning peace.

**1 Chron. 22:9 Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.**

There are some who feel strong overtones of a coming son of God in these verses. Descendants were often called sons though they were but from the line of a person. The name Solomon in this verse could very well have just been translated as "peace." The next verse states that this son would be God's Son, and that God would be his father. This sounds like a picture of Jesus the Christ.

In spite of these overtones, the present commentator believes the promised son was to be David's own son Solomon and that he was in a sense a type of the Prince of Peace who was to come. Solomon did come to the throne in a time when the enemies of Israel had been defeated or eliminated. Under his rulership the kingdom reached it's greatest days of glory.

**1 Chron. 22:10 He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.**

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It was Solomon who would build this house for the name of the Lord. The throne of the kingdom would rule over an everlasting nation of the people of God. Of course Christ is the one who occupies that throne after he was raised to the right hand of the Father in heaven. However, Solomon's rule typified Christ's rule in many ways.

1 Chron. 22:11 Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

1 Chron. 22:12 Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

Since the Lord had chosen Solomon to build this glorious new house, Solomon must accept the responsibility and the opportunity of the task.

It would require the help of the Lord to bring the house to a successful conclusion. David prayed that Solomon be given both wisdom and understanding, plus the administrative skill to see that Israel would respect the will of God, not only in building the temple, but in abiding by the law of God. Both would be necessary.

We need to say a word about the difference between wisdom and understanding. Understanding of how and why things should be done is one thing. Wisdom to choose those best ways is not always found in men who know what should be done but will not choose to do it.

1 Chron. 22:13 Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments

which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

If Solomon and the people would live in accordance with the laws and principles which Jehovah had stated in the time of Moses, prosperity would follow. They must be diligent and persistent in good works. God would then see that all things worked together for their good.

1 Chron. 22:14 Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

It is doubtful that we should take these amounts of gold and silver to be precise figures. They are obviously rounded off. Nevertheless, it does say earlier that the brass was not weighed. The estimation of the dollar value of this silver and gold is risky business due to the lack of present knowledge as to the size of the talent at the time, and also how much a talent was worth in present day terms. We calculate the price of gold at a certain number of dollars per ounce. It could have been worth more or less at that time.

We can most certainly say that the value of both the gold and the silver amounted to many millions of dollars.

1 Chron. 22:15 Moreover there are workmen



with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

1 Chron. 22:16 Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number. Arise therefore, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.

It seems there was no hint of jealousy in David's charge to his son Solomon. Some might have said, God told me to let you build it, so go ahead. I will have nothing to do with it. Instead, David did all he felt he could do without overstepping the boundaries God had set up. He had seen to it that everything Solomon needed was ready. It was time to build.

1 Chron. 22:17 David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying,

The princes of Israel does not refer to the king's sons. It speaks of those in high positions of the government. They were expected to lend their influence to promote the erection of the building.

1 Chron. 22:18 Is not the LORD your God with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people.

David reminded Solomon that he was favored with a peaceful state of affairs. Other nations had found it unprofitable to fight with the Lord's people. Solomon could devote his energies to God's house.

1 Chron. 22:19 Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.

Much can be accomplished when men set their entire heart and soul upon a goal. The building of the temple of God in the days of Solomon would move forward much more successfully if all looked forward to the finishing of the building and the furnishing of it with the ark of the covenant and other holy vessels which were to be needed.

The temple of the Lord is still building today. The church is the temple of God in our own time. If everyone of God's people will put all of their heart, soul, mind and strength into the building up of the church, the results will be pleasing to both the Father in heaven, and His children on earth.



Chapter 23

King David will not actually build the temple of the Lord. He was forbidden to do so. What he will do is to organize everything possible in order to ease both the erection of the temple and the religious services which will take place there after it is built.

This chapter is dedicated to the organization of the Levites in order that each will know his responsibilities when the proper time arrives.

1 Chron. 23:1 So when David was old and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel.

We do not know just how old David was at this time. He was a very old man and it was increasingly clear that a need existed for him to appoint his successor on the throne. His son Adonijah had already caused some difficulties along this line. David had promised Bathsheba that Solomon would succeed him. Adonijah had stepped forward and was actually claiming the throne. Bathsheba reminded David of his promise and David decided to anoint Solomon as king, even before he died. This was out of step with tradition, but David felt it was necessary. See the complete story as given in the first chapter of I Kings.

1 Chron. 23:2 And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.

Those listed in this verse were the most influential persons in Israel, other than the king. The princes were not sons of the king. They were men of prestige and

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influence in the land. Some of the Levites were priests. Others were not.

**1 Chron. 23:3 Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thousand.**

The Levites were to supply the personnel who tended to the activities of the temple. Their number needed to be ascertained in order to make the best possible assignments for the work. In this place we find that only those above the age of thirty were to be counted. In Numbers 8:24 the lower age limit is given as twenty-five. The upper limit was given in Numbers and was to be fifty years.

*Num 8:24 This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:*

*Num 8:25 And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more:*

Also compare verse twenty-four of this same chapter, which give twenty years as the lower limit. The only reasonable explanation for this difference in numbers seems to be that the number of workers needed varied from one time to another and thus the age limits were altered.

Some feel that thirty-eight thousand persons was more than could be utilized for the purposes described in this chapter. Could this many persons all crowd into the



temple together? It is well to remember that there were twenty-four courses involved in the work. These courses took turns in fulfilling the duties. However, this still leaves us with what seems to be serious problems.

**1 Chron. 23:4 Of which, twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work of the house of the LORD; and six thousand were officers and judges:**

Some six thousand of these Levites were to serve as civil officials such as our present day executive branch of government. This cuts the number directly involved with the temple down to thirty-two thousand.

**1 Chron. 23:5 Moreover four thousand were porters; and four thousand praised the LORD with the instruments which I made, said David, to praise therewith.**

Four thousand more served as gatekeepers and guards of the temple treasures. There were other duties associated with the daily maintenance of the temple operations. See chapter twenty-six for more details.

Another four thousand played on musical instruments which David had caused to be made for the praise of the Lord. The reader would do well to compare Amos 6:5 with the present verse.

*Amo 6:4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;*

*Amo 6:5 That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David;*

When we add the four thousand porters and the four thousand musicians, we have a total of eight thousand. When this is subtracted from the thirty-two thousand above, have twenty-four thousand remaining who were actually assigned to the work of the temple.

**1 Chron. 23:6 And David divided them into courses among the sons of Levi, namely, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.**

Levi was the priestly tribe. Levi had three sons, Gershon, Kohath and Merari. The Gershonites are listed in verses seven through eleven.

**1 Chron. 23:7 Of the Gershonites were, Laadan, and Shimei.**

**1 Chron. 23:8 The sons of Laadan; the chief was Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three.**

**1 Chron. 23:9 The sons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziël, and Haran, three. These were the chief of the fathers of Laadan.**

**1 Chron. 23:10 And the sons of Shimei were, Jahath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei.**

**1 Chron. 23:11 And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second: but Jeush and Beriah had not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their father's house.**

Kohath had four sons, Amram, Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel. These are listed in verses twelve through



twenty. Among Kohath's descendants were Moses and Aaron.

**1 Chron. 23:12 The sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.**

**1 Chron. 23:13 The sons of Amram; Aaron and Moses: and Aaron was separated, that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister unto him, and to bless in his name for ever.**

**1 Chron. 23:14 Now concerning Moses the man of God, his sons were named of the tribe of Levi.**

**1 Chron. 23:15 The sons of Moses were, Gershom, and Eliezer.**

**1 Chron. 23:16 Of the sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief.**

**1 Chron. 23:17 And the sons of Eliezer were, Rehabiah the chief. And Eliezer had none other sons; but the sons of Rehabiah were very many.**

**1 Chron. 23:18 Of the sons of Izhar; Shelomith the chief.**

**1 Chron. 23:19 Of the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.**

**1 Chron. 23:20 Of the sons of Uzziel; Micah the first and Jesiah the second.**

The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. These are listed in verses twenty-one through twenty-three.

**1 Chron. 23:21 The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar, and Kish.**

**1 Chron. 23:22 And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters: and their brethren the sons**

**of Kish took them.**

**1 Chron. 23:23 The sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.**

**1 Chron. 23:24 These were the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers; even the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of twenty years and upward.**

Verse three spoke of thirty years as the lower limit. Perhaps those who did the work directly connected with the temple had a different lower age limit than those who acted in other capacities.

**1 Chron. 23:25 For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever:**

**1 Chron. 23:26 And also unto the Levites; they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof.**

No longer were the Israelites moving from one location to another. They had been allowed to settle in the city of Jerusalem. It was only appropriate that since God had given them rest, they should honor Him with sacrifices and a temple.

**1 Chron. 23:27 For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above:**

**1 Chron. 23:28 Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;**





We now come to a listing of some of the many duties expected at the hands of the Levites. Aaron and his descendants were to act as priests. The Levites were to assist them as needed. There were many manual duties to be discharged. Aaron's descendants were to offer the sacrifices.

**1 Chron. 23:29 Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size;**

This time the cooks were not women. Those who prepared shewbread and fried meat were men.

**1 Chron. 23:30 And to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at even:**

Every day there was thanksgiving and praise to be offered to Jehovah both in the morning and in the evening.

**1 Chron. 23:31 And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the LORD in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the LORD:**

All of the important days such as weekly sabbaths, new moons, and feasts such as Pentecost, and the Passover were to be celebrated with burnt offerings. They were to be continued until the Christian age began in A.D. 33.

**1 Chron. 23:32 And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the LORD.**

The center of worship for the Jews was to be the city of Jerusalem, and in particular it was to be the temple with its holy and most holy places. The descendants of Aaron were to take the lead, and the rest of the Levites were to assist them in a host of other supporting duties.



## *Chapter 24*

This chapter twenty-four discusses the organization of the priests and Levites in the temple duties. The twenty-four divisions or courses of priests and a like number divisions of Levites are assigned.

**1 Chron. 24:1 Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.**

A very large number of qualified persons existed who could have served in connection with the temple. As suggested in the previous chapter, several thousand could not all serve simultaneously. God provided David with a method by which this could be administered.

**1 Chron. 24:2 But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priest's office.**

Aaron had four sons. They were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. The high priest was to be chosen from his sons. Two of these sons, Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire on the altar. God smote them with death before Aaron died. Since they had no children before their death, the remaining sons Eleazar and Ithamar were to produce Aaron's line.

**1 Chron. 24:3 And David distributed them, both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service.**

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David chose Zadok from the sons of Eleazar and Ahimelech from the sons of Ithamar to participate in the dividing of the courses. Eleazar was the oldest of the two remaining sons of Aaron and the high priest office came primarily from his family.

1 Chron. 24:4 And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar, and thus were they divided. Among the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar according to the house of their fathers.

These chief men were all priests, but stood out among the influential men of the two families. There were twice as many from the family of Eleazar than from that of Ithamar.

1 Chron. 24:5 Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another; for the governors of the sanctuary, and governors of the house of God, were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar.

The various duties to be supervised by these chief priests were to be determined by lot. This avoided accusations of partiality in the assignments. Sixteen courses were to be headed by those from the house of Eleazar, and eight courses were to be headed by leaders from the family of Ithamar.

We are not told precisely how the lots were chosen, but it may well be that the Urim and Thummim were involved. This would mean that God had a major part in the decisions.

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**1 Chron. 24:6 And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel the scribe, one of the Levites, wrote them before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and before the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites: one principal household being taken for Eleazar, and one taken for Ithamar.**

Shemaiah, a Levite wrote the results of the allotment in a record book. The witnesses of the recording were David the king, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the twenty-four chief men who had been chosen. There was to be no room for any charge of dishonesty.

**1 Chron. 24:7 Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah,**

**1 Chron. 24:8 The third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim,**

**1 Chron. 24:9 The fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin,**

**1 Chron. 24:10 The seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah,**

We break into the listing at this point because of the importance of John the baptist who was a descendant of Abijah who headed the eighth course. (See Luke 1:5.)

*Luk 1:5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.*

**1 Chron. 24:11 The ninth to Jeshuah, the tenth to Shecaniah,**

**1 Chron. 24:12 The eleventh to Eliashib, the**  
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twelfth to Jakim,

1 Chron. 24:13 The thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab,

1 Chron. 24:14 The fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer,

1 Chron. 24:15 The seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Apses,

1 Chron. 24:16 The nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel,

1 Chron. 24:17 The one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Gamul,

1 Chron. 24:18 The three and twentieth to Delaiah, the four and twentieth to Maaziah.

It does seem that the number of these courses changed over time. The names of the chief priests varies in other listings, and there may have been only four as Israel returned from exile in Babylon.

The remainder of the priests were divided into twenty-four divisions and each division was responsible to one of the chief priests. Each of the divisions served for one week, from sabbath to sabbath.

1 Chron. 24:19 These were the orderings of them in their service to come into the house of the LORD, according to their manner, under Aaron their father, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

When the selections and assignments were completed, we find that they were in harmony with the will of Jehovah.

1 Chron. 24:20 And the rest of the sons of Levi

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**were these: Of the sons of Amram; Shubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah.**

There were many Levites who were not priests. These families are listed in verses twenty-one through thirty-one. These would have had duties not directly connected with the temple.

**1 Chron. 24:21 Concerning Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, the first was Isshiah.**

**1 Chron. 24:22 Of the Izharites; Shelomoth: of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath.**

**1 Chron. 24:23 And the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth.**

**1 Chron. 24:24 Of the sons of Uzziel; Michah: of the sons of Michah; Shamir.**

**1 Chron. 24:25 The brother of Michah was Isshiah: of the sons of Isshiah; Zechariah.**

**1 Chron. 24:26 The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno.**

**1 Chron. 24:27 The sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri.**

**1 Chron. 24:28 Of Mahli came Eleazar, who had no sons.**

**1 Chron. 24:29 Concerning Kish: the son of Kish was Jerahmeel.**

**1 Chron. 24:30 The sons also of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites after the house of their fathers.**

**1 Chron. 24:31 These likewise cast lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the**

**priests and Levites, even the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.**

Though some of the men chosen for the various courses were older than others, this did not mean they were given priority in the lots.





## Chapter 25

We are still interested in this chapter in the arrangements for the worship of the Lord in connection with the anticipated temple. David cannot build it, but he most certainly tried to organize matters such that the building of it would be as orderly as possible, and the worship which would take place would be easily instituted. We now see the choosing of musicians and singers, plus the assignments given to each of the divisions.

**1 Chron. 25:1 Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen according to their service was:**

The captains of the host often refer to the military. The captains of the host in this case are the chief priests who were assisting David in setting up the groups of persons responsible for the music and prophesying which would take place.

We can probably see something of the nature of these activities by examining the Bible book of Psalms. These psalms declare truths which God wanted taught to the people. Some are called psalms of David. Some are psalms of Asaph. Some are linked to the name of Jeduthun.

The musical instruments which were used along with the prophetic singing were harps, psalteries and cymbals. There is no indication that the Lord was displeased with the use of instruments of music at

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this time. It may be that the condemnation of the use of instruments by David in the book of Amos was due to self entertainment rather than praise of God. It is associated in that place with lying on beds of ivory.

We do point out, however, that there is neither command nor example of their use in the new testament age. Christians are to sing and make melody **in their hearts**.

1 Chron. 25:2 Of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and Asarelah, the sons of Asaph under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied according to the order of the king.

1 Chron. 25:3 Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise the LORD.

1 Chron. 25:4 Of Heman: the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamtiezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth:

1 Chron. 25:5 All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer in the words of God, to lift up the horn. And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters.

1 Chron. 25:6 All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.

We have here the listing of the twenty-four chief men over the musicians. They were from the sons of

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the Asaph, Jeduthun and Heman.

Particular attention is given to Heman who is called the king's seer in the words of God. This lends evidence that the prophesying did include information which came to these singers from God, as well as praise and thanksgiving to God.

**1 Chron. 25:7 So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the LORD, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.**

There were twenty-four courses with twelve in each course, making a total of two hundred eighty-eight. All are stated to have been proficient musicians.

**1 Chron. 25:8 And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar.**

As in the previous instances, the assignments were made by lot and not by the whim of the chief men. This went so far as to treat the teachers and their students evenly in assigning them.

**1 Chron. 25:9 Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons were twelve:**

**1 Chron. 25:10 The third to Zaccur, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:**

**1 Chron. 25:11 The fourth to Izri, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:**

**1 Chron. 25:12 The fifth to Nethaniah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:**

1 Chron. 25:13 The sixth to Bukkiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:14 The seventh to Jesharelah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:15 The eighth to Jeshaiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:16 The ninth to Mattaniah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:17 The tenth to Shimei, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:18 The eleventh to Azareel, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:19 The twelfth to Hashabiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:20 The thirteenth to Shubael, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:21 The fourteenth to Mattithiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:22 The fifteenth to Jeremoth, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:23 The sixteenth to Hananiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:24 The seventeenth to Joshbekashah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:25 The eighteenth to Hanani, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:26 The nineteenth to Mallothi, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:27 The twentieth to Eliathah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:28 The one and twentieth to Hothir, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:

1 Chron. 25:29 The two and twentieth to



**Giddalti, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:**

**1 Chron. 25:30 The three and twentieth to Mahazioth, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve:**

**1 Chron. 25:31 The four and twentieth to Romantiezer, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve.**

Adam Clarke is most vehement in his stand that God never commanded the use of musical instruments to accompany singing in the worship services. Clarke spoke of it as “a parade of noise and show.” He contends that this was an addition to the word of God and was strictly initiated by David.

Although there does seem to be some approbation by the Lord concerning their use by David and worship in the temple after it’s erection, this present writer sees danger of adding to the word of the Lord when these devices are used in conjunction with Christian worship. It is very easy to make a transition between pure praise of God and personal entertainment.

## Chapter 26

This chapter continues the preparations for the building and operation of the temple area. David could not build the temple, but did everything he could do to facilitate those who were to build it.

We are interested here in the selection and assignments of the porters, who had a variety of tasks associated with the maintenance of the temple after it's erection.

**1 Chron. 26:1 Concerning the divisions of the porters: Of the Korhites was Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph.**

Just as the other classes of Levites had been divided by courses, so was this class called porters. The Hebrew word which is translated here as "porter" is *sho'er* which Strong's Hebrew Dictionary lists as (1) gatekeeper (2) doorkeeper (3) janitor. However, the content of this chapter indicates these porters were men of valour and men of strength. This leads one to associate at least a part of their duties as guards.

There were several main gates which needed to be opened and closed each day. Captains were appointed over perhaps as many as a thousand subordinates. There said to four thousand of these porters in an earlier census. (See I Chronicles 23:5.)

Meshelemiah had the supervision of the eastern gate. Zechariah supervised the northern gate. Obededom had the south gate. Two names, Shuppim and Hosah, were associated with the western gate



**1 Chron. 26:2 And the sons of Meshelemiah were, Zechariah the firstborn, Jediel the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,**

**1 Chron. 26:3 Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh.**

These were his direct sons and did not include his entire family.

**1 Chron. 26:4 Moreover the sons of Obededom were, Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth.**

**1 Chron. 26:5 Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for God blessed him.**

The ark had rested in the home of Obededom for some time after the Philistines returned it to Israel, until it was moved to Jerusalem. God was pleased with him and blessed him with eight direct sons.

**1 Chron. 26:6 Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father: for they were mighty men of valour.**

**1 Chron. 26:7 The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren were strong men, Elihu, and Semachiah.**

**1 Chron. 26:8 All these of the sons of Obededom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, were threescore and two of Obededom.**

We have sixty-two sons and brethren of Obededom.

**1 Chron. 26:9 And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen.**

Meshelemiah had another eighteen.

**1 Chron. 26:10 Also Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons; Simri the chief, (for though he was not the firstborn, yet his father made him the chief;)**

There were certain conditions under which it was possible for a father to replace the rights of the first born son and place them upon one born later.

**1 Chron. 26:11 Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen.**

The total of the sons and brethren of Hosah was thirteen.

**1 Chron. 26:12 Among these were the divisions of the porters, even among the chief men, having wards one against another, to minister in the house of the LORD.**

**1 Chron. 26:13 And they cast lots, as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate.**

Lots were cast to determine which gate would be assigned to the various captains.

**1 Chron. 26:14 And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his son, a wise**

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counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot came out northward.

1 Chron. 26:15 To Obededom southward; and to his sons the house of Asuppim.

1 Chron. 26:16 To Shuppim and Hosah the lot came forth westward, with the gate Shallecheth, by the causeway of the going up, ward against ward.

We have no number given for the sons and brethren of Shuppim and Hosah.

1 Chron. 26:17 Eastward were six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and toward Asuppim two and two.

1 Chron. 26:18 At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar.

1 Chron. 26:19 These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari.

Each day there were six porters assigned to the east gate. Four were assigned to the north gate, four to the south gate and four to the west. It has been suggested that Asuppim was a store room near the western wall.

1 Chron. 26:20 And of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the dedicated things.

Much treasure had been accumulated during the times of Saul, Samuel, Abner and Joab. These had

been dedicated to the Lord and were not to be used for secular purposes. Some of the Levites were assigned to guard these treasures.

1 Chron. 26:21 As concerning the sons of Laadan; the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, even of Laadan the Gershonite, were Jehieli.

1 Chron. 26:22 The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, which were over the treasures of the house of the LORD.

1 Chron. 26:23 Of the Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites:

1 Chron. 26:24 And Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures.

1 Chron. 26:25 And his brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his son, and Jeshaiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son.

1 Chron. 26:26 Which Shelomith and his brethren were over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host, had dedicated.

1 Chron. 26:27 Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to maintain the house of the LORD.

1 Chron. 26:28 And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; and whosoever had dedicated any thing, it was under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren.

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Much of the treasure had been accumulated as a result of spoils taken during battles. Much attention was given to making certain this treasure was secure.

**1 Chron. 26:29 Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were for the outward business over Israel, for officers and judges.**

Some of the Levites were to aid in making decisions among the people and acting as policemen to keep order in the society.

**1 Chron. 26:30 And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, were officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward in all the business of the LORD, and in the service of the king.**

Quite a number of the people of Israel lived on the east side of the the Jordan river. The two and one half tribes located there were not forgotten. Seventeen hundred men were to keep order on that side of the river. Some dealt with civil affairs and others dealt with religious duties.

**1 Chron. 26:31 Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at Jazer of Gilead.**

**1 Chron. 26:32 And his brethren, men of valour, were two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the**

**Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king.**

These seventeen hundred were sought out during David's last year of life. They maintained order over the Tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh east of the Jordan.

As has been the case through much of this book of I Chronicles, there are a number of things which are not clear. One of those things has to do with the gates which are mentioned. Some speak of four gates. Others speak of three. If one examines the drawings made by experienced students of the Bible, those drawings show only an east door of the temple proper. If one then turns to the inner and outer courts there are three openings in each court. One is on the east. One is on the north. One is on the south, but none is shown on the west. The drawings vary with different time periods. It seems that much guesswork has been involved. The present writer is not ready to say precise statements cannot be made. But, he is not embarrassed to say that he does not find everything clear.



## *Chapter 27*

We are not now limited to the Levites. There were many in the land who served in duties of a civil nature. David was also interested in seeing that these persons were well organized as well as those with religious assignments.

**1 Chron. 27:1 Now the children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course were twenty and four thousand.**

There were several classes; chief fathers, captains of thousands, captains of hundreds and those who served under these officers. There were twenty-four thousand in each course. Each course served for one month out of the year. Multiplying the twelve months by the twenty-four thousand in each of the twelve courses, we have two hundred eighty-eight thousand, plus the captains and chief fathers.

Since each course served but one month out of the year, the rest of the year was theirs to tend to their personal affairs. In case of emergency the king had some three hundred thousand available at his call.

**1 Chron. 27:2 Over the first course for the first month was Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.**

**1 Chron. 27:3 Of the children of Perez was the**

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chief of all the captains of the host for the first month.

First month—Jashobeam and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:4 And over the course of the second month was Dodai an Ahohite, and of his course was Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise were twenty and four thousand.

Second month—Dodai and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:5 The third captain of the host for the third month was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

1 Chron. 27:6 This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty: and in his course was Ammizabad his son.

Third month—Benaiah and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:7 The fourth captain for the fourth month was Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Fourth month—Ahahel and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:8 The fifth captain for the fifth month was Shamhuth the Izrahite: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Fifth month—Shamhuth and his 24,000.



1 Chron. 27:9 The sixth captain for the sixth month was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Sixth month—Ira and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:10 The seventh captain for the seventh month was Helez the Pelonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Seventh month—Helez and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:11 The eighth captain for the eighth month was Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zarhites: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Eighth month—Sibbecai and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:12 The ninth captain for the ninth month was Abiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Ninth month—Abiezer and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:13 The tenth captain for the tenth month was Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zarhites: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Tenth month—Mahari and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:14 The eleventh captain for the eleventh month was Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Eleventh month—Benaiah and his 24,000.

This is a Pirathonite of Ephraim. The previous Benaiah was a Levite and not the same person.

1 Chron. 27:15 The twelfth captain for the twelfth month was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

Twelfth month—Heldai and his 24,000.

1 Chron. 27:16 Furthermore over the tribes of Israel: the ruler of the Reubenites was Eliezer the son of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the son of Maachah:

The men listed in verses sixteen through twenty-two are called princes. It has been suggested that they were honorary individuals as a result of past accomplishments.

1 Chron. 27:17 Of the Levites, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: of the Aaronites, Zadok:

1 Chron. 27:18 Of Judah, Elihu, one of the brethren of David: of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael:

1 Chron. 27:19 Of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel:

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**1 Chron. 27:20 Of the children of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half tribe of Manasseh, Joel the son of Pedaiah:**

**1 Chron. 27:21 Of the half tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo the son of Zechariah: of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner:**

**1 Chron. 27:22 Of Dan, Azareel the son of Jeroham. These were the princes of the tribes of Israel.**

The list of rulers here does not include one from either the tribes of Gad nor Asher. We still have a list of twelve, but not the same twelve as found in Numbers, chapter one and I Chronicles, chapter two.

**1 Chron. 27:23 But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and under: because the LORD had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens.**

**1 Chron. 27:24 Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finished not, because there fell wrath for it against Israel; neither was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David.**

In I Chronicles 21, we find that Joab had been under orders from David the king to take the number of the men qualified for military duty. Joab had disagreed with the plan but was obligated to obey David. Joab did not finish the numbering because of the wrath of the Lord. As a consequence, the total count was not recorded in the king's records. Benjamin and Levi were left out.

**1 Chron. 27:25 And over the king's treasures was Azmaveth the son of Adiel: and over the storehouses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, was Jehonathan the son of Uziah:**

Kings were recognized for the amount of wealth they controlled. David had enormous wealth. He appointed men to oversee such possessions. Azmaveth was over the king's treasures. Jehonathan was over the storehouses of materials scattered over the kingdom.

**1 Chron. 27:26 And over them that did the work of the field for tillage of the ground was Ezri the son of Chelub:**

Ezri supervised the cultivating of the fields of the king.

**1 Chron. 27:27 And over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite: over the increase of the vineyards for the wine cellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite:**

Shimei was over the vineyards and Zabdi was placed over the wine storage.

**1 Chron. 27:28 And over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that were in the low plains was Baalhanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil was Joash:**

The production of olives and figs from the sycamore trees was overseen by Baalhanan. The oil supplies were supervised by Joash.

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1 Chron. 27:29 And over the herds that fed in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adlai:

The herds of goats that fed in the plains of Sharon were assigned to Shitrai, while those in the valleys were in charge of Shaphat.

1 Chron. 27:30 Over the camels also was Obil the Ishmaelite: and over the asses was Jehdeiah the Meronothite:

Camels were used for both transportation and meat. Obil supervised them. The asses were under the charge of Jehdeiah.

1 Chron. 27:31 And over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagerite. All these were the rulers of the substance which was king David's.

The flocks of sheep were overseen by Jaziz. Note that all of the above were classed as the substance belonging to king David. Solomon was to be known for his riches. His father was not poverty stricken.

1 Chron. 27:32 Also Jonathan David's uncle was a counsellor, a wise man, and a scribe: and Jehiel the son of Hachmoni was with the king's sons:

1 Chron. 27:33 And Ahithophel was the king's counsellor: and Hushai the Archite was the king's companion:

1 Chron. 27:34 And after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the general of the king's army was Joab.

It seems that Hachmoni was a tutor and guardian of David's sons. They would need both security and training. Ahithophel and Hushai were close advisors to the king. Jehoiada and Abiathar also served as backups for Ahithophel and Hushai.

Joab served as the major general of the armed forces.

How careful David had been to put everything in order before his death and replacement by his son Solomon.



Chapter 28

The life of king David was rapidly drawing toward its close. He felt the necessity to make a farewell address to the leaders of God's people, and to transfer authority from himself to his son Solomon. This chapter contains that address.

1 Chron. 28:1 And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.

Now that leaders had been appointed for both secular and religious affairs, those leaders were brought together in Jerusalem for their final instructions from the aging king.

1 Chron. 28:2 Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building:

By this time David was very old and spent a large amount of time in his bed. When the leaders were assembled he made a valiant effort and stood upon his feet to speak to them. He began by reminding them that

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he wished with all his heart that he could have built a magnificent house where the ark of the covenant could rest securely, and where the ark itself could become a footstool for the Lord God. He had already made plans to build.

**1 Chron. 28:3 But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.**

Then the Lord had commanded him not to build the house. The reason given was that David had been involved in much bloodshed. The ark was not to be associated with war and bloodshed. A man of peace must build it's house.

**1 Chron. 28:4 Howbeit the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah, the house of my father; and among the sons of my father he liked me to make me king over all Israel:**

In spite of David's weaknesses, God had forgiven him of serious sins and had kept His promise that the tribe of Judah would provide a king over Israel. He had then selected David's family, and finally David himself to be king. The Lord had aided David in ruling the people and had expressed His pleasure with David's response to His blessing.

**1 Chron. 28:5 And of all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen**

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Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel.

David felt blessed because he had a number of sons. God had even gone so far as to choose the one of those sons whom He wished to sit on the throne when David was no longer able.

1 Chron. 28:6 And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.

The son whom God had chosen was Solomon. Solomon was the son of David through Bathsheba. She had lost the child she conceived in the adulterous union with the king. But now a second son was to be God's choice for ruler.

There are those who see this statement as pointing to Jesus Christ who was in a very special way God's Only Begotten Son. As in many other Bible cases, this may be an instance of double meaning. Solomon would be cared for as if he was the precious child of God. Solomon would be expected to return the blessing by allowing God to lead him in his rulership. Yet, only Jesus the Christ can truly be the unique Son of the Heavenly Father.

1 Chron. 28:7 Moreover I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day.

There is a wonderful promise and also a very large

“if” in this seventh verse. As long as Solomon remained obedient the kingdom would be established. When Solomon failed to show such obedience, the kingdom would be in danger.

1 Chron. 28:8 Now therefore in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the LORD, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.

David then charged the leaders of the people to honor God’s commandments. They could then live in the land and pass it on to their descendants for all time. It would be wise for all parents to follow this advice. We do not live for ourselves alone. We should do our very best to instill a spirit of obedience to God in the hearts of our children that they may live in favor with God when we have passed.

1 Chron. 28:9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

David reminded Solomon that the Lord not only sees what His people do; He sees the thoughts which they entertain in their minds. He is to be served with all the heart, soul, mind and strength. If one seeks the truth he will find it. If he then lives it, God will continue



with him.

David could speak from experience. The Lord knew, even before he lay with Uriah's wife that he had imagined it in his heart.

1 Chron. 28:10 Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

God had commanded that Solomon build the sanctuary. The fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom.

1 Chron. 28:11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat,

1 Chron. 28:12 And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things:

1 Chron. 28:13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

There were vast differences in the tabernacle and the temple. One was constructed of wood and skins. The other would be constructed of hewn stone. Still, the altars, candlesticks, holy place and most holy place were ingredients of both.

God had given the detailed pattern for the temple

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to David by inspiration. David laid those plans before Solomon with the expectation that the pattern would be followed.

**1 Chron. 28:14 He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service:**

Much gold and silver would be called for in the making of the articles of worship. David saw to it that there was a sufficient weight of silver and gold for each of the articles God had commanded to be made.

**1 Chron. 28:15 Even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof: and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick.**

**1 Chron. 28:16 And by weight he gave gold for the tables of shewbread, for every table; and likewise silver for the tables of silver:**

**1 Chron. 28:17 Also pure gold for the fleshhooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons he gave gold by weight for every bason; and likewise silver by weight for every bason of silver:**

One might have expected that the fleshhooks which were used to draw flesh out of the fleshpots after it was cooked would be made of less precious metal. They were to be made of gold.



**1 Chron. 28:18 And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.**

The ark is spoken of as the chariot of the Lord. Every direction one turned his eyes in the proposed building there was the glitter of gold and silver. The value of the total weight of precious metals must have been enormous.

**1 Chron. 28:19 All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.**

This is a very fascinating verse. What is meant by saying that David was made to understand in writing by God's hand upon him? The present commentator believes it was very similar to the writing done by the apostles of the New Testament. As they wrote, God guided their minds and their hands in order that His will might be made known.

Jesus once spoke of casting out devils through the "finger of God." Can we not presume that the pattern for the temple was written down by David as he was made to understand what was to be drawn by the finger of God. The pattern for the temple was God's pattern, not David's.

The same should be true for the church today. The church is the temple of God. All things should be done "according to the pattern."

**1 Chron. 28:20 And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.**

All that was left was for Solomon to take the charge seriously. If he did so, God would see that the work could be finished. Solomon must be persistent, and he must not lose heart.

**1 Chron. 28:21 And, behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, even they shall be with thee for all the service of the house of God: and there shall be with thee for all manner of workmanship every willing skilful man, for any manner of service: also the princes and all the people will be wholly at thy commandment.**

All the arrangements had been carefully made. There would be qualified workmen. There would be sufficient materials. And since God had provided the pattern for building the temple and its courts, there was no reason to delay. He was to be of good courage and do it!



## *Chapter 29*

We have come now to the close of the life of David. The chapter includes a prayer of David to the Lord. Then we have a challenge the king made to the people to offer both themselves and their possessions to the work of the palace or temple. We have a record of Solomon's anointing and of David's death.

**1 Chron. 29:1 Furthermore David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the LORD God.**

The leaders and many of the people had been gathered in order that all things might be put in order for the building. This was seen by David as an appropriate time to admonish them to finish the work which had been made ready. God had said that Solomon was His choice to do the building.

David realized that Solomon was still inexperienced. The leader of Israel would be placed in a position of tremendous responsibility. The proposed temple was to be a palace dedicated to God and its beauty must indicate that it was more than fit for a king. It was to be fit for God Himself.

**1 Chron. 29:2 Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistening stones,**

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and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.

The next few verses may sound as if David was boasting of his accomplishments. That was not his purpose. He wanted the people to know he had done his best to honor Jehovah with the very finest he could offer. He wished with all his heart that the leaders and the people would follow his example and offer whatever they were able.

Gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, gems and valuable marble stone had been given. These materials were to be incorporated into the edifice just as God's pattern had been laid out before them.

1 Chron. 29:3 Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house.

The king had two kinds of resources. There were some from his own personal treasury, and there were some which were assets of the nation as a whole. David had dipped into his own possessions deeply to magnify God's glory.

1 Chron. 29:4 Even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses withal:

Vine's Expository Dictionary states that the talent was a weight of 114 pounds. Three thousand talents of

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gold would then be 342,000 pounds of gold. At \$32 per ounce, the total would come to over ten million dollars worth of gold. When we add the value of seven thousand talents of silver, we find that David had offered many million dollars worth of materials.

**1 Chron. 29:5 The gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?**

The king then challenged the people to follow his example and donate willingly whatever they could give.

**1 Chron. 29:6 Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king's work, offered willingly,**

The king's plea fell upon open ears and open hearts. The leaders of the nation were most happy to add what they could to what David had given.

**1 Chron. 29:7 And gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron.**

The contributions of the leaders amounted to:

- 5,000 talents of gold.
- 10,000 talents of silver.
- 18,000 talents of brass.
- 100,000 talents of iron.

**1 Chron. 29:8 And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the LORD, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite.**

**1 Chron. 29:9 Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the LORD: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.**

The attitude of giving was infectious. As the people saw what their king and their leaders had done, they too offered freely.

What a monumental dollar value this would have totaled.

**1 Chron. 29:10 Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.**

Usually we speak of the Lord blessing His people. By that we mean He provides that which we need and which makes life richer. How then could it be said that David blessed the Lord? It can be said because God desires gratitude and honor from those He loves. That is precisely what David was ready to offer in the upcoming prayer.

**1 Chron. 29:11 Thine, O LORD is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.**

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Notice the similarity between the words of this verse and those found in the prayer which Jesus suggested in what we call the “Lord’s Prayer.” God deserves honor, glory and power in the lives of his people. When those are offered God has been blessed.

Anything which men accomplish or possess is made possible by God. He created the heavens and the earth. All there is is His. We are but stewards.

1 Chron. 29:12 Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

1 Chron. 29:13 Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

Is it not a beautiful thing to think of one of the greatest kings of history humbling himself before the Lord, thanking Him and praising His name.

1 Chron. 29:14 But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.

The only reason that either David or his subjects could offer as they had was that these things had come from the storehouse of God, and from His bountiful hand.

1 Chron. 29:15 For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

David was about seventy years of age when he prayed this prayer. He realized very clearly that men spend a few days upon earth and then all must face death unless the Lord comes back before then.

1 Chron. 29:16 O LORD our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.

Any man or woman in any age can not give more to God than He has given to them. If men would realized this truth their lives could be made far more satisfying.

1 Chron. 29:17 I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.

It had been a source of joy for David to give his offering. It had also been a part of that joy to see the people do the same. The Lord knows the heart and He finds a willing and cheerful giver a source of great joy to Him.

1 Chron. 29:18 O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:

David's prayer continues. He asked God to help keep the attitudes of the people the same in the future as



they were at that time. We must ask ourselves just what this implies. Can God force certain attitudes upon the hearts of people? The scriptures indicate that man is a creature of choice. He can choose to mock God. He can choose to honor and obey Him. David requested that God make it possible for the attitudes of the people to last into the future because they had chosen good over evil.

1 Chron. 29:19 And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for the which I have made provision.

Solomon's life is a perfect example of this matter of choosing paths of righteousness. When Solomon began his reign he was ready to choose wisdom and service. Later he ignored the commands of God not to multiply horses, riches or wives. He did, however, build the wonderful palace for God for which David held him responsible.

1 Chron. 29:20 And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the LORD your God. And all the congregation blessed the LORD God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the LORD, and the king.

The king wanted the people to once again follow his example. He had blessed God, and now he urged the people to do just as he had. The congregation did as he asked. They bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord—and the king.

This is not an indication that the people were placing David on the same level as the God of heaven. They worshipped the Lord. They admired and honored the king.

1 Chron. 29:21 And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings unto the LORD, on the morrow after that day, even a thousand bullocks, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel:

Some three thousand animals were sacrificed unto God for a period of two days. Part of these offerings were for the purpose of showing their thanksgiving by giving up a part of what had been given to them. Sacrifices, Burnt offerings and Drink offerings were all included. Some of the offerings were eaten and drunk as a sign of fellowship with the Lord.

1 Chron. 29:22 And did eat and drink before the LORD on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him unto the LORD to be the chief governor, and Zadok to be priest.

The feasting was a time of great happiness. All seemed well at the time.

We are told that Solomon was made king for the second time and he was anointed as the supreme governor. But why does it say he was made king the second time? It was because in the past Adonijah and Abiathar had attempted to take the throne. David was becoming old and weak. To thwart the plans of the



plotters, David had Solomon proclaimed king. At that time the ceremony was done quietly. It did serve the purpose and the plot failed. Now the ceremony was in the eye of the public and produced much joy.

As Solomon was proclaimed king, Zadok was announced as the High Priest.

1 Chron. 29:23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.

1 Chron. 29:24 And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of king David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the king.

1 Chron. 29:25 And the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

Solomon had not sat upon the throne after his first anointing. This time he replaced his father David and the people recognized him as God's choice for ruler of Israel. God was with Solomon at that time and all of the world from that day to this have recognized Solomon's wisdom, riches and power.

1 Chron. 29:26 Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.

These last five verses of the book of I Chronicles was a brief summary of the reign of one of the great kings of human history. David had conquered territory from the river Nile to the Euphrates. The foes were quiet.

1 Chron. 29:27 And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

He had ruled over Judah for seven years from Hebron. Then his rule was extended to the entire land and he ruled from the city of Jerusalem.

1 Chron. 29:28 And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

David was not as old as many of the patriarchs of the old testament at the time of his death. By saying he died in a good old age it may mean that he did not suffer from disease, poverty or persecution.

1 Chron. 29:29 Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer,

Samuel, Nathan and Gad were all persons through whom God communicated his word. These three produced written records of the life of David. Some of these no doubt are included in the old testament records of I & II Samuel, I & II Kings and I & 2 Chronicles. We do not have any canonical books which fit Gad or Nathan as a whole.

1 Chron. 29:30 With all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

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The records which the three men mentioned in verse twenty-nine dealt with David's reign in Israel and his relationships with surrounding nations.

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**The Book Of  
2 CHRONICLES**



## *Introduction To 1 and 2 Chronicles*

Since Second Chronicles is but an extension of the material found in First Chronicles, the introductory material found in First Chronicles serves this book also. The reason for the division of the material is thought to have been the inconvenience of handling such a large quantity of writing on scrolls.

## *Chapter 1*

The introduction to First Chronicles serves to introduce both that book and the present one. They were originally one work. They were divided at a natural break between the reigns of David and Solomon. First Chronicles had described the events in the reigns of Saul and David. Second Chronicles will take us from the reign of Solomon to the captivity.

**2 Chron. 1:1 And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the LORD his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly.**

Many favorable things had happened to God's people while David was king. Solomon came into a situation which was highly favorable to success. Solomon wished to serve both the Lord and the people. Thus God was with him and lifted him up in the eyes of the people. As he assumed the role of king, he was most humble in the realization that he needed the help of Jehovah to accomplish what was expected from him.

**2 Chron. 1:2 Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, the chief of the fathers.**

A good leader of the people needs their zealous cooperation. This was the purpose of having the leaders called together. It was an effort to unite the tribes that all might fulfil the will of God.



**2 Chron. 1:3 So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness.**

The important sacrifices had for some time been offered at the brazen altar which was then located at the high place at Gibeon. The tabernacle which had served them for an extended period had been left there and the brazen altar stood near the tabernacle.

**2 Chron. 1:4 But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjathjearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.**

During the reign of David, the ark had been separated from the tabernacle and the brazen altar. It had been taken from Kirjathjearim to Jerusalem where it had been placed in a tent. The reader should not be confused. The tabernacle was a tent, but the tent which David had caused to be pitched in Jerusalem was in anticipation the reuniting of the ark and the original tabernacle.

**2 Chron. 1:5 Moreover the brasen altar, that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the LORD: and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it.**

It was the brazen altar which Bezaleel had made which was more important as the place of sacrifice. The ark was the item which served as a point of contact as Jehovah expressed Himself to His people.

**2 Chron. 1:6 And Solomon went up thither to the brasen altar before the LORD, which was at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it.**

Solomon began his reign in humility. He struggled to maintain the favor of the people. He also knew that he could not succeed in his responsibilities without support and guidance from the God of heaven.

His offer of a thousand burnt offerings on the brazen altar was his way of asking God's help in a task which he knew was impossible without it.

**2 Chron. 1:7 In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.**

God was pleased with Solomon's dependence upon Him and asked Solomon what type of help he felt he needed. This present writer agrees with the statement that God did not promise to give Solomon whatever he asked. Rather, He asked what Solomon desired. He reserved the right to give or not give that which was requested.

This response from the Lord was given through a dream. That did not make it less real, as we shall see.

**2 Chron. 1:8 And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead.**

Solomon gave the type of response that the Lord appreciates. He was thankful for what had been done for his father David. He also recognized that God had arranged for him to replace his father on the throne.

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2 Chron. 1:9 Now, O LORD God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.

Solomon was well aware that God had promised his father David that his descendants would rule as long as earth would stand. He also admitted his rule would not be easy. The people were a vast multitude. He would need help from the Divine Hand.

2 Chron. 1:10 Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?

Solomon did not ask for immense power or glory. He asked for wisdom and knowledge. There is a clear difference between knowledge and wisdom. A person can have a vast knowledge of factual information and be a complete fool in the application of that knowledge. Solomon asked for understanding of truth, and for the ability to use that truth in the best possible way.

The reader may recall Solomon's statement that "the beginning of wisdom is in the fear of the Lord."

2 Chron. 1:11 And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

God told Solomon that he would grant the wisdom and knowledge which he had asked. He also added that since Solomon had not been self centered in his request, He would give him other aid for which he had not asked. Since Solomon saw himself as the servant of God rather than a tyrant, he would receive more than he had asked.

2 Chron. 1:12 Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

The new king would receive the knowledge and wisdom which he had asked. In addition, he would receive wealth, and honor such that he would become recognized as possessing greater wisdom than any who preceded him or followed him.

The promise from God to Solomon was to become true. All of these centuries later, Solomon has retained his reputation as a wise man. Under his rule, the kingdom reached a place of high acclaim among men from that day until this.

2 Chron. 1:13 Then Solomon came from his journey to the high place that was at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and reigned over Israel.

The young king Solomon must have been in high spirits as he moved from the high place at Gibeon to where the ark of God was located in Jerusalem.

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**2 Chron. 1:14 And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he placed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.**

Now we come to a sad note. Israel had been told not to multiply horses and chariots, riches or wives. (See Deuteronomy 17:16.)

*Deu 17:16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.*

*Deu 17:17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.*

All of those things which God had warned about were ignored later. The king married one thousand wives. He caused silver and gold to become as plenteous as stones. He communicated with Egypt in purchasing horses in large numbers.

When Israel had first asked for a king, God informed them that there would come a time when their king would be far less desirable than they expected.

**2 Chron. 1:15 And the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycomore trees that are in the vale for abundance.**

**2 Chron. 1:16 And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price.**

**2 Chron. 1:17 And they fetched up, and brought forth out of Egypt a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so brought they out horses for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, by their means.**

This last verse seems to tell us that Solomon led the nation into profit making through merchandising. They would purchase horses and chariots at a price, and then sell them to the Hittites and the Syrians for more than they paid the Egyptians. God's warnings had been disregarded. Instead of depending upon the Lord, they were looking toward an army. When the Assyrians and the Babylonians came down later and took them into captivity their horses and chariots were insufficient. Their gold and silver could not buy their freedom. Their wives were taken as slaves. Wealth, sexual pleasure, fame and power cannot satisfy the deepest needs of men.

Solomon and the nation were already headed in a disastrous direction.



## Chapter 2

The tabernacle had been the center of religious sacrifices and ceremonies up to this time in Israel's history. This was to change drastically. The tabernacle and its associated worship services were proper for a people who were moving from place to place. They were now settled in the land of Canaan and a need existed for a more impressive and durable structure. This structure would be the temple. This temple would be a type of the glorious church of Christ which would honor the Lord world wide and until time passed into eternity.

**2 Chron. 2:1 And Solomon determined to build an house for the name of the LORD, and an house for his kingdom.**

There are two houses mentioned in this first verse. The first is the temple which was to exalt the name of the Lord. The second was a palace from which the king would rule over God's people. This latter may have been a complex rather than a single building.

**2 Chron. 2:2 And Solomon told out threescore and ten thousand men to bear burdens, and fourscore thousand to hew in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred to oversee them.**

The word "told" only means Solomon counted out this number of men from his own territory to carry out the various tasks listed.

70,000 to carry materials.

80,000 to cut trees in the mountains.

3,600 to oversee the other 150,000.

This may seem like a very large number of workmen.

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The temple was not any larger than many church buildings at the time this commentary is being written. The same is not true of the palace of the king. It was undoubtedly much larger. It is also quite possible that the men did not work throughout the entire year. They may have worked in shifts.

2 Chron. 2:3 And Solomon sent to Hiram the king of Tyre, saying, As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, even so deal with me.

Solomon was on friendly terms with the king of Tyre. His name was Hiram, or as the book of Kings calls him, Hiram. Solomon's father David had found it beneficial to work with this king, and Solomon trusted that he might be able to do the same. Solomon had agricultural products he could offer to Hiram to compensate him for the timber which he was confident that Hiram would agree to send.

2 Chron. 2:4 Behold, I build an house to the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance for ever to Israel.

Solomon explained to Hiram that this was no ordinary structure he was planning. It was to be used for the worship of the Lord. As long as earthly Israel stood, this building was to be used for the glorification of Jehovah.



2 Chron. 2:5 And the house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods.

This verse is not an admission on the part of Solomon that there are other real gods and that Jehovah is only the greatest of them. The point is that the temple which was planned must be most magnificent.

2 Chron. 2:6 But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?

Solomon had no false impression that he, or any other man or group of men could build a structure in which the Lord could be contained within it's walls. The Lord is the Creator of the entire universe. He does not fit in buildings made of wood, stone and fabric. However; the temple must be impressive if it is to be a place where man meets his Maker.

2 Chron. 2:7 Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my father did provide.

Solomon felt certain that Hiram had someone available who could take the lead in seeing that all of the materials were properly designed and matched together for prayer and sacrifice to the God of the heaven of heavens.

2 Chron. 2:8 Send me also cedar trees, fir trees, and algum trees, out of Lebanon: for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants,

2 Chron. 2:9 Even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build shall be wonderful great.

Solomon did not say “please.” Still, we get the impression that he was not ordering Hiram around. He anticipated a friendly relationship that would work to the advantage of both kings.

The wood of the trees mentioned was noted for beauty and durability. The world was to long remember that the God Israel worshiped is worth the best that can be provided. The servants of Solomon would work in cooperation with those of Hiram to see the project finished.

2 Chron. 2:10 And, behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil.

There have been various estimates of the amount of wheat, barley, wine and oil that Solomon promised to Hiram. Since we do not know the size of the “measure” mentioned in this verse, such estimates must be taken with a large degree of precaution. We can only say that Solomon was trying to present a trade which Hiram would find acceptable.



2 Chron. 2:11 Then Hiram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, Because the LORD hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them.

The letter which Hiram sent back to Solomon indicates agreeability with the proposed arrangement. We will give him the benefit of the doubt that this was more than political courtesy. Hiram had respected David. He also respected David's son. He felt that the people of the Lord were most fortunate.

2 Chron. 2:12 Hiram said moreover, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding, that might build an house for the LORD, and an house for his kingdom.

Note that Hiram did not say "Blessed be the only True and Living God." He did, however, go so far as to say the Lord was the maker of heaven and earth. Let us hope his heart agreed with his lips.

2 Chron. 2:13 And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my father's,

The king of Tyre was willing to send a very skilled man to oversee the workers. He had established himself as being extremely capable while serving under the present Hiram's father, who also happened to be named Hiram.

2 Chron. 2:14 The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father.

This man whom Hiram was willing to send was of mixed background. His mother was a woman from the Israeli tribe of Dan. His father was a man from Tyre. It was not the man's father who was so skilled. It was the man Hiram was planning on sending to Solomon. Hiram felt that with this man supervising, and with David's craftsmen following his directions, the work could be carried out well.

2 Chron. 2:15 Now therefore the wheat, and the barley, the oil, and the wine, which my lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his servants:

An amiable agreement was made. Solomon was invited to send the agricultural products as prepayment for the services of Hiram's help. I do not believe the verse implies any lack of trust. There seems to be a high degree of trust between Solomon and Hiram.

2 Chron. 2:16 And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need: and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa; and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.



The mountains of Lebanon lay north of Joppa and Jerusalem. The wood which was cut would be bound together in rafts and moved perhaps seventy-five miles down the seacoast where it would then be transported to the site of the construction at Jerusalem. The reader may be accustomed to thinking of “up” on the map as north. In this case “up” is to a higher elevation.

2 Chron. 2:17 And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred.

The number mentioned here agrees exactly with the total of the three figures mentioned in verse two. The workers were to be the non Israelite persons who were still found in the land of Canaan.

2 Chron. 2:18 And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a work.

One hundred fifty thousand persons were to do the manual labor. They were to be supervised by three thousand six hundred, who were themselves directed by the skilled individual whom Hiram was to send from Tyre.

Chapter 3

Students of the Bible are agreed that this chapter of Second Chronicles has a number of problems. The wording varies much in the various translations. Yet the basic message is that David passed on to Solomon certain instructions for the building of a permanent structure at which God was to be worshiped, and that this structure was to be truly magnificent. The people were now settled in Canaan and the tabernacle was to be replaced by the temple. It is called the temple of Solomon because Solomon supervised the building of it. It was, however, not Solomon's plan. It was the plan given to David by the Lord and then followed by Solomon in erecting it.

2 Chron. 3:1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

There were two well known mounts in the city of Jerusalem. One was Mount Zion. The other was Mount Moriah. Neither of these mounts were of great height. They were, however, at an elevation such that the city of Jerusalem could be viewed from their summit. There is strong reason to believe that Mount Moriah was the site where Abraham was commanded to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering, and then excused from that task when it was evident that he was actually willing to do as God had commanded.



2 Chron. 3:2 And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.

Here is one detail about which there seems to be little controversy. It was in the fourth year of Solomon's reign that the building of the temple was begun. We do not know the reason for waiting this long before beginning the temple. It could have been that the assembling of the materials was a lengthy process. It could be that there was a four year period during which David and Solomon were co-rulers.

2 Chron. 3:3 Now these are the things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the house of God. The length by cubits after the first measure was threescore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.

Part of the problems arising here have to do with apparent discrepancies between the facts as stated in the book of First Kings and those given in this book. It is quite possible that Solomon did not follow the pattern which was transmitted to him by David as closely as he might have.

One of the difficulties is in the mention of the "first measure." This is thought to have had reference to the cubit which was used before the Babylonian captivity, and was slightly different than that used later. There were indefinite standards used in ancient days. We have the span of a man's hand. We have the length of a man's foot. We have the cubit which compared with the distance from a man's elbow to the end of his middle finger. The most commonly held definition assumes that

the cubit was about eighteen inches.

The length of the temple was to be three times its width. It was to be about thirty feet in width and about ninety feet in length. There were to be two chambers. The Holy Place was to be twice as long as the Most Holy Place.

2 Chron. 3:4 And the porch that was in the front of the house, the length of it was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the height was an hundred and twenty: and he overlaid it within with pure gold.

This is a verse which has been debated for centuries. What is meant by saying the porch was six times as long as the breadth of the house. Was this porch some sort of tower which extended far above the height of the rest of the building? This seems highly unlikely. The present writer prefers to think the “porch” was a paved approach which was the same width as the temple but extended up the side of the mount to the actual entrance of the building. This would be a most awesome approach. One would walk on this golden pavement for about one hundred-eighty feet before entering the building.

What was it that Solomon had laid within with pure gold? I believe we are not talking about the porch here. We are talking about the inside of the Holy Place and the Most Holy.

2 Chron. 3:5 And the greater house he cieled with fir tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm trees and chains.



The “greater” house would be the Holy Place, which was twice the floor space of the Most Holy Place. Even this Holy Place was lined inside with the wood of fir trees, which were then overlaid with the finest gold available. The palm trees and chains seem to have been engraved upon the gold overlay.

2 Chron. 3:6 And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty: and the gold was gold of Parvaim.

This verse still applies to the “greater house”, which was the Holy Place. Even it was set with precious stones set in the gold which covered the surface of the walls, etc.

2 Chron. 3:7 He overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubims on the walls.

Nothing was left bare. Even the supporting posts and the doors were gold plated. Angelic cherubim were engraved upon the gold covering the walls.

2 Chron. 3:8 And he made the most holy house, the length whereof was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, amounting to six hundred talents.

Verse eight moves from the Holy Place to the Most Holy Place. The Holy Place was known as the greater house. The Most Holy Place is called the Most Holy

House. This inner room was a cube, thirty feet wide, thirty feet deep and thirty feet high. It was overlaid completely with some six hundred talents of “fine” gold. A talent was a weight of gold equal to about \$29,000. Six hundred talents would then be the enormous sum of over seventeen million dollars. Remember now that this was what was used in the Most Holy Place.

2 Chron. 3:9 And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

The fifty shekels weight was probably that of a single nail. It was suggested that this would more likely refer to a bolt than a nail. It is not certain what is meant by the upper chambers.

2 Chron. 3:10 And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image work, and overlaid them with gold.

Right here we have a major difference in the furnishings of the tabernacle and the temple. The cherubim in the tabernacle were much smaller. The ark was about the size of a cedar chest and the cherubim rested on the top of the ark with their faces toward each other. Now the two cherubim in the Most Holy Place are considerably larger.

2 Chron. 3:11 And the wings of the cherubims were twenty cubits long: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.

Each wing of each of the cherubim was five cubits in length. This means that the outstretched wings covered a span of ten cubits from wingtip to wingtip. When the two cherubim stood side by side the outstretched wings reached precisely from one wall of the sanctuary to the other.

2 Chron. 3:12 And one wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub.

2 Chron. 3:13 The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were inward.

Whereas the cherubim on the ark faced one another, the cherubim in the temple faced the room. Those in the tabernacle rested on the cover of the ark. These stood with their feet on the floor.

It should be pointed out that these cherubim were not intended to be objects of worship. They represented angelic worshipers, who joined the humans in adoring the Creator of all things.

2 Chron. 3:14 And he made the vail of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubims thereon.

Here is another problem statement. In the record of First Kings, it is said there were olive wood doors separating the two chambers. Now we find a vail of fine linen, with colors of blue, purple and crimson. It is not impossible, of course that there could have been both olive wood doors and a fine linen vail.

2 Chron. 3:15 Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high, and the chapter that was on the top of each of them was five cubits.

Two massive pillars were placed in front of the temple. Each was thirty-five cubits in height with a chapter of five cubits which would have given a total of forty cubits. If the cubit is accepted as eighteen inches this would have meant a height of sixty feet for each of the pillars.

2 Chron. 3:16 And he made chains, as in the oracle, and put them on the heads of the pillars; and made an hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains.

Chains of gold were made and were fastened to the five cubit chapters. Golden pomegranate fruit were carved out and hung on the chains.

The overall impression of the temple is more important than the more detailed portions of the description. This was to be one of the great wonders of the ancient world. It will be discussed to the end of the ages. No house could contain the Living God. No house could be magnificent enough to surpass His own supreme glory. This temple was the best that man could offer in His praise.

2 Chron. 3:17 And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

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One of the pillars was placed at the left of the entrance of the Holy Place. The other was placed at the right of the entrance. One pillar was called Jachin, which means “established.” The other was called Boaz, which means “strength.”

## *Chapter 4*

Having looked at the inside arrangements and structure of the new temple, we are now ready to examine the furnishings for the inside and the objects found in the outside court area. Outside we will find a brazen altar for burnt offerings, a molten sea, set upon twelve oxen and lavers for the washing of the priests who handled the sacrifices. Inside were the candlesticks for light, and numerous other items used in the services.

**2 Chron. 4:1 Moreover he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.**

Brass was a metal which would be attractive and yet survive the temperatures which would be built up during the burning of the sacrifices. This altar of brass was the same length as in breadth, about thirty feet each way. It was about fifteen feet high. Thousands of animals would be sacrificed upon it's grid.

**2 Chron. 4:2 Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round in compass, and five cubits the height thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did compass it round about.**

The molten sea was a large container used for the cleansing of the priests. See below in verse six. Across the top of the sea it measured some fifteen feet. It was about seven or eight feet deep.

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2 Chron. 4:3 And under it was the similitude of oxen, which did compass it round about: ten in a cubit, compassing the sea round about. Two rows of oxen were cast, when it was cast.

We are not certain just what is meant by saying these images of oxen were under it. We surmise that there were two rows of these oxen, with ten of them for each eighteen inches. The reader should not confuse these figures on the sea with the twelve large oxen upon which the sea was supported. The images around the surface of the sea would have been only about two inches in width and would have been cast as a part of the sea itself.

2 Chron. 4:4 It stood upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea was set above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward.

No reason is given for the use of large metal oxen for support of the sea. There are those who believe this was infiltration of pagan worship into the pure worship of Jehovah. Such is difficult to accept since God expressed his satisfaction with the entirety of the area when the temple and it's surroundings were finished.

2 Chron. 4:5 And the thickness of it was an handbreadth, and the brim of it like the work of the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and it received and held three thousand baths.

A basin whose thickness was some four or five inches, and which was fifteen feet from one side of the brim to the other would have been a very massive piece of metal.

Around the very brim of the molten sea was a series of designs in the likeness of the flowers of the lily plant. One estimate we noted was that the molten sea would have been capable of holding 25,000 gallons of water.

2 Chron. 4:6 He made also ten lavers, and put five on the right hand, and five on the left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt offering they washed in them; but the sea was for the priests to wash in.

These ten lavers were apparently placed on the outside of the temple, with five on one side and five on the other. They served the purpose of washing the burnt offerings before they were placed on the altar. It would be very easy to confuse the purpose of the molten sea with the purpose of the ten lavers. The large molten sea was used for the cleansing of the priests, while the smaller lavers were used for the washing sheep, goats and oxen.

2 Chron. 4:7 And he made ten candlesticks of gold according to their form, and set them in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left.

Now we turn to objects placed inside the temple. The temple was a type of the church which is the spiritual temple of the present day church. The golden candlesticks were to provide light for the activities



taking place there. The light of the gospel illuminates the way for the members of Christ's church in the present time.

2 Chron. 4:8 He made also ten tables, and placed them in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left. And he made an hundred basons of gold.

There were ten tables placed inside of the temple. Five were on the right side and five on the left side. These seem to have had some association with the tables of shewbread which were found in the tabernacle. The basins of gold are not further described here. The reader may wish to make comparison with the similar descriptions of the temple and courts, as given in Kings and in the earlier chapters of Chronicles.

2 Chron. 4:9 Furthermore he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass.

The great court was accessible to the people. The court of the priests was limited to their use. The doors of these courts were covered with brass, which was as mentioned before, both attractive and durable.

2 Chron. 4:10 And he set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south.

2 Chron. 4:11 And Hiram made the pots, and the shovels, and the basons. And Hiram finished the work that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God;

We are reminded that Solomon had called upon Hiram, or Hiram, to supervise the construction of the temple and surrounding courts. It has been known as Solomon's temple. Solomon received directions from David, who had received them from the Lord.. By the time Hiram did the building itself, the instructions had been passed through several men.

With the finalizing of the task overseen by Hiram, we have a summary of what was produced.

2 Chron. 4:12 To wit, the two pillars, and the pommels, and the chapters which were on the top of the two pillars, and the two wreaths to cover the two pommels of the chapters which were on the top of the pillars;

2 Chron. 4:13 And four hundred pomegranates on the two wreaths; two rows of pomegranates on each wreath, to cover the two pommels of the chapters which were upon the pillars.

2 Chron. 4:14 He made also bases, and lavers made he upon the bases;

2 Chron. 4:15 One sea, and twelve oxen under it.

2 Chron. 4:16 The pots also, and the shovels, and the fleshhooks, and all their instruments, did Hiram his father make to king Solomon for the house of the LORD of bright brass.

We will now simply make an itemized list of the furnishings of the temple, which Hiram built for Solomon, and which Solomon directed to be done at the command of the Lord.

Two pillars with chapters covered by carvings.

Bases, and lavers which sat upon the bases.

A molten sea supported by twelve metallic oxen.

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Pots, shovels, fleshhooks and other items.

**2 Chron. 4:17 In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredathah.**

The clay ground in the plain of the Jordan river made it easier to produce moldings in which the instruments could be cast.

**2 Chron. 4:18 Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance: for the weight of the brass could not be found out.**

The amount of brass used in producing the vessels and other objects associated with the temple area was so large it would have been impractical to weigh it.

**2 Chron. 4:19 And Solomon made all the vessels that were for the house of God, the golden altar also, and the tables whereon the shewbread was set;**

**2 Chron. 4:20 Moreover the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should burn after the manner before the oracle, of pure gold;**

**2 Chron. 4:21 And the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, made he of gold, and that perfect gold;**

**2 Chron. 4:22 And the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers, of pure gold: and the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy place, and the doors of the house of the temple, were of gold.**

~~~~~Gold, gold, gold, gold. Solomon was once asked by the

Lord what he wished to have as a gift. He replied that he would like to have wisdom to rule the people of God. God then replied that since he had not asked for riches or fame, he would be granted both. Solomon's name has been connected with wealth and riches from that time to this. It is a mark of wisdom that he directed much of that wealth to the building of the temple where God was to be worshiped.



Chapter 5

This present chapter discusses the movement of various items into the temple. David had received the instructions for building from God. He had been told not to build it since he had been a man of war. Solomon then supervised the building of it, and it was now ready for use. A great celebration was held and when all was concluded, the glory of God filled the building indicating God's acceptance of it.

2 Chron. 5:1 Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished; and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

David had accumulated many materials, some of which were precious metals. These had already been dedicated to use in the temple, but had to wait until the building was finished before being stored there. The total value of the temple and its furnishings was immense.

2 Chron. 5:2 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.

All of the leading men of the nation were gathered to celebrate the bringing of the ark from its previous



location nearby to the finished temple. Zion, which was called the city of David, was but a small area within the entire city of Jerusalem.

2 Chron. 5:3 Wherefore all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto the king in the feast which was in the seventh month.

The dedication of the temple was held at the time of the feast of atonement. This was held in the seventh month of the year. It was at the time of this feast when the High Priest entered into the Most Holy in the tabernacle. This was a most appropriate time for this present event.

2 Chron. 5:4 And all the elders of Israel came; and the Levites took up the ark.

The Levites had been assigned to be responsible for the movement of the ark up to this time. Thus they were the ones to accomplish this task as it was moved into its permanent resting place.

2 Chron. 5:5 And they brought up the ark, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, these did the priests and the Levites bring up.

2 Chron. 5:6 Also king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

We have to force our imagination a bit to envision the grandeur of this exciting time. As the temple was



furnished with items which had been associated with the tabernacle in previous times, there were also a great number of sacrifices. The statement that the number of sheep and cattle which were offered was too many to be counted only means that it was an immense number. God had been good to Israel. They wished to show their thanks through these abundant sacrifices.

2 Chron. 5:7 And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims:

2 Chron. 5:8 For the cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above.

The priests carried the ark of the covenant into the Most Holy Place and positioned it under the outstretched wings of the two cherubim in that chamber. Originally the cherubim were found on the cover of the ark with their wings spread over the ark and their faces pointing toward one another. Now the cherubim are far larger and the ark is located in front of them.

2 Chron. 5:9 And they drew out the staves of the ark, that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day.

God had commanded that the ark be carried by the use of staves which were inserted through rings in the corners of it. When Uzzah died as a result of touching the ark, those who carried it were more observant of

the command of Jehovah.

When the ark was resting in the Most Holy Place, these staves were removed from the rings. There would be no more need for them. The statement that the ark remained in that resting place “until this day” indicates the time when the original record was made. That would have been some time before the book of Chronicles was compiled.

2 Chron. 5:10 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

Originally the ark held Aaron’s rod, the pot of manna and the tables of stone with the commandments. Now nothing is said about Aaron’s rod, or the pot of manna. Only the tables of stone are mentioned. The disappearance of the other items is not recorded in the scriptures.

2 Chron. 5:11 And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course:

Later on the priests served by courses. This was not the case at this time. All of the priests who were on hand were sanctified for service when needed.

2 Chron. 5:12 Also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals

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**and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:)**

Not all of the Levites were singers. Those who were singers were led by Asaph, Heman and Jeduthan in praise to the Lord. This must have been a most impressive sight, as they stood at the east end of the altar with their musical instruments and clothed in white linen robes. In addition to the singers there were one hundred twenty priests ready to blow trumpets to call the attention of the people.

**2 Chron. 5:13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD;**

Those who object to the use of musical instruments in the worship services of God have at times questioned why these objects were given such a prominent place at the dedication of the temple. In the New Testament God calls for men to sing and make melody in their **hearts**. We must remember that these events took place under the old covenant. Since God's cloud filled the temple immediately after the sounds above were produced, we can conclude that the use of these instruments was acceptable, or else tolerated by Him at that time.

No man can see the glory of God directly and live.

Thus the cloud which filled the temple was not the completeness of God's glory. It was but sufficient to establish His pleasure with what had been done.

**2 Chron. 5:14 So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.**

Even so, the brilliance of the cloud of glory was intense enough that the priests were unable at that moment to go about their duties. The reader would do well to compare the similar events which took place when Jesus apostles were empowered by the Holy Spirit previous to going out to preach the gospel and support their authority by performing miracles. (See Acts 2:1-4.)

*Act 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

*Act 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*

*Act 2:3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*

*Act 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

The reigns of Saul and David are now closed. The reign of Solomon begins in majesty. Forty years later that majesty quickly dimmed with the division of the kingdom into north and south.

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Chapter 6

This is Solomon's dedicatory prayer as the temple was being readied for its purpose of praising the Lord and calling upon Him for assistance.

This material is almost the same as is found in the eighth chapter of I Kings. Therefore it will be treated lightly here and the reader is invited to examine what was said in I Kings.

2 Chron. 6:1 Then said Solomon, The LORD hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness.

The glory of God is too brilliant for the eyes of mortal men. God has seen fit to veil Himself from direct exposure to men. Solomon did not expect to see Him in the fulness of His brilliance. He was hoping for a sign that God approved of that which had been done.

2 Chron. 6:2 But I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever.

God does not dwell in houses made with hands. All Solomon could do was to construct a beautiful edifice which would bring to the minds of men something of the grandeur of the Divine nature.

2 Chron. 6:3 And the king turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood.

All the congregation came to attention as Solomon began his prayer. He began with a plea for a blessing upon the people.

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**2 Chron. 6:4 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who hath with his hands fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying,**

**2 Chron. 6:5 Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel:**

God had not seen fit to dedicate a certain city for the location of a house of worship to Him. He had allowed them to wander in the wilderness. He had helped them to take the land of Canaan. But no city had been chosen.

**2 Chron. 6:6 But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.**

**2 Chron. 6:7 Now it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.**

This was to change. Jehovah had now chosen Jerusalem as a peculiar city. He had indicated that David was to be a leader of His people. Since David had wished to build God a house of worship, God would allow the house, or family of David to build a place of worship for Him.

**2 Chron. 6:8 But the LORD said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart:**

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2 Chron. 6:9 Notwithstanding thou shalt not build the house; but thy son which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name.

David's heart had been right when he wished to build a temple for worship, but because he had been a man of war God appointed his Son Solomon to build the temple.

2 Chron. 6:10 The LORD therefore hath performed his word that he hath spoken: for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.

The Lord keeps His promises. He had given David a son. This son was now sitting on the throne and had been allowed to erect that temple which had been in the heart of David.

2 Chron. 6:11 And in it have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, that he made with the children of Israel.

The ark was the principle item which was to keep the people focused upon the agreement God had made with the nation of Israel. The tables of stone with the commandments written upon them had been placed in the ark and were there at the time Solomon was speaking.

2 Chron. 6:12 And he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands:

2 Chron. 6:13 For Solomon had made a brasen scaffold of five cubits long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven.

Solomon had caused a large platform to be built for the address to Israel. It was seven and one half feet wide, seven and one half feet long, and four and one half feet high. The platform had been placed just in front of the brazen altar and now Solomon mounted the platform and began his remarks. To show his respect for God, he kneeled down and lifted his hands toward the heavens.

2 Chron. 6:14 And said, O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven, nor in the earth; which keepest covenant, and shewest mercy unto thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts:

2 Chron. 6:15 Thou which hast kept with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him; and spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day.

Solomon was delighted to make the confession that Jehovah was unique. All other claimants to be God were false. The only True God was the one to whom he was



addressing his prayer.

Solomon spoke of the promise God had made to his father David that He would care for Israel God had kept His promises in the past and there was solid reason to believe He would do the same in the future.

2 Chron. 6:16 Now therefore, O LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel; yet so that thy children take heed to their way to walk in my law, as thou hast walked before me.

2 Chron. 6:17 Now then, O LORD God of Israel, let thy word be verified, which thou hast spoken unto thy servant David.

Solomon prayed that God's promise to David concerning a perpetual rule by one from the house of David over those who walked in harmony with the Divine will. It was a grand promise God had made, but Solomon was convinced it would be honored.

2 Chron. 6:18 But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!

2 Chron. 6:19 Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee:

It was not to be expected that the God of the universe would become confided to the limits of the temple which had just been built. The most which could be expected

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was that in the manner of His own choosing, He would hear the prayers of the people and would bless them in return for their loyalty.

**2 Chron. 6:20 That thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldest put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth toward this place.**

**2 Chron. 6:21 Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.**

The prayer of the king continued. He pleaded with the Lord to see that all things worked for good to those who worshipped Him in spirit and in truth. He felt that those who turned their faces toward the temple and made their prayers known to the Father in heaven would be heard and aided.

**2 Chron. 6:22 If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house;**

What kind of pleas would be heard by the Lord? Solomon was ready to list a few of them.

The first dealt with sins against one's neighbor. If a man had committed such a sin and was charged with it, he might be called upon to swear his guilt or innocence with an oath before God's altar.



**2 Chron. 6:23 Then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by requiting the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.**

Solomon was asking God to see justice done. If the man was guilty, God would know of the guilt and would see that it was punished. If God knew an innocent plea was correct, He would see that the man was treated as a righteous man.

**2 Chron. 6:24 And if thy people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee; and shall return and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication before thee in this house;**

**2 Chron. 6:25 Then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.**

If God's people had been punished by an enemy and taken captive as a result of sin on their own part, and then had repented, confessed the sin and prayed for mercy, God would hear and bring them back from captivity to their own land.

**2 Chron. 6:26 When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them;**

**2 Chron. 6:27 Then hear thou from heaven, and**

**forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.**

When a drought came upon Israel because of their sin Solomon pleaded that upon returning to righteous conduct and praying for forgiveness the people would see the affliction come to an end.

**2 Chron. 6:28 If there be dearth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, locusts, or caterpillars; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore or whatsoever sickness there be:**

It was pleaded that the same would be true with respect to disease and pestilence which had been sent upon them for wicked behavior.

**2 Chron. 6:29 Then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands in this house:**

**2 Chron. 6:30 Then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men:)**

When Israel truly repented and changed their ways, God was asked to forgive their sins and deal with them as was deserved.

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2 Chron. 6:31 That they may fear thee, to walk in thy ways, so long as they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

It was to be expected that God would allow certain afflictions to come to them in order that they would learn not to ignore the commandments which they had been given. Correction is a blessing whether it comes from a parent to a child, or from the Lord to His people.

2 Chron. 6:32 Moreover concerning the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand, and thy stretched out arm; if they come and pray in this house;

The prayer even included proselytes who had made the decision to live among the Israelites because of the relationship with the Lord. They also had the privilege of appealing to God for guidance and strength.

2 Chron. 6:33 Then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as doth thy people Israel, and may know that this house which I have built is called by thy name.

In this verse we find just a hint of the later spread of the gospel over the entire globe. The apostles were commanded to take the gospel to every nation. There are today very few people who do not know of the Bible

and the One God who rules over heaven, earth and sea. The earthly temple of Solomon was to later give way to the spiritual temple of the church. All men are to hear of that temple and worship the Living God.

2 Chron. 6:34 If thy people go out to war against their enemies by the way that thou shalt send them, and they pray unto thee toward this city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name;

2 Chron. 6:35 Then hear thou from the heavens their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

These two verses imply that Israel had been attacked by enemies and were expected to defend the cause of their God. When the conflict was fierce, prayers offered toward the temple would be heard and answered.

2 Chron. 6:36 If they sin against thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near;

2 Chron. 6:37 Yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly;

On occasion Israel might well sin against the revealed will of their Lord, and be taken captive and carried away into other lands. After a period of punishment, if they turned back and were ready to serve God, the prayer was that they might be heard.

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**2 Chron. 6:38** If they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name:

**2 Chron. 6:39** Then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

There are some very interesting thoughts related to this passage. Did God actually forgive sins before the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son? We answer that any man who complies with the plan of forgiveness which is in effect in his time should be confident that he will not have to face a guilty charge in the final judgment. Repent, confess and pray for forgiveness. God will forgive in His own way and in His own time. He loves those who love Him with all their heart.

**2 Chron. 6:40** Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.

**2 Chron. 6:41** Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness.

The ark had been placed in position under the wings of the cherubim in the Most Holy Place of the temple.

God would respond to the needs of those who placed their trust in Him.

**2 Chron. 6:42 O LORD God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant.**

David and Solomon had both been anointed as kings of Israel. The prayer was that God would be merciful to his servants who were ruled by the descendants of David. This did not end with the death of Saul, David, and Solomon.. Jesus our Lord was of the family of David. He is the Anointed of the Father today. God's mercies are extended to those who love, honor and obey the Son of God!



## *Chapter 7*

In this chapter God shows His approval of the temple and the sacrifices, promising his support for the nation as long as it remains faithful to Him, but warning of dire consequences if they become disobedient and idolatrous.

**2 Chron. 7:1 Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house.**

Solomon had kneeled down and offered a very devoted prayer that God might be pleased with the efforts they had made to show their willingness to serve. As soon as the prayer was completed God sent fire down from heaven which consumed the sacrifices. He also caused a manifestation of His glory to fill the temple. He was pleased with what had been done.

A number of other times God sent fire down from heaven. See Lev. 9:24, Judges 13:20 and I Chron. 21:26. Those who witnessed this miracle would never forget it.

**2 Chron. 7:2 And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house.**

Another miracle took place when the glory of the Lord filled the temple. A cloud had appeared before. This time it seems to have been even more impressive. The priests were unable to enter the temple because of

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the glory. The reader will recall that this same thing took place at the dedication of the tabernacle long before this.

2 Chron. 7:3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

When a small puppy approaches it's master, it will often crouch down to the ground, or even roll over on it's back. When grown men kneel before God they are showing their appreciation and humility before one infinitely more wise and powerful than themselves.

People of the eastern nations are much more apt to kneel than those in the west. Perhaps there are two reasons for this. One might be that there is a lesser respect for God. The second is that with the short dresses which are worn in western nations, bowing down could be immodest. Has the reader ever knelt while praying? Does the position in prayer make any difference?

2 Chron. 7:4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the LORD.

2 Chron. 7:5 And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep: so the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

This is a fantastic number of animals which were offered. We must remember, however, that this dedication of the temple was set to coincide with the
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feast of the tabernacles in which the entire nation was expected to attend. There were seven days of the feast of tabernacles, and another seven for the dedication of the temple. Many thousands of persons were present for at least two weeks. The number does not sound so impossible when these facts are considered.

**2 Chron. 7:6 And the priests waited on their offices: the Levites also with instruments of musick of the LORD, which David the king had made to praise the LORD, because his mercy endureth for ever, when David praised by their ministry; and the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood.**

The priests and the Levites were vitally involved in all that took place. The Levites praised God with the accompaniment of musical instruments which had been made at the command of David. Trumpets were blown to call everyone's attention to the wondrous event.

Some would use this and other old testament occasions to justify the use of musical instruments in the worship of the Lord today. But if one examines the entire New Testament he will find no use of musical instruments in the worship of God on earth. Instruments are mentioned in the praises in heaven, but not on earth. It is best not to add to what God has specified. His command was to sing, and make melody in the heart.

**2 Chron. 7:7 Moreover Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD: for there he offered burnt offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, because the brasen altar which Solomon had made was not**

**able to receive the burnt offerings, and the meat offerings, and the fat.**

The number of animals offered was so great that Solomon declare the courtyard itself hallowed and suitable for use in some of the offerings.

**2 Chron. 7:8 Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt.**

**2 Chron. 7:9 And in the eighth day they made a solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days, and the feast seven days.**

The Israelites had come from the farthest northern region of the land to the southernmost region. They first spent seven days in celebrating the feast of tabernacles. This was then followed by another seven days. The amount of food consumed must have been very great. The joy of sharing in the feasting must have also been at an extremely high level.

**2 Chron. 7:10 And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.**

If only Israel had remembered the goodness of God later on when they disregarded His law and walked in their own ways! Their hearts were merry at this time. Their hearts were filled with grief when they found themselves in Assyrian and Babylonian captivity. God had been very good to them.

**2 Chron. 7:11 Thus Solomon finished the house**

**of the LORD, and the king's house: and all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the LORD, and in his own house, he prosperously effected.**

The grand project which had been planned for years under the reign of both David and Solomon had now been accomplished. He felt that he had served well.

**2 Chron. 7:12 And the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice.**

We get the impression that this appearance of the Lord was the same night that the people were sent back to their homes. It could have been later on. Nothing is said about a dream being involved, but we do know the Lord sometimes used dreams to convey his messages to men.

The message this time was that God had heard the prayer of Solomon and was willing to accept the temple as a place of sacrifice. All was acceptable

**2 Chron. 7:13 If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people;**

**2 Chron. 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.**

When the people had displeased God to the point that

he found it necessary to chastise them with calamity there was a means of appeasing Him. The people must humbly accept His commandments. They must turn from any evil ways. They must pray for forgiveness. He would then hear the prayer and forgive them.

**2 Chron. 7:15 Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.**

**2 Chron. 7:16 For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.**

Now that the temple had been built and sanctified, God would be watching and listening for the penitent prayers of His people. His presence would be with them as long as they served Him and held up His name before others.

**2 Chron. 7:17 And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments;**

**2 Chron. 7:18 Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel.**

A promise was made to Solomon that if he would follow paths of righteousness as his father David did, God would see that the Davidic line continued to provide a ruler for Israel.

**2 Chron. 7:19 But if ye turn away, and forsake**  
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my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them;

2 Chron. 7:20 Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations.

Israel had a choice. They could walk with God and enjoy prosperity in the land which had been provided for them. But, God would not force their obedience. They could choose to turn their hearts from Him and serve gods which were no God. If that was their choice they would be thrown out of the land. All nations of earth would hear that the Jew had been made a laughing stock among men.

2 Chron. 7:21 And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this house?

If God did become disgusted with the people the temple would lose its glory. Those who discussed it would be asking the question as to why a building so wondrous could have been brought so low.

2 Chron. 7:22 And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.

~~~~~ They would not have far to look to find the answer ~~~~~

to the question. The answer would be that Israel had turned to idolatry. This would have caused the True God to become jealous. His anger would lead to much anguish of heart. The joy they felt at the dedication of the temple would be replaced with sadness.

The word “Jew” has become a byword among the nations. They did forsake Jehovah. They did suffer punishment. They were sent into captivity. They were scattered among many nations.

There are Jews who have distinguished themselves as great scientists, etc. But, Oh how different the history of the Jews could have been in comparison to what has actually been the case!



## *Chapter 8*

David had been a man of military might. Solomon was far more interested in establishing that which David had conquered. This chapter, along with the ninth chapter of I Kings tells of the grandeur of Israel under the rule of Solomon.

**2 Chron. 8:1 And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the LORD, and his own house,**

**2 Chron. 8:2 That the cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.**

Hiram and Hiram are the same person. He was the king of Tyre and had helped Solomon in gathering materials for the building of the temple grounds. In return, after he had finished building the temple and his own palace, Solomon offered certain cities to Hiram. Hiram was not well pleased with the cities and gave them back to Solomon.

**2 Chron. 8:3 And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.**

Note that the wording does not say Solomon fought against this city and conquered it. His fame had apparently become known to the degree that he was able to dominate without war. Also this could have been a city which did not wish to be returned from Hiram to Solomon.



**2 Chron. 8:4 And he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath.**

There were sites for storehouses of different kinds. Some stored treasures. Others held horses, etc.

**2 Chron. 8:5 Also he built Bethhoron the upper, and Bethhoron the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars;**

**2 Chron. 8:6 And Baalath, and all the store cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot cities, and the cities of the horsemen, and all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.**

The main thought in these last two verses is that the land was being organized for the most effective government of the land. As long as Solomon and the people of Israel were respecting the Lord, He blessed them with peace and prosperity.

**2 Chron. 8:7 As for all the people that were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which were not of Israel,**

**2 Chron. 8:8 But of their children, who were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make to pay tribute until this day.**

Here we have five of the seven nations which occupied the land when Israel took it under Joshua. Only the Canaanites and the Girgashites are not listed.

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There were remnants of these nations who were not eliminated. They became subordinate to the rule of Solomon.

2 Chron. 8:9 But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work; but they were men of war, and chief of his captains, and captains of his chariots and horsemen.

2 Chron. 8:10 And these were the chief of king Solomon's officers, even two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

Solomon made the men of Israel officers over the servants from the conquered people. He did have horses and chariots, but these were probably used more for maintaining order than for doing battle against enemy nations.

2 Chron. 8:11 And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David unto the house that 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, whereunto the ark of the LORD hath come.

We can begin to see Solomon's independence now. Israel was not to intermarry with the nations around them. It seems that this would have particularly true with respect to Egypt, from which they had been delivered by Jehovah. Solomon's fame was such that he was able to marry a daughter of the Pharaoh of Egypt.

He did have enough respect for the Lord that he had a palace built for her in order that she would not live in close proximity to the ark of God.

2 Chron. 8:12 Then Solomon offered burnt offerings unto the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch,

The porch spoken of here was the area leading up to the entrance of the temple of God. The brazen altar had been placed in front of the porch.

2 Chron. 8:13 Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

A part of the organization which Solomon put into regular routine was the offering of a certain number of sacrifices, as the Lord had called for them. There were morning and evening sacrifices. There were weekly sabbath sacrifices. There were monthly sacrifices and there were the sacrifices offered at each of the three main feasts God had commanded.

These three main feasts went by more than one name.

1. Feast of unleavened bread=The Passover.
2. Feast of weeks=Feast of Pentecost.
3. Feast of Tabernacles=Day of Atonement.

All Jewish males were expected to attend these feasts if at all possible.

2 Chron. 8:14 And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests,



as the duty of every day required: the porters also by their courses at every gate: for so had David the man of God commanded.

David had passed on specific directions for the ordering of the worship in the temple. Solomon honored those instructions and appointed the priests, Levites and others to tend to the everyday duties. The activities of the temple did not close. They were continuous.

2 Chron. 8:15 And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning the treasures.

Up to this time Solomon had been relatively true to the will of the Lord. There were some marks of independence, but in general he served well. This inspired the rest of the servants of God to maintain their loyalty also.

2 Chron. 8:16 Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was perfected.

“Unto the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord” appears to mean that from the beginning Solomon had in mind the construction and use of the temple area in a manner favorable with God.

2 Chron. 8:17 Then went Solomon to Eziongeber, and to Eloth, at the sea side in the land of Edom.

2 Chron. 8:18 And Hiram sent him by the hands of his servants ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to king Solomon.

Hiram had return to Solomon certain cities which the latter had given him in return for his aid in the completion of the temple. This seems not to have adversely affected their cooperation. Hiram ruled Tyre which was on the shore of the Mediterranean. Hiram had a sizable navy and worked with Solomon to obtain gold from Ophir.

It is difficult to calculate the value of four hundred and fifty talents of gold because of the varying value of the talent. The impression received is that it was a very large sum. The fame of Solomon was beginning to reach some distance from the land of Canaan.



Chapter 9

Our present chapter tells of the amazement of the queen of Sheba when she visited Solomon to see if what she was hearing about was really true. She found that it was even greater than what she had heard.

The chapter details some of the wealth of the king and closes out the history of the united kingdom. From this point on, the prosperity and security of the people of Israel will decay until they find themselves captives in Babylonia as a result of their spiritual misbehavior.

2 Chron. 9:1 And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.

We are not certain as to the location of the land of Sheba. Some suggest Ethiopia. Others feel that it was in a province of Arabia. She was very clearly a wealthy person in her own right. Her curiosity was stirred by the reports which came to her about one whose wisdom and riches were so fabulous. A part of her motive for visiting him was to ask him some questions which she had been pondering.

2 Chron. 9:2 And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.

As a young man Solomon had been offered a blessing from the Lord. He was humble in his request and this

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caused God to tell him he would receive far more than he had asked. He would have great riches and also great wisdom. His ability to judge matters and arrive at deep understanding was far superior to other men of his time. He was able to answer the questions of the queen with ease.

**2 Chron. 9:3 And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built,**

**2 Chron. 9:4 And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cupbearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her.**

Both the wisdom of his mind and the material surroundings brought about by such wisdom left her amazed. The food he served and the clothing of his servants were most impressive. When Solomon led the procession to the temple his manner of bearing was so awesome that she was quite subdued in spite of her own accomplishments.

**2 Chron. 9:5 And she said to the king, It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom:**

**2 Chron. 9:6 Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard.**



She readily admitted that all she had heard was correct. There was but one flaw. Everything was twice as grand as had been reported to her. The half had not been told!

**2 Chron. 9:7 Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.**

**2 Chron. 9:8 Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.**

She felt certain that those who served Solomon must be genuinely happy. The God whom he served must be able to bless his worshippers abundantly if this which she saw was an indication. He must love Israel greatly to shower such wonderful things upon them.

**2 Chron. 9:9 And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.**

The royalty of the nations in the area of Israel recognized the need to be allies with this king who had such wisdom and power. The queen of Sheba indicated her friendship by offering him great treasure. One hundred and twenty talents of gold was hardly a pittance. The reader would be happy indeed to have a bank account equaling the gold alone. Then she also added precious stones and expensive spices to the

gold.

**2 Chron. 9:10 And the servants also of Hiram, and the servants of Solomon, which brought gold from Ophir, brought alnum trees and precious stones.**

**2 Chron. 9:11 And the king made of the alnum trees terraces to the house of the LORD, and to the king's palace, and harps and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah.**

A commentator on the Bible runs out of words in the attempt to do justice to the glory of this king. Athletes making five million dollars a year for their services in the present day would be just as awe stricken as was the queen of Sheba if they were to be shown what she saw.

**2 Chron. 9:12 And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.**

This verse is a little puzzling. It is possible that giving the queen all that she asked meant that he was able to satisfy her curiosity. It is also possible that Solomon returned all of the gifts which she offered him and added even more. The queen then returned to her own land.

**2 Chron. 9:13 Now the weight of gold that**

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came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold;

It stirs our curiosity to wonder what the actual amount of money represented by 666 talents of gold would be. No doubt the surrounding rulers were most envious of Solomon's wealth.

There is another passage in the scriptures which mentions this same number. The book of Revelation presents it as the number of the beast in the end days. I must ask, "Is this mere coincidence?"

2 Chron. 9:14 Beside that which chapmen and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.

Solomon did not have to fight battles to gain wealth from other leaders. They were willing to pay tribute to him in order to maintain his friendship. He was also able to work through tradesmen to exchange materials for a profit.

2 Chron. 9:15 And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred shekels of beaten gold went to one target.

2 Chron. 9:16 And three hundred shields made he of beaten gold: three hundred shekels of gold went to one shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.

A talent of gold is thought to have been worth \$30,000 dollars. Each talent was worth about 3,600 shekels. Each target would have been worth about

\$5,000 dollars. The shields would have been worth about \$2,500 dollars each. These objects were stored in Solomon's treasure houses until they were taken later by King Shishak of Egypt.

2 Chron. 9:17 Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

Ivory was also valuable. It formed the inner structure of Solomon's throne. Then it was plated with pure gold.

2 Chron. 9:18 And there were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and stays on each side of the sitting place, and two lions standing by the stays:

From the floor to the seat of the throne were six steps. There was even a footstool of gold. We are made to wonder how many in the kingdom were hungry while Solomon was resting his feet upon his golden footstool. Let us hope the number was small.

2 Chron. 9:19 And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom.

There were twelve tribes in the kingdom. They were six statues of lions standing on each side of the steps to the throne chair, one lion for each of the twelve tribes.

2 Chron. 9:20 And all the drinking vessels of



king Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold: none were of silver; it was not any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon.

Even the containers from which the king drank were made of gold. Silver was too common for this use. It is no wonder the queen of Sheba nearly went into a state of shock.

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

Hiram, the king of Tyre had an ocean going navy. He cooperated with Solomon in the trading and merchandising. These ships brought all manner of costly items which enriched the kingdom. Perhaps the apes were used for entertainment.

2 Chron. 9:22 And king Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

2 Chron. 9:23 And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.

2 Chron. 9:24 And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

2 Chron. 9:25 And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

2 Chron. 9:26 And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

2 Chron. 9:27 And the king made silver in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar trees made he as the sycomore trees that are in the low plains in abundance.

2 Chron. 9:28 And they brought unto Solomon horses out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

2 Chron. 9:29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

2 Chron. 9:30 And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

2 Chron. 9:31 And Solomon slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.



Chapter 10

Solomon was dead. There was a need for a replacement on the throne of the kingdom. The sad story told in this chapter is due to the envy and jealousy which arose over the replacement process. The unity which existed through the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon begins to show cracks which will lead to the complete rending of the one kingdom into two and one half tribes in the south and nine and one half tribes in the north. From this point on we will be hearing of Israel and Judah rather than Israel.

2 Chron. 10:1 And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for to Shechem were all Israel come to make him king.

Rehoboam was the son of Solomon. The people had come together to appoint him king in place of his illustrious father. He was there for the anointing as ruler.

2 Chron. 10:2 And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king, heard it, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.

Jeroboam had left Israel because of differences with Solomon while he was yet alive. When he heard of the death of Solomon, he returned from Egypt determined to cause some changes in the rule of the nation.



2 Chron. 10:3 And they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all Israel came and spake to Rehoboam, saying,

Those who had been dissatisfied with Solomon were ready to help in bringing about a less stringent rule. They threw their support to Jeroboam. They came to Rehoboam with a demand.

2 Chron. 10:4 Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee.

If Rehoboam would allow a greater degree of freedom and perhaps decrease the amount of tribute that had been asked under Solomon, they would be happy to serve his son. They did not say what the results would be if Rehoboam did not ease their burdens. It was pretty clear that they would rebel.

2 Chron. 10:5 And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.

Rehoboam did not immediately answer his questioners. He replied that they should give him three days to make up his mind about what they had asked. We must admit that caution was in order. The amount of authority which is demonstrated by a ruler can make him or break him. If he places the people in the condition of puppets without any freedom of choice, he is in danger of rebellion. If he fails to apply law and

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order, he will be faced with anarchy. A real leader must know how much control should be applied, and how it should be done.

The people were willing to give Rehoboam the three days to weigh the problem and tell them what he intended to do.

**2 Chron. 10:6 And king Rehoboam took counsel with the old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people?**

Rehoboam first ask for counsel from the men who had seen the conditions while Solomon was on the throne. What should he tell the people?

**2 Chron. 10:7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou be kind to this people, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever.**

The older men gave him wise counsel. He needed to be kind to those over whom he wished to rule. If he would do that, they would be delighted to serve him as king.

**2 Chron. 10:8 But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him.**

Then Rehoboam turned to the young men of his own age and asked them for their advice. This is not talking about his brothers and sisters who were a

part of his immediate family. It refers to his younger generation.

**2 Chron. 10:9 And he said unto them, What advice give ye that we may return answer to this people, which have spoken to me, saying, Ease somewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us?**

His question to the younger men was similar to that which he placed before the older men. Should he relax the burdens which his father had placed upon Israel?

**2 Chron. 10:10 And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it somewhat lighter for us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.**

The younger men were less experienced and far more interested in showing power and authority. They advised Rehoboam to tell those who had come to him that rather than lightening the burdens of the people, he would make them even heavier. Nor would it be a slight increase. They would know who was king when he began his rule.

**2 Chron. 10:11 For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.**

Whips are certainly not a pleasant thing to endure.  
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But, Rehoboam let the people know in no uncertain terms that his chastisement would be even worse. If the statement he made about scorpions has to do with the poisonous live scorpions it would be a ghastly torture. If the scorpions of which he spoke were whips with sharp weights tied in the end of the thongs, these weapons could cut the backs of the victims into a bloody mass of gashes.

The statement may not have been literal. It may have only symbolized the fact that he intended a far tighter rule than his father. Even so, this would not set well with a people who already felt they had endured too much.

2 Chron. 10:12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day.

2 Chron. 10:13 And the king answered them roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men,

The people returned on the third day as Rehoboam had instructed them. They were shocked to hear him speak to them in an insulting manner.

2 Chron. 10:14 And answered them after the advice of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add thereto: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

2 Chron. 10:15 So the king hearkened not unto the people: for the cause was of God, that the LORD might perform his word, which he spake

by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

What had God spoken by the hand of Ahijah to Jeroboam? This writer admits his ignorance as to what the exact words were. But, the line of thought can be followed. What was taking place here was in accord with God's overall plan for His people. Though the people were being allowed to make their free choice, God knew what would happen before the fact. The tribes of the north who followed Jeroboam would become idolatrous and the result would be that they would be removed from the presence of the tribes of Judah. This would preserve the purity of the southern tribes and allow some of God's providential action to fall into place.

2 Chron. 10:16 And when all Israel saw that the king would not hearken unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? and we have none inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to your tents, O Israel: and now, David, see to thine own house. So all Israel went to their tents.

This was a sad day for the people of the Lord. Not only did the kingdom of Israel split into northern Israel, ruled by Jeroboam, and the kingdom of Judah, ruled by Rehoboam. It set up a conflict which would go on and on.

2 Chron. 10:17 But as for the children of Israel that dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

2 Chron. 10:18 Then king Rehoboam sent



Hadoram that was over the tribute; and the children of Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. But king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem.

2 Chron. 10:19 And Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

Rehoboam was still blind enough that he could not see the seriousness of the problem. He sent Hadoram, who was a collector of taxes to the north to prove the king could enforce his demands. When Hadoram tried to collect the tribute, the people of the north stoned him to death.

Finally Rehoboam saw the folly of his ways. He left by chariot to seclude himself behind the walls of the city of Jerusalem and left Jeroboam to rule the nine and one half northern tribes. The southern kingdom of Judah would resist moral decay and idolatry for much longer than would the northern tribes.

Chapter 11

In this chapter we can see the gap widening between the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Judah remained closer to God, while Israel followed Jeroboam into idolatrous worship.

2 Chron. 11:1 And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam.

Rehoboam was ready to take military action against Jeroboam and the northern tribes. He had one hundred eighty thousand soldiers and was ready to invade the northern territory and force it to rejoin Judah. One might have anticipated that God would approve of such plans.

2 Chron. 11:2 But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

2 Chron. 11:3 Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

2 Chron. 11:4 Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house: for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the LORD, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

Such approval was not the case. God spoke through Shemaiah, a prophet, and forbid Judah to fight with

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Israel. They were not to fight against their own brethren. They were to return to their homes and accept the separation. The reason for this command was that God approved of the separation. (See I Kgs. 11:30-35).

*1Ki 11:30 And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces:*

*1Ki 11:31 And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, **I will** rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:*

*1Ki 11:32 (But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:)*

*1Ki 11:33 Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.*

*1Ki 11:34 Howbeit **I will** not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but **I will** make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes:*

*1Ki 11:35 But **I will** take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes.*

## **2 Chron. 11:5 And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defence in Judah.**

Rehoboam heeded the word of the Lord and refrained from attacking Jeroboam and his northern tribes. Instead, he began building up the strength of the cities of Judah that they might be protected against invasion.

**2 Chron. 11:6 He built even Bethlehem, and Etam, and Tekoa,**

**2 Chron. 11:7 And Bethzur, and Shoco, and Adullam,**

**2 Chron. 11:8 And Gath, and Mareshah, and Ziph,**

**2 Chron. 11:9 And Adoraim, and Lachish, and Azekah,**

**2 Chron. 11:10 And Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities.**

**2 Chron. 11:11 And he fortified the strong holds, and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine.**

**2 Chron. 11:12 And in every several city he put shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.**

It is easily seen that Rehoboam was not merely building up the social organization of these cities. He was concerned about attack from Israel in the north and perhaps also from surrounding nations such as Edom and Moab.

**2 Chron. 11:13 And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to him out of all their coasts.**

The priests and the Levites who had been closely connected with the temple soon found themselves isolated. Idolatry had no room for them. They began to leave Israel and find their way to Judah where their services would be utilized.

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2 Chron. 11:14 For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD:

2 Chron. 11:15 And he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.

Jeroboam appointed his own priests to offer sacrifices at the high places of the north. Witchcraft and calf worship were practiced in Israel. We can see how this might have developed as a result of Jeroboam's stay in idolatrous Egypt while he was fleeing from Solomon earlier. Calf worship was accepted in Egypt.

2 Chron. 11:16 And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers.

2 Chron. 11:17 So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.

Nor was it only the priests and Levites who forsook the north and joined the kingdom of Judah. There were many who saw the horror of idolatry and left it for the worship of Jehovah which was centered at the temple in Jerusalem.

2 Chron. 11:18 And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David to wife, and Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse;

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There are some women who will admire a man who has prestige and power. Rehoboam was such a man. He found women who were relatives of David and married them.

**2 Chron. 11:19 Which bare him children; Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham.**

**2 Chron. 11:20 And after her he took Maachah the daughter of Absalom; which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.**

**2 Chron. 11:21 And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines: (for he took eighteen wives, and threescore concubines; and begat twenty and eight sons, and threescore daughters.)**

Absalom was David's son. Maachah was Absalom's daughter. Rehoboam married the granddaughter of David and she became his favorite wife. The three wives mentioned above were only three of eighteen wives and sixty concubines.

From these seventy-eight women he produced eighty eight children. It seems he was somewhat more active than Solomon who had three hundred wives and seven hundred concubines. We hear of no such number of children from Solomon.

**2 Chron. 11:22 And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah the chief, to be ruler among his brethren: for he thought to make him king.**

Rehoboam decided to promote Abijah, the son of his

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favorite wife to the throne. We do not know whether or not Abijah was the eldest son of Rehoboam or not. It was normally the eldest son who became king at the death of his father.

2 Chron. 11:23 And he dealt wisely, and dispersed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto every fenced city: and he gave them victual in abundance. And he desired many wives.

When it is said that Rehoboam dealt “wisely” when he dispersed his children throughout the areas of Judah and Benjamin, it does not imply that the Lord approved of his multiple wives and concubines. God suffered such behavior. He did not approve of it. The wisdom was in scattering the children throughout the land and being able to be aware of what was going on in the entire kingdom.

Chapter 12

After the division of Israel into a northern kingdom and a southern kingdom, we begin to see a serious decrease in dedication to the Lord. Their weakness became visible to surrounding nations and they began to suffer attacks from outside

2 Chron. 12:1 And it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the LORD, and all Israel with him.

The reader will remember that Rehoboam was the ruler over the southern kingdom of Judah. Judah was less corrupt than the northern kingdom of Israel was, but was small in numbers. One would think that the influx of priests and Levites from the north would have increased the spiritual strength. That apparently was not the case.

Rehoboam became proud after having assumed the control of Jerusalem and the two and one half tribes. He ignored the commandments of Jehovah and the nation followed his ridiculous departure from the faith.

2 Chron. 12:2 And it came to pass, that in the fifth year of king Rehoboam Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the LORD,

Egypt was always waiting in the wings and watching for signs of weakness among the people who had once served them for centuries. As soon as Shishak, the king of Egypt saw a possibility of regaining control, he came against Judah.



God did not inspire this attack from Egypt. What He did do was to allow it to take place. Such an attack should serve to awaken the people to the danger of once more being taken into bondage.

2 Chron. 12:3 With twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.

This was quite an army which Shishak had assembled. He not only had soldiers from Egypt. He had help from other smaller nations close by. He had;

- 1,200 chariots
- 60,000 horses and riders
- innumerable other fighters

2 Chron. 12:4 And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem.

This Egyptian army had little difficulty conquering a number of the smaller fortified cities in the south. They had even moved to the very gates of Jerusalem itself. One cannot help but wonder if the citizens of the southern kingdom were not aware of the reason for this success on the part of the foreign army.

2 Chron. 12:5 Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak.

To make certain that His people realized the seriousness of their spiritual rebellion against Him, Jehovah sent Shemaiah, a prophet to spell out the cause of their difficulties.

Shemaiah informed them that God had been offended by their abandonment of respect for Him. Since they did not wish to have Him as a help in time of need, He had allowed them to face their enemies without His help.

2 Chron. 12:6 Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves; and they said, The LORD is righteous.

It is not always true that when God's people bring adversity upon themselves by rejecting His will they will change their ways when He gives a warning. This time the enemy was at the gates of the Holy city of Jerusalem and it would be difficult to ignore what the future held if they did not alter their actions.

They made the proper choice and both the leaders and the people admitted their need for help. God was right. They had been wrong.

2 Chron. 12:7 And when the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak.

God is impressed when His people humble themselves. He instructed Shemaiah the prophet to tell them He would not allow them to be taken captive at that time.



Shishak would not be allowed to completely devastate them.

2 Chron. 12:8 Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

They did need to know that the Lord expects respect from His people. He also intended for them to know He rules in the affairs of all nations. Kings are to be subject to Him.

2 Chron. 12:9 So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

Shishak was allowed to ransack the treasures of the temple and the king's palace. An enormous amount of gold had been stored in the shields which Solomon had caused to be made. All of this gold was taken by Shishak.

2 Chron. 12:10 Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house.

2 Chron. 12:11 And when the king entered into the house of the LORD, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard chamber.

In place of the shields of gold, king Rehoboam had to replace them with shields made of brass. The brass

might have been more serviceable in military action, but certainly lacked the material value of the gold.

2 Chron. 12:12 And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy him altogether: and also in Judah things went well.

Rehoboam seems to have learned a hard lesson. He turned back to the Lord and the kingdom itself was left in existence as the Egyptians returned home with their plunder.

2 Chron. 12:13 So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned: for Rehoboam was one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess.

2 Chron. 12:14 And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD.

We gain the impression that Rehoboam was barely able to maintain his rule over Judah, but did manage to hold the throne for a lengthy period of seventeen years. The fact that his mother was from the Ammonites may help to explain his lack of loyalty to Jehovah at the first part of his reign.

2 Chron. 12:15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.

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There are some books written by prophets and seers which have not been included in our present list of books of the Bible. We trust that God has overseen the collection of Bible books to the degree that those which are needful for our instruction in righteousness have been made available to persons who wish to seek the truth which makes men free.

**2 Chron. 12:16 And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and Abijah his son reigned in his stead.**

How sad it was that the people who had been successful in taking the land which God had promised to them, and had defeated all of the enemies from the outside should now find themselves constantly at war with each other. This terrible condition has existed most of the time from then until now, as God's people strive among themselves and waste valuable energy which could be used in glorifying Him.

## *Chapter 13*

A battle is described between the forces of Jeroboam and Abijah. Because of the falling away of the northern kingdom from the law of the Lord, Abijah wins the conflict and the life of Jeroboam comes to an end.

**2 Chron. 13:1 Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.**

Rehoboam and Jeroboam had fought with one another for many years. Rehoboam had died and His son Abijah took over the throne of Judah.

**2 Chron. 13:2 He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.**

The reign on Abijah was but three years. He is identified through his mother Michaiah because this separated him from the other sons of Rehoboam by other mothers.

The change from father to son did not bring a halt to the continuing battles taking place between Israel and Judah. If anything, the rivalry increased.

**2 Chron. 13:3 And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, being mighty men of valour.**

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We are not told the circumstances which brought about the battle about to be described. We can presume that with a much larger store of manpower, Jeroboam decided he might make inroads into the south under this new king. He gathered an army of eight hundred thousand men who were considered to be capable soldiers, and was challenging Abijah.

2 Chron. 13:4 And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which is in mount Ephraim, and said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel;

Abijah took a position on a mountain in the mountain range of Ephraim and prepared to address Jeroboam and his men. He called out for all Israel to hear what he was about to say.

2 Chron. 13:5 Ought ye not to know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?

His claim was that God's will had been ignored when someone in other than the line of David had been chosen as king. God had made a covenant with David that one of His descendants would reign over God's people as long as they remained faithful to Him. The covenant was a covenant of "salt." Salt is a preservative. This covenant was to last for all time.

2 Chron. 13:6 Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his lord.

In defiance of God's agreement with David,
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Jeroboam, who was not a son of David's line, but merely a servant to Solomon, had seized the throne. This was rebellion against the Lord.

**2 Chron. 13:7 And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tenderhearted, and could not withstand them.**

Abijah claimed that worthless and wicked men had fought on the side of Jeroboam and against Rehoboam. Rehoboam had been immature. He had failed to stand against the northern forces.

**2 Chron. 13:8 And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David; and ye be a great multitude, and there are with your golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods.**

Abijah accused Jeroboam of thinking he could fight successfully against the declared will of God because of his advantage in manpower. Jeroboam had made a sad mistake in placing his confidence in golden calves instead of Jehovah.

**2 Chron. 13:9 Have ye not cast out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands? so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same may be a priest of them that are no gods.**



The properly qualified priests and Levites had nothing to do because they were separated from the temple and the services were those centered around the golden calves.

In the place of the true priesthood, Jeroboam had chosen priests on the basis of the material possessions they owned. If they were able to pay their way by presenting a bullock and seven rams, they could be declared priests of the calves which were not gods at all.

**2 Chron. 13:10 But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the LORD, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business:**

Abijah then drew a contrast between what was true in the north and what was true in Judah. The Lord was the object of their worship. The priests who served were descendants of Aaron. The Levites tended to the practices Jehovah had spelled out as pleasing to Him.

**2 Chron. 13:11 And they burn unto the LORD every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him.**

It was at the temple in Jerusalem that the burnt offerings could be offered on the altar. It was in the temple that the table of shewbread was set with twelve

loaves, one for each of the twelve tribes of God's kingdom. It was at the temple that the golden candlestick with its seven lamps burned every evening. Judah had obeyed God. Israel had turned away from Him.

**2 Chron. 13:12 And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.**

Abijah called out for Jeroboam and his soldiers to cease their aggression. They were fighting against the God of heaven. It would be impossible for them to succeed in their efforts.

**2 Chron. 13:13 But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them.**

Jeroboam had no intention of letting Abijah scare him. He caused a number of his men to move around in back of the men of Abijah and ambush them from behind. They would face the enemy from all sides.

Though it is not absolutely clear, it seems that one of the reasons for the battle was that Jeroboam had made the decision to invade the southern kingdom. His forces were far enough into the land that they could surround the forces of Abijah.

**2 Chron. 13:14 And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.**

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Abijah and his men needed the help of the Lord. They were outnumbered two to one. According to verse three above, Israel had 800,000 men while Judah had but 400,000. There is some doubt as to the accuracy of the numbers here. Many of the early manuscripts have 80,000 rather than 800,000. They also have 40,000 rather than 400,000. Whichever is correct, the only hope Judah had was that the True God was with them. Golden calves are not much help in a face off with Jehovah.

2 Chron. 13:15 Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

Just what means did Jehovah used to smite Jeroboam and his men? We are not told. He could have cause fear to reign in their hearts. He could have caused their skill in the use of their weapons to be sharply reduced. The result was that the much larger army of Jeroboam was soundly defeated at the hands of the men of Judah.

2 Chron. 13:16 And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand.

2 Chron. 13:17 And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men.

The men of Israel went into a state of panic and ran from the southern forces. We have the statement here that 500,000 of the men of Jeroboam were killed. This

is an enormous number of fatalities.

We do not know how many Egyptians died in the Jordan river. We do know that 185,000 Assyrian soldiers died in one night. Even in modern times, however, 500,000 victims is a horrendous number. The reader should note that this was a larger number than the entire army of Judah.

2 Chron. 13:18 Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.

When God is for us who can be against us. Judah had far greater power on their side than did Israel.

2 Chron. 13:19 And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Bethel with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephraim with the towns thereof.

The men of Abijah actually pushed the army of Jeroboam back until they were able to win three cities from the north. These were Bethel, Jeshanah and Ephraim.

2 Chron. 13:20 Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the LORD struck him, and he died.

The battle was so effective in favor of Judah that Jeroboam never attempted to repeat his challenge to Judah. Ultimately God brought his life to an end.

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**2 Chron. 13:21 But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.**

Abijah lived on. He became powerful. The kings of those days found it favorable to their prestige to claim multiple wives and a host of children. This seems to have impressed the people of their own country, and also those of the nations around them.

Jesus, however, declared that it was not so from the beginning. God had made one woman for one man. He had permitted polygamy but had not approved of it. (See I Cor. 7:2)

*Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own **wife**, and let every woman have her own husband.*

**2 Chron. 13:22 And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo.**

Iddo the prophet appears to have been inspired, but his writings were not selected for inclusion in the canon of Holy Scripture. We have what God desired that we have.

## *Chapter 14*

Abijah is presented in 2 Chronicles as a much more effective king than is the case in I Kings. He was clearly better than a number of others, but he did have some serious weaknesses.

In the present chapter we find the death of Abijah and facts respecting his Son Asa. Asa is known as one of the good kings of Judah. His leadership allowed Israel to survive a serious attack by the forces of Ethiopia.

**2 Chron. 14:1 So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.**

The city of David was actually a prominent part of the city of Jerusalem. Death is a sleep in that some time in the morning of the resurrection, the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and all who are in the graves will come forth, some to enter into the joy of the Lord, and some to be told, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

We now find that the constant warfare ceased for some time. It is thought by most of the Bible students that this ten years of peace took place at the beginning of Asa's reign. The chapter does not say this was the case. It could have been a time before the period of peace began.

**2 Chron. 14:2 And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God:**

**2 Chron. 14:3 For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves:**

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There is but one God. That God is Jehovah and He is a jealous God. His wrath falls upon those who place any other objects of worship before Him. Asa placed himself in good standing with Jehovah by eliminating the false gods. Strange Gods were those invented by the minds of men. The high places were the tops of hills where all could see the services being held in honor of the strange gods.

Much of the false worship was centered around sexual orgies. The images were often models of the male sex organ which were taller than a human and set up erect and pointed toward the sky. The groves are thought to have been connected with the female side of the celebrations.

Asa required considerable courage to take the steps he did in demolishing the symbols of these pleasure loving worshippers.

2 Chron. 14:4 And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.

Under the direction of king Asa, Judah was to devote their attention to the Lord. They were to study His laws and commandments, and were to obey them.

2 Chron. 14:5 Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him.

Regardless of any resistance which might have been offered, Asa cleansed the nation of much of the abominable religious practices which would have brought God's anger down upon them. The result was the ten years of peace and quiet mentioned before.

2 Chron. 14:6 And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest.

The fencing of the cities was a means of defense against possible attackers. It was a mark of wisdom on Asa's part to use this time of peace to prepare for possible later invasions.

2 Chron. 14:7 Therefore he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the LORD our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered.

Asa understood what many kings of that time did not. Peace came about through fidelity to the Creator. War came when men ignored walking in the way of the Lord. He was doing everything he knew to cement the relationship between God and Judah that the nation could call upon God in time of danger.

2 Chron. 14:8 And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and spears, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valour.

Asa drafted an army of men from both the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. There were 300,000 from Judah, and another 280,000 from Benjamin, making a total of



580,000 warriors. These were all men of courage and skill.

2 Chron. 14:9 And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah.

It is almost certain that if a nation builds up an army there will be the opportunity to battle against some challenger. It was so here. An Ethiopian named Zerah led an army of 1,000,000 (one million) men to attack Asa's forces.

There is some question as to the identity the Ethiopians. This does not seem to be an Ethiopia a great distance from the borders of Judah. One million men would require tremendous supplies to travel for such distances.

2 Chron. 14:10 Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

In spite of the fact that his own forces were outnumbered nearly two to one, Asa sent his men out to meet the invaders.

2 Chron. 14:11 And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let no man prevail against thee.

There was one advantage Asa had on his side, which the enemy had overlooked. That advantage was Jehovah. That made all the difference. David had found that to be true in his conflict with Goliath. If Christians will keep such facts in mind, they will find that the victory of Christianity over the powers of Satan will be won in the end of time.

Asa called upon the Lord to give help. He was confident that the difference in numbers of men would have little to do with the outcome of the battle. Judah would rest their hope in the arm of the Lord. With the God of heaven supporting them, they would win.

2 Chron. 14:12 So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

What a simple statement this is! God smote the Ethiopians and they fled. We are not told just how God smote them. It could have been with a wave of panic. It could have been a loss of strength to make use of their weapons. The lesson we must learn is that no force is able to fight successfully against God.

2 Chron. 14:13 And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed before the LORD, and before his host; and they carried away very much spoil.

What a sight! 580,000 men were chasing about twice their own number who held an advantage of thousands of chariots.

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Who was it that carried away much spoil. It was the army of Asa who took possession of the valuables which the fleeing Ethiopians left behind in their haste to escape.

**2 Chron. 14:14 And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.**

Gerar seems to have been the area from which the Ethiopians had come. As they returned to their own land, the army of Asa pursued and took possession of the valuables which were left behind.

**2 Chron. 14:15 They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep and camels in abundance, and returned to Jerusalem.**

Even the livestock which had been brought along by the Ethiopians were confiscated and taken to the city of Jerusalem. If only God's people could have maintained a positive relationship with Him the latter days of Assyrian and Babylonian captivity could have been avoided.

## Chapter 15

Asa, as a good king of Judah, responds to a warning from the prophet Azariah that as long as His people do not forsake Him, God will not forsake them. He proceeds to make another attempt at eliminating idolatry from the land. The Lord is pleased with the effort and peace ensues.

**2 Chron. 15:1 And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:**

The Spirit of God did not continually rest upon the prophets in the sense that they were inspired to convey His messages to the people. When the Spirit did come upon them it was extremely wise to heed that which God had presented through them.

This is the lone mention of this particular prophet, but his words are applicable to our day as well as they were to the day in which he prophesied.

**2 Chron. 15:2 And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.**

Azariah proclaimed that the entire southern kingdom was to hear well. As long as the people sought to be with Him, God would be with them. The opposite would hold true is they forsook His admonitions.

**2 Chron. 15:3 Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.**

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This long season of which Azariah spoke was during the days Abijah was ruler. The people had neglected the Lord. They had not been taught by the priests because the priests had failed to study the will of the Lord. Consequently, the land passed through a time of bitterness. Lawlessness prevailed.

2 Chron. 15:4 But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

Those times had eased when the people changed their attitudes toward God and placed dependence upon Him. He was ready to hear them when they were ready to hear Him.

2 Chron. 15:5 And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries.

2 Chron. 15:6 And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity.

Everywhere men went they found themselves faced with hatred. Destruction ruled as men despised other men, cities fought against other cities, and countries fought against other countries. It was a most unpleasant time for all concerned.

2 Chron. 15:7 Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

There had been a change under the reign of Asa and the Lord had noted that change. But, the work was not yet finished. They must not give up in the effort to turn from idolatry to true worship.

2 Chron. 15:8 And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD.

At first it was said the prophet was Azariah. Now he is called Oded. Since Oded was the father of Azariah, it seems we may conclude the the father and son both presented the same inspired message.

Asa was encouraged by the word of the Lord. He stood tall and removed the idols from the land of Judah and Benjamin. He rededicated the altar which stood before the porch of the temple.

2 Chron. 15:9 And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

When those in parts of the northern kingdom saw what was happening in the south, large numbers of them left the north and joined them in their attempts to please Jehovah.



2 Chron. 15:10 So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

A great assembly gathered in Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign. The third month was the time of the Passover when all male Jews were expected to celebrate that feast.

2 Chron. 15:11 And they offered unto the LORD the same time, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep.

A massive number of animals were offered. Much of this sacrifice had come to them as a result of the victory which had been achieved when they were attacked by the Syrians and by forces from the north. God had assisted them. They were most grateful.

2 Chron. 15:12 And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul;

This was not the first of this covenant. It was but a renewal of the one which had existed from ages past. It had been neglected and now there was a serious need to restate their convictions. The Lord was to be worshiped with all of their being.

2 Chron. 15:13 That whosoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.

The covenant went so far as to slay any person, man or woman, who showed disdain for the divine commandments.

We are caused to wonder how many dead would be left lying on the ground in our present day if such a punishment was visited upon any and all who chose the world over their Creator. It will just be a matter of time until just such punishment will be administered as the Judge of all the earth pronounces final judgment.

2 Chron. 15:14 And they sware unto the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.

2 Chron. 15:15 And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them: and the LORD gave them rest round about.

Those who had put away idolatry and given themselves to God celebrated with their voices and with musical instruments, creating a sound which must have been heard all the way to the gates of heaven. As a result of the oath the people had made, God arranged in His providential care for them to be relieved of the slaughter which had caused grief in the days gone by.

2 Chron. 15:16 And also concerning Maachah the mother of Asa the king, he removed her from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove: and Asa cut down her idol, and stamped it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron.



King Asa's own mother did not escape punishment for failure to enter into the covenant with all her heart and soul. She made an idol in a grove. Her son cut down the idol, stomped upon it and burnt it by the brook Kidron. We can safely conclude that the ashes of the idol were cast into the water of the brook. Does this not sound similar to what took place when Moses ground the golden calves into dust?

2 Chron. 15:17 But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

Asa was not able to rid the land of every remnant of the the idolatry. The high places were not destroyed. This was not because Asa was deficient in his willingness. It must have been a result of some degree of laxity on the part of at least some of the people.

2 Chron. 15:18 And he brought into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, and that he himself had dedicated, silver, and gold, and vessels.

The king proved his own dedication by bringing back into the temple those precious things which had been dedicated to God in the past, but which had been removed.

2 Chron. 15:19 And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.

There is a problem here when we compare this last verse with I Kings 15:32.

1Ki 15:32 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

Your present commentator does not see a means of harmonizing the two statements. That does not mean a solution does not exist.



Chapter 16

The best of persons can occasionally fall into sinful ways. Asa was for the most part a man whose heart was perfect toward the Lord. This chapter records some times of weakness on Asa's part. He failed to completely place his trust in God. The result was reprimand and unpleasant consequences.

2 Chron. 16:1 In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

There were many tense times between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The temple was located at Jerusalem in the land of Judah. The three major feasts were all held at Jerusalem. There were many in the north who desired to attend those feasts. King Baasha did not want his people to cross the boundary and mix with the people of Judah. He set out to prevent such visits.

Baasha built the city of Ramah, not many miles north of Jerusalem, with the intention of preventing any intercommunication. None were to go out to Asa. None were to come from Asa to Baasha's territory.

2 Chron. 16:2 Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent to Benhadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,

King Asa of Judah saw this as a threat to the people

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over whom he ruled. He made plans to protect Judah from invasion by the forces of Baasha. He made the mistake of taking gold and silver from the treasury of the palace and sent an offer to Benhadad, the king of Syria.

**2 Chron. 16:3 There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.**

Asa stated that there was a need for a league or a pact of cooperation between Judah and Syria. He pointed out that he had silver and gold to offer Benhadad if he would separate himself from Israel and give assistance to Judah. This would make it necessary for Baasha to turn back from his aggression toward Judah.

**2 Chron. 16:4 And Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abelmaim, and all the store cities of Naphtali.**

This sounded like a very profitable path for Benhadad. The gold and silver spoke loudly. He sent armies into the northern kingdom and attacked a number of cities there.

**2 Chron. 16:5 And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease.**

Baasha quickly realized he would have to divert his



energies to the defense against the armies of Benhadad. He ceased his plans for building Ramah and turned his attention to countering the attacks of Benhadad.

**2 Chron. 16:6 Then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.**

The plan worked just as Asa had anticipated. Not only did Baasha stop the building of the city of Ramah. He abandoned the building materials which had been intended for that project. Asa's men collected the abandoned materials and used them to build two cities, Geba and Mizpah, in his own kingdom.

**2 Chron. 16:7 And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.**

A "seer" was a person who had received information from the Lord which he could not have learned by his own powers. Hanani was sent to Asa, the king of Judah with a message from the Lord. Asa had made a sinful decision. He had placed his confidence in the armies of Syria rather than in the hand of God. As a result, Benhadad had escaped from some punishment God had planned for him.

**2 Chron. 16:8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.**

Hanani continued his message. When Zerah the Ethiopian had come against God's people with a vast army he had been soundly defeated. Numbers of armed men and chariots were not to be the deciding factor. If Zerah had been defeated with the help of the Lord, why not then trust in the Lord to defend against the far less powerful forces of Israel?

**2 Chron. 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.**

Hanani further pointed out that God sees all things. When He is called upon to give assistance to those who place their trust in Him, and who have a righteous cause, He will see that they prevail.

Asa had failed to place his confidence where it belonged. The result would be that the peace the land had enjoyed previously would now be interrupted and there would be war through the rest of Asa's reign.

**2 Chron. 16:10 Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.**

The pride of life is one of Satan's three great instruments of destruction to the inner man. When Hanani delivered the unwanted message that Asa had acted foolishly, Asa became infuriated at the man who brought him the words of chastisement. He arrested

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the seer and placed him in prison for what he had said. Since his anger was still not erased, he took it out upon some of the people, perhaps some of his advisors who sided with the seer.

2 Chron. 16:11 And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

God is unbiased. The record which comes down through history includes both the good and the bad actions of those who ruled His people. The book of Kings includes such with respect to Asa.

2 Chron. 16:12 And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians.

The above was not the only mistake of a like nature which Asa made. After ruling for thirty-nine years he developed some type of disease in his feet. The problem became extremely serious. But again Asa failed to ask for the help of the Lord. He went to the physicians for assistance.

Was it wrong for Asa to go to medical persons to get help? Surely not. The point being taught is that God is infinitely more able to help in times of distress than any man or group of men. For a person whose life is endangered by disease, there are two sources of aid. Prayer to God and treatment by medical specialists. It is wise to use both prayer and medicine.

2 Chron. 16:13 And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.

Asa died after reigning over Judah for just over forty years, Asa died.

2 Chron. 16:14 And they buried him in his own sepulchres, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great burning for him.

It was common for those who could afford it to prepare a burial place where they could be placed after their death. Asa had made such preparation. He was buried in the city of Jerusalem. His bed was covered with sweet smelling spices and perfumes.

There are two different explanations of the last phrase of this verse. What is meant by saying they made a great burning for him? One line of thought contends that the bed with the sweet spices and perfumes was a pile of fuel for his cremation and that the burning was that of his body. The other contention is that the people placed him in his bed in the sepulchre and then made a great offering to God, showing their respect for their deceased king.

Chapter 17

We will now examine the rule of one of the best kings of the people of God. There were no exemplary kings in the northern kingdom. There were only a few in the southern kingdom. Jehoshaphat, who is discussed in this chapter is one of those few. The chapter may be read to advantage by any Christian, but it should be of major importance to those who have the responsibility of supervising large numbers of persons.

2 Chron. 17:1 And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, and strengthened himself against Israel.

Jehoshaphat, the son of Asa, had the advantage of a fairly stable situation when he stepped into the throne room. Asa had weakened at times, but over all he contributed to spiritual strength in Judah. Jehoshaphat immediately began to set things in good order. He made certain that he would be strong enough to defend Judah against any possible invasion from the northern forces.

2 Chron. 17:2 And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which Asa his father had taken.

It tears at our heart to think that it was necessary for a part of the people of God to place fortresses in various places, and man these forts with soldiers to protect themselves against other portions of His people. This was the case. Perhaps it was little different from

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the bitter feelings the denominational world has today toward those who hold different understandings of the Bible.

**2 Chron. 17:3 And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim;**

In the first part of David's life he walked carefully in the ways of the Lord. Later on he went sadly astray in the case of Bathsheba and Uriah. Jehoshaphat is said to have walked in the righteous manner that David did in his early years.

David had not bowed to the false god Baal. Jehoshaphat followed that example.

**2 Chron. 17:4 But sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.**

The northern kingdom of Israel had very early placed idols in Dan and Beersheba. They were never free of such idol worship from that time until they were taken into captivity.

**2 Chron. 17:5 Therefore the LORD stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance.**

God was with Jehoshaphat and saw to it that the kingdom thrived under his rule. The people of Judah were united and brought contributions to him for the support of the government. He was respected and honored throughout the land.

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2 Chron. 17:6 And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the LORD: moreover he took away the high places and groves out of Judah.

Usually when the Bible speaks of a ruler's heart being lifted up, it is talking about self pride. This king's heart was lifted up by his confidence in the power, the wisdom and the support of Jehovah, God.

While Asa had not removed the high places and groves, Jehoshaphat saw to it that these remnants of idol worship were no longer a temptation to the people to betray the Lord.

2 Chron. 17:7 Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes, even to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.

Jehoshaphat saw a need for education. He first made contact with the princes who would have been taking the lead in civil affairs. The reader should not make the mistake of thinking Zechariah and Obadiah are identical with the prophets of those names. These five princes were to teach throughout the cities of the land. There was to be respect and concern for other persons.

2 Chron. 17:8 And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tobadonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests.

Although the Levites were not necessarily priests, they did have duties which were related to the religious services. They would have assisted the priests in whatever way they were needed as the teaching progressed.

The priests, of course, were the ones responsible for seeing that the law was explained to the people, and that the people obeyed the law of the Lord.

2 Chron. 17:9 And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the LORD with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

Thus the system of education included both civil and religious training. These appointed teachers went through the entire southern kingdom strengthening the minds and souls of the people.

2 Chron. 17:10 And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

The effects of Jehoshaphat's efforts were so visible to the kingdoms round about that none dared to make war against Judah. When a nation gives it's heart and it's hands to God, He will protect that nation.

2 Chron. 17:11 Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and tribute silver; and the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he goats.



Even long time enemies such as the Philistines and the Arabians though it wise to set up cordial relations with the king of Judah. They brought a multitude of animals and presented them to him as a gesture of friendship.

2 Chron. 17:12 And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah castles, and cities of store.

Castles were sometimes erected for defensive purposes. At other times they were symbols of prestige. The cities of store were places where supplies might be kept for use in times of need.

2 Chron. 17:13 And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.

The cities were thriving. Merchandise was being produced and traded. Soldiers were available to protect the land. These men were well trained and were men of courage.

2 Chron. 17:14 And these are the numbers of them according to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands; Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valour three hundred thousand.

The numbers of these men of war were certainly not insignificant.

Adnah was chief over 300,000 men.

2 Chron. 17:15 And next to him was Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand.

Jehohanan led 280,000 men.

2 Chron. 17:16 And next him was Amasiah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour.

Amasiah volunteered to lead 200,000.

2 Chron. 17:17 And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty man of valour, and with him armed men with bow and shield two hundred thousand.

Eliada oversaw 200,000 men.

2 Chron. 17:18 And next him was Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war.

Jehozabad had 180,000 under his supervision.

Summing up the numbers we arrive at a total of 1,160,000 armed men, available to defend the land.

2 Chron. 17:19 These waited on the king, beside those whom the king put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.

This army of over one million men did not include the ones whom the king placed in specially fortified cities. The reader may remember that in the conflict

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between the north and the south, Judah had less than half this number in the military.

The entire picture presented in this chapter is one of progress. Jehoshaphat respected the Lord. The Lord supported Jehoshaphat and his subjects. How long would this prosperity continue?

## *Chapter 18*

We read of an unexpected alliance in chapter eighteen. A great amount of friction had existed between the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Now we find the kings of these two kingdoms ready to cooperate in a battle with the Syrians.

The northern prophets of Baal urge that the battle begin. The one lone prophet of the Lord predicts disaster if the conflict takes place. The battle does take place. The disaster comes to pass.

A more lengthy record is presented in the twenty-second chapter of I Kings. The reader is advised to compare the two records.

**2 Chron. 18:1 Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.**

Jehoshaphat ruled Judah for a long time. It is possible that the events of this chapter were separated in time from that which was given us in the previous chapter. Yet it seems this first verse follows naturally from the abundance God granted to Jehoshaphat as a result of his faithful leadership of Judah, which was related in chapter seventeen.

But we must point out a difficulty. In the earlier chapter Jehoshaphat had persuaded the Syrians to aid him in defending himself against Israel. The picture presented here is just the opposite. Ahab calls upon Jehoshaphat to aid him in defending Israel against Syria.

Part of the explanation may lie in the fact that



Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab by Jezebel, had become married to Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat. This marriage seems improbable if the two battles were close together in time.

It is possible that the battle which occurred in this chapter was some time after the one related in chapter seventeen. In that case Jehoshaphat may have felt he could unite the efforts of the two kingdoms through the marriage of his son with the daughter of the northern king.

**2 Chron. 18:2 And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramothgilead.**

The statement in this verse seems to support the fact that some time had elapsed. Jehoshaphat and Ahab were communicating with one another. Jehoshaphat had gone to Samaria where he met with Ahab. Ahab may also have had visions of becoming king of both kingdoms. He gave Jehoshaphat a royal welcome with a feast for him and for the persons he had brought with him.

**2 Chron. 18:3 And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramothgilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.**

During the course of the reception ceremony, Ahab asked Jehoshaphat if he would join forces with him and

go with him to capture the city of Ramothgilead. This city had been taken by the Syrians and Ahab wanted it back.

Jehoshaphat should have rejected the suggestion. It meant allying himself and his people with those who were worshipping Baal. Jehovah does not approve of alliances between His people and those who oppose Him. Jehoshaphat at first agreed to the partnership. Then he seems to have had second thoughts.

**2 Chron. 18:4 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the LORD to day.**

Jehoshaphat urged Ahab to appeal to God for approval before setting out toward Ramothgilead. This was proper procedure under the circumstances.

**2 Chron. 18:5 Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand.**

Jehoshaphat should have realized that any prophet Ahab called upon would be a prophet of Baal rather than of Jehovah. If he did recognize this he did not make any objection known until he had heard the advice of Ahab's prophets. There were four hundred of them and all agreed that a victory would be achieved. The city of Ramothgilead could be taken. God would make it possible. The prophets were of course stating that which they knew the kings would like to hear. Anyone





who claims to speak the Word of the Lord and then compromises by preaching what the people want him to say, has betrayed the Lord and will suffer serious consequences.

**2 Chron. 18:6 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?**

At this point Jehoshaphat became very suspicious of the four hundred prophets. He knew they were not true prophets of God. He asked if there was not a prophet of Jehovah who could be called.

**2 Chron. 18:7 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.**

Ahab admitted to Jehoshaphat that there was one prophet who had not been called. The reason he had not invited him was that he always prophesied that which the king did not want to hear. That could be expected. Ahab constantly did that which Jehovah condemned. Even though Ahab had objected, he had been put under pressure to call this prophet named Micaiah.

**2 Chron. 18:8 And the king of Israel called for one of his officers, and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imla.**

There was no hesitation in Ahab's voice as he

commanded one of his officers to go and get Micaiah. It is quite possible that he had put this prophet into prison for predicting the truth.

**2 Chron. 18:9 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat either of them on his throne, clothed in their robes, and they sat in a void place at the entering in of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.**

The two kings sat in dignity, dressed in their royal robes and seated on thrones, as they waited for the coming of Micaiah. While they were waiting the four hundred false prophets continued their lying words.

**2 Chron. 18:10 And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the LORD, With these thou shalt push Syria until they be consumed.**

**2 Chron. 18:11 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.**

Zedekiah appears to have been very influential among the false prophets. He devised a method for persuading the rest of the four hundred to join him in persuading the two kings to enter the battle. He made a headdress with iron horns on it and paraded around saying that the power of the two kings would push the Syrians back until they were removed from the scene. They even insisted that the **LORD** would insure the victory. They were not prophets of Jehovah, and they were not speaking for Jehovah.

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2 Chron. 18:12 And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake to him, saying, Behold, the words of the prophets declare good to the king with one assent; let thy word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and speak thou good.

The officer who went to bring Micaiah before the kings advised him to tell Ahab what the four hundred had prophesied. That was what the king wanted to hear. The officer obviously did not know the courage of Micaiah.

2 Chron. 18:13 And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, even what my God saith, that will I speak.

Micaiah let the officer know in no uncertain terms that he would speak what God said, and only what God said. He would face whatever fate was his.

2 Chron. 18:14 And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand.

Ahab asked Micaiah whether or not they should enter the battle. If we were to take the reply of Micaiah at face value, we would conclude that he agreed with the four hundred. The statement he made is not to be taken so. Sometimes the tone of the voice, or the expression on the face can show that the speaker means just the opposite of the words which he speaks. The words of Micaiah were spoken in sarcasm or irony. Ahab knew it!

2 Chron. 18:15 And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD?

It is a little surprising that Ahab did not agree with Micaiah and tell Jehoshaphat they now had unanimous approval from the prophets. He realized that Jehoshaphat would recognize the irony in the voice of Micahah and would side with him rather than with the prophets of Baal.

2 Chron. 18:16 Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace.

Since Ahab had asked for the truth, Micaiah proceeded to spell it out in pictures. God had revealed that if the kings entered into the battle their armies would be scattered over the battlefield like sheep who have no shepherd. The right thing to do was to return their armies to their homes where they could enjoy peace.

2 Chron. 18:17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil?

Micaiah had done just what Ahab was afraid he would do. What could he do to combat the advice of the true prophet? He turned to Jehoshaphat and stated his case. The two of them had already agreed they would



fight the Syrians. Why should they change their mind when the vote of the prophets was 400 to 1?

2 Chron. 18:18 Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left.

Micaiah was not quite finished! He invited the two kings to hear about what he had seen in a vision. He had viewed a scene in heaven. God was sitting upon His throne surrounded by a host of spiritual attendants.

2 Chron. 18:19 And the LORD said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner.

It was the will of the Lord that Ahab go to Ramothgilead where he would be defeated. The reader may be surprised at this statement about the will of the Lord. It should not be surprising. Ahab had defied Him for years. He and his people deserved to be defeated.

There was some discussion about which of the spirits should receive the task of persuading Ahab to take on the battle. One suggested one method of accomplishing the objective. Another would counter with a different suggestion.

2 Chron. 18:20 Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?

Finally one of the spirits presented himself before God and said he would persuade Ahab. The Lord then asked him how he planned on convincing the king.

2 Chron. 18:21 And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so.

The spirit explained that he would cause the false prophets to lie about how the battle would be resolved. The spirit would predict victory when the truth was that they would meet defeat.

The Lord permitted the spirit to follow the plan. Does this make the Lord a Father of liars? No, it does not. If man wishes to believe a lie, the Lord will send a strong delusion and let the person see just how wrong he was. (See 2 Thess. 2:11.)

2Th 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

2Th 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

2Th 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

2Th 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

2 Chron. 18:22 Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

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Micaiah explained just what had happened when the false prophets urged the kings to fight the Syrians. The prophets had wished to believe a lie and they were permitted to do so.

**2 Chron. 18:23 Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee?**

Zedekiah, the one who had worn the horns and influenced the rest of the false prophets, slapped Micaiah on the face and mocked him by asking him just how this spirit from God had caused him to act as he was acting.

Those who truly represent the Lord sometimes find themselves persecuted by unbelievers. In such cases it must be remembered that this persecution is not the last word. God is the final judge.

**2 Chron. 18:24 And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.**

Micaiah was far from being intimidated by Zedekiah. He informed Zedekiah that a time would come when Zedekiah would try to find a hiding place to escape from God's wrath.

**2 Chron. 18:25 Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son;**

**2 Chron. 18:26 And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace.**

It would have been a mark of real wisdom had Ahab repented and listened to the true prophet. He did not listen. He acted the fool. He commanded that Micaiah be thrown into prison and fed on only bread and water until they had won the victory and the king had returned alive.

**2 Chron. 18:27 And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, then hath not the LORD spoken by me. And he said, Harken, all ye people.**

Micaiah was quite willing to stake his reputation as a prophet on the results of the battle. If Ahab returned all the people would know he was a liar and not a true prophet.

**2 Chron. 18:28 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramothgilead.**

The two kings ignored the advice of Micaiah and set out for Ramothgilead.

**2 Chron. 18:29 And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and I will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle.**

Both of these kings might have been convinced there was a possibility of uniting the two kingdoms under one head. By allowing the marriage between his son and Ahab's daughter Jehoshaphat may have looked toward becoming king of the united kingdom.

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Ahab's thoughts went another direction. He proposed that he take off his royal robes so the Syrians would not identify him. Meanwhile Jehoshaphat was to wear his robes during the battle. This would work to the advantage of Ahab in that the Syrians would believe Jehoshaphat to be the king of Israel and would kill him. Then when the battle was over and the Syrians were defeated Ahab could rule the united kingdom.

2 Chron. 18:30 Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or great, save only with the king of Israel.

If you cut off the head, the body will die. The king of Syria commande his troops to concentrate their efforts on killing the king of Israel. He did not realize he was fighting the king of Judah also. He felt that if the king was slain the battle was won.

2 Chron. 18:31 And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him.

2 Chron. 18:32 For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him.

For a time things seemed to be falling into place for Ahab. When the Syrians saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robes they concluded that this was Ahab and they

surrounded him ready to kill him. Jehoshaphat then cried out and they turned back from their intentions as God assisted him with divine intervention.

What did Jehoshaphat cry out? Was he crying out to God for help? Was he proving to the Syrians that it was not Ahab they were about to murder? We do not know. What we do know is that God protected a good king.

2 Chron. 18:33 And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded.

The next occurrence demonstrates the difference between providence and a miracle. In a miracle God makes it absolutely certain that the event was a result of divine wisdom and power. It often comes about through a human, but it is clear that the human could not have accomplished the miracle without God's help.

In a providential action God causes certain things to take place which could very well be natural events, but which accomplish His will in the lives of men.

In the case we have at hand, a Syrian archer shot at the forces of Israel. He did not know he was about to kill the king of Israel. God guided the arrow so that it struck Ahab in a vital spot where it could penetrate the protection of the king and injure him beyond recovery. Ahab called on his chariot driver to leave the scene of the battle. He had been badly wounded.

2 Chron. 18:34 And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the

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**even: and about the time of the sun going down he died.**

Apparently the command to leave the fighting was not obeyed. This last verse of the chapter tells us Ahab tried to stand upright in his chariot throughout the day until it was dark. At sundown he died.

While the Lord had protected Jehoshaphat, He had permitted the death of Ahab. Fighting against the will of the Lord is a losing battle.

## *Chapter 19*

Jehoshaphat had barely escaped with his life in the disastrous battle with the Syrian army at Ramothgilead. If it had not been for the Lord's intervention he would have been slain. This experience may have opened his eyes to the danger in which he had placed himself.

**2 Chron. 19:1 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.**

Ahab had not been so fortunate. He had not returned to house, in peace or otherwise. Jehoshaphat must have been wondering what the future held for him. He did not have to wait long.

**2 Chron. 19:2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.**

Jehu was either a seer himself, or else he was carrying a message to Jehoshaphat from his father Hanani. The message was very straightforward. Jehoshaphat had offended the Lord by making an alliance with Ahab, who was an idolator. He needed to know such things were not expected to happen in the future.

**2 Chron. 19:3 Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.**

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Everything was not bad. God was aware of the fact that Jehoshaphat had caused the groves where the people had worshiped idols in the past to be removed. Jehoshaphat had either entered into the alliance with Ahab with honest intentions, or else the experiences in the recent battle had shown him the need to reach out to God.

2 Chron. 19:4 And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers.

From the capitol at Jerusalem Jehoshaphat went out into every portion of the southern kingdom and attempted to set things right between the people and the Lord. Dan and Beersheba had been the northern and southern extremities of the united kingdom. With the division, Mount Ephraim was at this time the northern boundary.

2 Chron. 19:5 And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city,

His first action was to appoint civil judges in all of the major cities of Judah. The actions of the people had need of regulation in civil courts. God is concerned about human relationships and the settlement of differences between men.

2 Chron. 19:6 And said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment.

The appointed judges were reminded that they were not limited to answering men for their accurate judgments. They were answerable to the Lord Himself. If all of the judges throughout the world would come to an understanding of this truth, the living conditions of mankind would be much improved.

2 Chron. 19:7 Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.

Just what was it that God was concerned about in this warning? It was the strong possibility that judges would favor those who had political influence.

We also have the old saying that “money talks.” The judges were to refuse any bribes offered to them for favoritism. Have these dangers been eliminated over the centuries? Anyone who has their eyes open knows some persons serve a lifetime sentence for the same crime for which others get off much more lightly.

2 Chron. 19:8 Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel, for the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.

Higher courts were set up in the city of Jerusalem to handle those cases which the minor courts felt it necessary to refer to them. Those who manned the higher courts were respected men of the people, priests, Levites and elders.



2 Chron. 19:9 And he charged them, saying, Thus shall ye do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully, and with a perfect heart.

Since God was the ultimate authority in the making and enforcing of decisions, they were representing His will. They were to be fair and just.

A perfect heart means that every judge was to perform his duties with the best of intentions. Bias was not acceptable with Jehovah.

2 Chron. 19:10 And what cause soever shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in your cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and judgments, ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass.

Some cases would involve murder. Some would involve manslaughter. There would be cases where persons were charged with breaking God's commandments. The judges must warn offenders not to ignore or rebel against such spiritual laws. The trespassing was not talking about trespasses against other persons property. It was walking all over God's commands. Such trespasses would invite the wrath of God, upon both individuals and upon the nations as a whole.

2 Chron. 19:11 And, behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, for all the king's matters: also the Levites

**shall be officers before you. Deal courageously,
and the LORD shall be with the good.**

All religious matters would be dealt with under the supervision of Amariah, the High Priest. All civil matters were to be under Zebadiah. The Levites were to assist as needed in either area.

One's first reaction to this arrangement is that all human affairs are basically religious, and that there should be no need for separate authorities. It is apparent that the Lord does see a need for some degree of separation between spiritual and civil responsibilities. Remember the words of Jesus when he was asked whether it was lawful to pay taxes to the civil government.

Mat 22:21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.



Chapter 20

We have in this chapter the record of an attack by three nations on the east side of the Jordan against the southern kingdom of Judah. With the help of the Lord, the attack is overcome. Jehoshaphat then repeated his previous error by making another alliance with the ruler of the idolatrous northern kingdom of Israel.

2 Chron. 20:1 It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

There is a complication in this first verse. It is probably talking about three nations rather than two who decided to make war on Judah. It is thought that “other beside the Ammonites” refers to Edomites. From the time that Israel entered Canaan, these three nations had ill feelings toward her. They had decided the time was right for them to take action against Judah with an invasion.

2 Chron. 20:2 Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat, saying, There cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria; and, behold, they be in Hazazontamar, which is Engedi.

Jehoshaphat received a report of the massing of troops by these nations which lay east of the Dead Sea and south of Syria. The threat was concentrated at Engedi toward the south end of the sea.



2 Chron. 20:3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

Jehoshaphat knew that the forces which had been assembled were more powerful than he could possibly place on the battlefield. He did precisely what every human should do who is on good terms with the Lord and who faces problems too large to solve on the human level. He prepared to ask help from God. Before asking that help he proclaimed a fast throughout Judah to demonstrate to the Lord that the request was heartfelt.

2 Chron. 20:4 And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

To their credit, the people responded positively to the proclamation and readied themselves for prayer.

2 Chron. 20:5 And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,

The king would lead the prayer. He stood in the midst of the people in the court near the temple and prepared to ask for Divine aid. As I write these words, the nation in which I live is facing a terrorism threat from abroad. Yet I have seen no indication that our president has publically led the nation in prayer. We cannot afford such silence. Jehoshaphat understood that truth.



2 Chron. 20:6 And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

There was no mistaking which God he was addressing. It was the God who ruled from heaven. It was the God who rules over all nations throughout the past, the present and the future. His rulership extends far beyond the Jewish nation. He is the authority to whom every people of every nation must bend the knee. Any person or nation deciding to oppose Him will be defeated.

2 Chron. 20:7 Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?

Jehoshaphat did not have to remind Jehovah that He had promised the land of Canaan to Abraham in the long ago, and had made it possible for Israel to drive the idolatrous nations out of the land. It was impossible for Jehoshaphat to believe God would now allow an invasion which would work contrary to the promises and actions of the past.

2 Chron. 20:8 And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying,

2 Chron. 20:9 If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for

thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.

After taking the land the people of Israel had built a temple honoring the Lord. It had been understood that if trials and afflictions came upon God's people, they could come, just as they were doing at the time, and ask for help. They would be heard and they would receive that help.

2 Chron. 20:10 And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not;

God had forbidden Israel to pass through the land of the Moabites, the Ammonites and the Edomites when they first came to Canaan. The people had done as they were told and had not destroyed those nations. Surely that had not been a mistake!

2 Chron. 20:11 Behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit.

2 Chron. 20:12 O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.

But look what had happened. Those very nations were now ready to overrun Canaan and drive out God's people from that land which He had given them. They were coming in such large numbers that there was no

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hope for Jehoshaphat and his kingdom if it did not come from the hand of the Almighty.

The people had turned toward the temple. They had made it clear that they were sincere in asking for help. They were doing what God had said to do. Now surely God would keep His promise and give them aid.

**2 Chron. 20:13 And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.**

The entire assembly, including men, women and children, waited to see what the answer to their prayer would be.

**2 Chron. 20:14 Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation;**

The reply came through one of the Levites. He spoke as he was inspired by the Spirit of the Lord. His message was that God would help.

**2 Chron. 20:15 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.**

The people were to listen carefully. This upcoming conflict was not to be a source of fear or anxiety. The attackers were opposing the will of God. He would fight the battle. He would win it.

**2 Chron. 20:16 To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.**

God told the people to go to a cliff in an unpopulated area. The instructions were precise. They would have no difficulty finding the enemy.

**2 Chron. 20:17 Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you.**

But now came an unexpected statement. There would be no need for His people to fight the horde of invaders. They were to watch as the Lord Himself produced the victory.

This is not the usual method used by the Lord. He usually insists that His people do all within their power to accomplish His ends. He will then see that whatever else is needed is provided.

**2 Chron. 20:18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.**

Just as he had before the prayer began, Jehoshaphat took the lead. He humbled himself by bowing deeply. All of the people then followed his example and worshiped in grateful humility.

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2 Chron. 20:19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

A shout of praise to God rang forth from the Levites. One wonders if the shout could possibly have been heard by the Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites. It certainly would not have sounded like a cry of despair. It was a shout of victory.

2 Chron. 20:20 And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.

Instead of cringing in fear and running to save their lives, the people of Judah and Jerusalem went to the location where God had directed. Jehoshaphat added to their confidence when he told them if they believed such prophets as Jahaziel who had predicted the upcoming successes, they would prosper.

2 Chron. 20:21 And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever.

If one is filled with fear he does not normally sing songs. The fact that the Levites preceded the soldiers as

they moved toward the opponents was solid proof that they believe what God had said through His prophet.

The songs were to praise God for the beauty of holiness. This should be no puzzle to us. Modern day congregations sing just such songs. God's holy character, and the holy character of those who are His children, is beautiful beyond compare. He is to be praised for His mercy as well as for His justice.

2 Chron. 20:22 And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.

While the people were marching and the Levites were singing God's praise, He was busy keeping His promise. Just what part He played in what was about to happen is not spelled out. Nevertheless, His involvement is certain. He smote the foe.

2 Chron. 20:23 For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.

The smiting took place when both the Moabites and the Ammonites turned against those of Mount Seir, or Edom. First the Edomites were destroyed. Then the Moabites and the Ammonites began to fight amongst themselves. Jehoshaphat and his people did not have to swing a sword or shoot an arrow.



2 Chron. 20:24 And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped.

When the people of Judah came close enough to see the scene, all the enemy soldiers been killed and their bodies were scattered all over the land.

2 Chron. 20:25 And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

The dead had no more need for the valuables they had accumulated. The people of Judah claimed these riches and found them to be so abundant that it took three days to gather them.

Does the reader have qualms about the people of Judah taking possession of these treasures? It should be remembered that the riches were probably the result of past plundering on the part of these greedy enemies. They would have no doubt multiplied the riches if they had claimed victory over the people of Judah.

2 Chron. 20:26 And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the LORD: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day.

The site of the victory was memorialized by calling it Berachah, meaning “benediction.”

2 Chron. 20:27 Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.

2 Chron. 20:28 And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets unto the house of the LORD.

Jehoshaphat then led the people of Judah back to Jerusalem where they rejoiced over the successes with various musical instruments. Psalteries and harps were both stringed instruments, while the trumpets were blown by the mouth.

2 Chron. 20:29 And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel.

2 Chron. 20:30 So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.

After hearing of the great victory of Judah over the three enemy nations, it was thought wise by other kingdoms to erase any thoughts of similar attacks on the land of Judah.

2 Chron. 20:31 And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: he was thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.



2 Chron. 20:32 And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD.

For the most part Jehoshaphat was a good king. He followed his father Asa in respecting the word of God and as a result ruled for twenty-five years from Jerusalem. God was with him and the people over which he reigned.

2 Chron. 20:33 Howbeit the high places were not taken away: for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.

Not everything was as it should have been. The high places where idolatry had been practiced had been removed several times in the past. Each time they had been rebuilt. Even with the evidence which they had seen that God must direct men's ways, they clung to their despicable places of false worship with a part of their hearts.

2 Chron. 20:34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

This is not the only mention of the prophet Jehu. He was responsible for the writing of a book of records of God's people. His book was available to the writer of the book of kings as well as to the chronicler. It should not disturb us that we do not now have the work of Jehu. There are a number of things which Jesus said that have not been passed on through the writings of the apostles. (See John 21:25.)

Joh 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

2 Chron. 20:35 And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly:

There were three horrible mistakes made by Jehoshaphat. First was his marrying his son to Athaliah the daughter of Jezebel. God's people paid dearly for that error. Second, he sought the help of Benhadad, the king of Syria, rather than the help of the Lord, when the northern kingdom, under Baasha tried to invade Judah. Third was this alliance with Ahaziah of the northern kingdom. It would seem that he would learn the value of dependence upon Jehovah sooner or later.

2 Chron. 20:36 And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Eziongaber.

The purpose of the venture in cooperation with Ahaziah was to promote commerce with other nations on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Ships were being made to carry the produce.

2 Chron. 20:37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

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Another prophet brought chastizing words from the Lord. This alliance with the northern king was doomed. The ships which were being prepared were disabled to the degree that they could not be used for the intended purpose.

## *Chapter 21*

The book of Second Chronicles is not the favorite book of the Bible for commentators. And this chapter is not the most delightful in the book. It is filled with evidences that nations cannot forget the Lord and prosper. The leadership of Judah moved from two good kings in succession to one of the worst.

**2 Chron. 21:1 Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.**

Jehoshaphat had for the most part exerted a positive influence on the people of Judah. Now he was dead and his son Jehoram, or Joram replaced him. This was to be quite a contrast! One of the tragic decisions made by Jehoshaphat was to allow the marriage of his son Jehoram to Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. As one commentator stated it, she should be known as Jezebel II.

**2 Chron. 21:2 And he had brethren the sons of Jehoshaphat, Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah: all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel.**

Jehoram had a number of brothers. They were:

1. Azariah?
2. Jehiel
3. Zechariah
4. Azariah?



- 5. Michael
- 6. Shephatiah

As the reader can easily see, there is a problem here. There are two brothers in the same family who were both named Azariah. If we go to the Hebrew the two names are not spelled identically. To further complicate the problem, it seems that Azariah is one of three different names which were all applied to Jehoram at various times. Yet, the above are all called the “brethren” of Jehoram.

But this complication is not the main reason for examination of the list of names. Jehoram and his wife Athaliah appear to have been extremely wary of the brothers. Jehoram had been assigned to the throne, but security of that position was a big question mark.

**2 Chron. 21:3 And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things, with fenced cities in Judah: but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram; because he was the firstborn.**

Jehoshaphat had amassed a large quantity of wealth. In his will he parcelled out this wealth among all of the sons. Entire cities were placed under their ownership. The law, as stated in the book of Deuteronomy specified that the eldest son receive a double portion and if his father was a king, he was to succeed his father on the throne. Jehoram was the firstborn. (See Deut. 21:17.)

*Deu 21:16 Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn:*

*Deu 21:17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the*

*hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.*

**2 Chron. 21:4 Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword, and divers also of the princes of Israel.**

There was one certain way of insuring that one of his brothers did not take his throne. Jehoram slew all of them with the sword. He even went farther. He killed any of the chief princes among the people. He was a bloody man.

**2 Chron. 21:5 Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem.**

It is thought that a portion of the eight years was spent in a co-regency with his father, and that he did not reign by himself for the full eight years.

**2 Chron. 21:6 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD.**

**2 Chron. 21:7 Howbeit the LORD would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.**

The kings of Israel, the northern kingdom, were

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without exception, idolators who rebelled against the law of the Lord. It is not difficult to see that Athaliah had a powerful influence upon her husband. God was much displeased with the evil which was taking place, but because of the promise he had made to David that there would always be one of his descendants to occupy the throne, He did not destroy Jehoram and place one who was not of David on the throne.

2 Chron. 21:8 In his days the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king.

Many of the Edomites had been killed in the recent war. There were enough left to organize a rebellion against the rule of the king of Judah. Edom set up their own king. This is the kind of thing which occurs when despots rule. Those under their authority realize there is dissatisfaction and they will call upon the disgruntled to rise up in opposition.

2 Chron. 21:9 Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots.

This verse informs us that Jehoram attempted to put down the rebellion. He gathered his leaders and his military and set out to punish them. His efforts were not successful. It seems that he over extended himself and the Edomites threatened to encircle him.

2 Chron. 21:10 So the Edomites revolted from

under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time also did Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers.

When the city of Libnah saw that the Edomites had revolted successfully, they followed suit. Thus Jehoram lost both the Edomites and the dwellers in Libnah. Things were going quite the opposite as they had in the times of Asa and Jehoshaphat.

2 Chron. 21:11 Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto.

Jehoram did not only failed to remove the high places where idolatry was practiced. He actually built new ones. He was responsible for leading the nation into both spiritual and fleshly fornication. They were unfaithful to Jehovah, and also to their wives and husbands.

2 Chron. 21:12 And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah,

It is not certain as to how this writing from Elijah the prophet came to Jehoram. The Elijah whom we read so much about in the scriptures is thought to have been taken up from the earth to heaven before this time.

There are several opinions. One is that this writing



came from Elisha rather than Elijah. Another is that Elijah wrote the material while he was still alive and upon the earth. Still another is that there was another Elijah who sent the writing. The message was a sharp condemnation of the foolish actions of Jehoram.

2 Chron. 21:13 But hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself:

The inspired message explained that he had behaved himself in the same way as had the kings of the northern kingdom. He had encouraged the people of Judah to imitate the wickedness of Ahab. This is not surprising. He had a good teacher who was the daughter of Ahab and the wife of Jehoram.

The message also informed him that of all of the sons of Jehoshaphat, he was the least qualified to sit on the throne.

2 Chron. 21:14 Behold, with a great plague will the LORD smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods:

2 Chron. 21:15 And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

As punishment a terrible plague would strike his people, his wives and children, and even his wealth. Also he would personally become diseased in his bowels and this would become so serious his bowels would fall out.

2 Chron. 21:16 Moreover the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians:

God arranged for the nations surrounding Judah to invade the land. It was clear that Jehoram was unable to effectively lead the nation. They saw the opportunity to take whatever they desired.

2 Chron. 21:17 And they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

It happened just as the Lord had said it would. His wealth was stolen. His wives and sons were abducted. He was left with only his youngest son, Jehoahaz, to succeed him.

2 Chron. 21:18 And after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease.

The incurable disease which God had promised would come upon him did so.

2 Chron. 21:19 And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers.

It took two full years for the disease to claim his life. His bowels did fall out. May I include a personal note

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here. I can visualize Jehoram's agonies quite clearly. My own father developed a fatal case of colitis, or infection of the colon. In the last few days of his life his stool was thick with blood and mucous from the bowels. He died much like Jehoram did. It was a horrible end.

Jehoram's father and grandfather were remembered at the time of their death by the burning incense. There was no such sign of respect for Jehoram. It is as if the entire nation was happy to be rid of him.

**2 Chron. 21:20 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.**

The king was buried in the special part of Jerusalem called the "city of David", but he was not laid in the sepulchres of the kings. There was general recognition that he did not deserve the honor which such a burial bestowed.

## *Chapter 22*

By this time things were becoming most chaotic in both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Israel. Power hungry individuals were maneuvering in a variety of plots designed to extend their influence. It is hard to believe that a people who had benefitted as much from God's grace would behave like animals.

**2 Chron. 22:1 And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned.**

A band of Arabians had raided Canaan and had killed all of the sons of Joram, or Jehoram, except for the youngest of them. Ahaziah is also called Azariah at times.

**2 Chron. 22:2 Forty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Athaliah the daughter of Omri.**

We are told here that Ahaziah was forty-two when he began his reign. There is a sharp discrepancy between what is said here and what is said in 2 Kings 8:26. In that place he is said to have been twenty-two. The text here in Chronicles cannot be accurate. A careful look at 2 Kgs. 8:46 will prove that if he had been forty-two, he would have been older than his own father.

The above is most certainly a scribal error. The



initial inspired penmen wrote accurate records. The scribes who copied those originals were not. Let us pray that the eye of the Lord has prevented errors which could result in the loss of salvation for anyone.

Also, Athaliah is said to have been the daughter of Omri. Athaliah's father was Ahab. Her grandfather was Omri. It is not unusual for the Bible to speak of a grandchild as being a son or a daughter of the grandparent.

**2 Chron. 22:3 He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.**

Ahaziah had Jezebel for a grandmother, Athaliah for a mother, and Ahab for a father. We can easily see why his footsteps had missed the paths of righteousness. A godly mother can be a precious blessing to her children. A wicked mother can be a curse.

**2 Chron. 22:4 Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab: for they were his counsellors after the death of his father to his destruction.**

After Jehoshaphat died the major influences on Azariah were those who had arisen from the house of Ahab. Even the kingdom of Judah was getting into perilous danger.

**2 Chron. 22:5 He walked also after their counsel, and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramothgilead: and the Syrians smote Joram.**

When Hazael the king of Syria attacked Israel, Azariah joined forces with Ahab and the Syrians were unsuccessful. In the course of the battle, Jehoram the son of Ahab was wounded. This becomes confusing because there is a Jehoram of Israel and also a Jehoram of Judah.

**2 Chron. 22:6 And he returned to be healed in Jezreel because of the wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria. And Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.**

Azariah, the son of Jehoram who was king of Judah went to Jezreel to see the Jehoram who was the son of Ahab. The fact that he went “down” to see him does not mean south as is customary on our present day maps. Jezreel was at a lower elevation than his starting point.

**2 Chron. 22:7 And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.**

The visit of Azariah, or Ahaziah as he is called here allowed Jehu to discharge a duty the Lord had assigned him. He was to destroy the entire house of Ahab. While Jehu was going about the task which God had given him, both Jehoram king of Israel and Azariah king of Judah were met by Jehu and both could be eliminated at the same time.

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2 Chron. 22:8 And it came to pass, that, when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, he slew them.

Jehu had been highly successful in his destruction of the house of Ahab. He had even slain the ones who were attending the sick Ahaziah.

2 Chron. 22:9 And he sought Ahaziah: and they caught him, (for he was hid in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: Because, said they, he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

Ahaziah managed to evade Jehu for a time. This did not last. They found him, killed him and buried him. The reason they gave him a decent burial was that he was a descendant of Jehoshaphat who had endeared many to him because of his service to the Lord.

2 Chron. 22:10 But when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah.

Athaliah was furious when she found that her son Ahaziah had been killed. She then retaliated by killing all of the possible heirs of the southern kingdom. This left her as the ruler of the nation of Judah. This was not to be a spiritual reformation. She was a “daughter” of Satan.

2 Chron. 22:11 But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons that were slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not.

There was one flaw in the plan of Athaliah. Joash was the very young son of Ahaziah. His aunt, the sister of Ahaziah, quietly removed him from the rest of the king's sons and put the child and his nurse in a bedchamber where they would not be discovered. God's promise was still able to be fulfilled. There was still an heir from the house of David.

2 Chron. 22:12 And he was with them hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.

What a difficult thing to do! A young child under the age of six years is not easy to keep quiet. It would seem that sometime during those years Athaliah or one of her servants would have found him.

For those six years Athaliah reigned over the land of Judah. I implore the readers of this portion of the scriptures to note just how much misery can come about when God's people work in close alliance with those who do not love and obey him.



Chapter 23

Athaliah was not popular among the people of Judah. This fact becomes clear in the events presented in chapter twenty-three. Jehoiada the High Priest managed to organize a rebellion against her and place the seven year old Joash on the throne.

2 Chron. 23:1 And in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, into covenant with him.

The king ruled in civil affairs. The High Priest oversaw spiritual matters. Power was divided among the two. Athaliah had unlawfully assumed the power of the throne when she eliminated what she thought were the last traces of potential heirs from the house of David. Jehoiada, the High Priest was able to enlist the power of the priesthood and the captains of the military in the effort to enthrone Joash. Five captains of one hundred are listed, which means he had at least five hundred of the military who were willing to cooperate with him.

There are two interesting questions here. How was Jehoiada able to gain the support of all of these priests and soldiers without Athaliah hearing of it? How was it possible to seclude a young child for the first six years of his life without discovery of his presence in the temple area? Only with the providential assistance of the Lord could such be done.

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**2 Chron. 23:2 And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.**

**2 Chron. 23:3 And all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD hath said of the sons of David.**

These leaders of the people could hardly have been conscripted to cooperate in the removal of power from Athaliah if they had not resented her rulership. The fact that such a mass of persons were quick to come to the side of Jehoiada speaks volumes about Athaliah and her god, Baal.

The purpose of the entire effort was to bring into reality the continuing promise of Jehovah that a descendant of David would always be available to reign over God's people. They had a male descendant of David and they were ready to declare him king, even though he was but seven years of age.

**2 Chron. 23:4 This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, shall be porters of the doors;**

All of these plans did not pop up in the mind of Jehoiada overnight. He had had several years to develop them. He knew precisely what he needed to do. A number of priest and Levites who would normally preside on the sabbath day were to guard the doors of the temple.

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2 Chron. 23:5 And a third part shall be at the king's house; and a third part at the gate of the foundation: and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD.

Another equal number were to serve at the palace, and yet another third was to be stationed at the gate of the foundation, which may have been what is called the "horse gate." in some other places.

The masses of the people were permitted to gather in the courtyard of the temple where they were normally permitted to be.

2 Chron. 23:6 But let none come into the house of the LORD, save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they are holy: but all the people shall keep the watch of the LORD.

The general population was not to defile the temple itself. It was holy and only the priests and the Levites who were on duty at the time were to be allowed within. This sounds very much like the activities were associated with the seventh day of the week. The people, though not allowed in the temple were charged to respect the ceremonies as they watched in the courtyard.

2 Chron. 23:7 And the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whosoever else cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.

As Joash was ushered to the throne of the king's palace, he was to be escorted by Levites who had been armed with weapons to protect his life. Anyone not assigned to the task who attempted to interfere was to be killed.

2 Chron. 23:8 So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go out on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not the courses.

Jehoiada had become the power behind the throne. Those involved did what he commanded. The High Priest had ordered that the various courses of priest were to attend to the business they would ordinarily have fulfilled.

2 Chron. 23:9 Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds spears, and bucklers, and shields, that had been king David's, which were in the house of God.

The military leaders who had promised their help were given weapons which had been accumulated during the wars of David's time. These were placed in the hands of their subordinates.

2 Chron. 23:10 And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about.

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These soldiers were arrayed in a row across the front of the temple near the altar. They were to add their power to that of the Levites who had also been armed. They surrounded Joash in preparation for the anointing.

**2 Chron. 23:11 Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, God save the king.**

With everything in order, Joash was brought forth. He is called the king's son because he was the rightful heir to the throne, even though his age would not have enabled him to execute the duties which the throne would ordinarily demand. Jehoiada would take the lead in such matters.

**2 Chron. 23:12 Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people into the house of the LORD:**

All this seems to have come as a complete surprise to Athaliah. If she had been considerably more attentive to the thinking of the people, her shock would have been lighter.

**2 Chron. 23:13 And she looked, and, behold, the king stood at his pillar at the entering in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king: and all the people of the land rejoiced, and sounded with trumpets, also the singers with instruments of**

**musick, and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, Treason, Treason.**

As she surveyed the scene she saw Joash at the position where the king would stand. The influential men of the land stood near him. Voices of the people were being raised in song. And musical instruments were accompanying the songs. Everyone was caught up in a spirit of rejoicing.

Athaliah could hardly believe her eyes. She tore her garments and cried out “Treason, Treason.” She could very well have applied these words to her own actions in the past when she had slaughtered those of the house of David who were possible claimants to the throne.

**2 Chron. 23:14 Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges: and whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, Slay her not in the house of the LORD.**

Jehoiada then called for the captains of the military forces to bring Athaliah forth from the rows of soldiers and see if anyone would step forward to support her. If anyone did so, they were to be killed, but this was not to be done until she was removed from the area of the Lord’s temple.

**2 Chron. 23:15 So they laid hands on her; and when she was come to the entering of the horse gate by the king’s house, they slew her there.**





The horse gate would have been the place where the horses made entry into the stable and were led out to be harnessed to chariots, etc. A person's shoes might get a little messed up going through that gate. It was there that she lost her life at the hands of the military corps. An evil six years had come to an end.

**2 Chron. 23:16 And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the LORD'S people.**

Athaliah had promoted the worship of idols by building a house dedicated to Baal. Jehoiada persuaded the king and the people that they must turn from Baal to the Lord God. They were to be His people, not the people of Baal.

**2 Chron. 23:17 Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his altars and his images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.**

The people as a whole went to the place where honors had been paid to Baal and destroyed the altars, the idols and the priest who was directing the worship there. At least for the moment, idolatry had suffered a serious setback.

**2 Chron. 23:18 Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the LORD by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the law**

**of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David.**

Reforms were made as the people turned from the worship of Baal, back to the worship of Jehovah. The worship services which had been set up under the reign of David were revived and the True God was magnified.

**2 Chron. 23:19 And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in.**

The porters were those that watched over the ones who entered the temple to see that only those who were qualified to enter and were undefiled were allowed to pass.

**2 Chron. 23:20 And he took the captains of hundreds, and the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the LORD: and they came through the high gate into the king's house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom.**

All of those who had worked together to rid the nation of wicked Athaliah watched as the new King Josiah was escorted from the temple area to the the palace and seated upon the throne. He entered by way of the high gate. Athaliah had been killed near the horse gate.

**2 Chron. 23:21 And all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.**

Happiness and joy replaced fear and anxiety after the replacement of Athaliah by king Josiah. No doubt Jehoiada was still the moving force in the nation, but Josiah would be groomed to rule as soon as possible.

## *Chapter 24*

We now have the record of the reign of Joash. It is a mixed picture. The first part of the reign while the High Priest Jehoiada lived was exemplary. The temple was repaired from the neglect that had existed during the years Athaliah attempted to promote the worship of Baal. But after Jehoiada died, Joash turned a complete circle and actually caused the son of Jehoiada to be killed for the scolding Zechariah had given the nation for serving idols.

**2 Chron. 24:1 Joash was seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Zibiah of Beersheba.**

A seven year old is no more than a figurehead ruler. Jehoiada was the major decision maker. His influence on the lad turned Joash in the direction of righteousness and respect for Jehovah. As did Saul, David and Solomon, Joash ruled for a forty year period. What is said here is all that we know of his mother.

**2 Chron. 24:2 And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest.**

**2 Chron. 24:3 And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters.**

God did not intend for men to have a plurality of wives. He made one woman for the first man, and He only permitted plurality of wives because of the hardness of their hearts. It would have been better if

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Joash had selected his own wife, and had selected but one! Joash had both sons and daughters. Still, we have the name of only one, That one is Amaziah.

2 Chron. 24:4 And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the LORD.

The words “after this” should be noted. Sometimes the Bible omits a number of years between one verse and the one which follows it. By the time of this fourth verse Joash had reached an age where he could make intelligent decisions. He saw that the temple was in dire need of repair and determined to see that the repair was carried out.

2 Chron. 24:5 And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened it not.

Joash seems to have exerted some true initiative. He called priests and Levites together and told them to cover the land and collect money to do the repair work. He even added that he expected it to be done promptly. It is surprising that the Levites did not obey the command. This seems quite an abrupt turnabout from the strong support they gave to Jehoiada when Athaliah was removed from power.

2 Chron. 24:6 And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not

required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?

When the Levites failed to hearken to his directions to collect the money, Joash even called upon Jehoiada to explain why he had not required them to do so. After all, this was a commandment given by Moses long before. Every male over the age of twenty was to pay an annual half shekel for the use of the activities of the temple and of the king.

2 Chron. 24:7 For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon Baalim.

Not only did Athaliah promote the worship of Baal, she removed items from the temple of the Lord to offer to her false god. We are not informed as to the response from Jehoiada. The following events indicate that he did not oppose the plan.

2 Chron. 24:8 And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD.

2 Chron. 24:9 And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness.

A chest was placed at the gate of the temple where the people could drop in their contributions. The order

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went out through the entire land of Judah that the order which had existed since the time of Moses was to be obeyed.

**2 Chron. 24:10 And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.**

The order was willingly and cheerfully received and obeyed by both the leaders and the people. The collection continued until the amount received was sufficient to make the repairs.

**2 Chron. 24:11 Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.**

The money chest was filled and emptied day after day by the Levites. This is proof that Jehoiada did as Joash had requested. It seemed that Joash was beginning to grow up!

**2 Chron. 24:12 And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD.**

Masons, carpenters and metal workers were hired to do the work they were qualified to perform. There was much to be done.

**2 Chron. 24:13 So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.**

**2 Chron. 24:14 And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of the LORD, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.**

There was even money left over after the repairs were completed. That money was used to pay for pots and pans, and even for tableware made of silver and gold. Nothing was to good for the service of the Lord.

**2 Chron. 24:15 But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died.**

Jehoiada lived to be a very old man. We can surmise that in these last years of his life he would have been much less alert than in his earlier days.

**2 Chron. 24:16 And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.**





Jehoiada had served as acting king during those years before Joash was old enough to make major decisions on his own. If we were to make a list of the good kings of Judah, we would almost be justified in adding Jehoiada's name to the list. The people of Judah certain felt this was the case. They caused him to be buried in the sepulchre of the kings. He had done good toward both the Lord and the temple of the Lord. He was worthy.

**2 Chron. 24:17 Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them.**

It would make us feel much more comfortable if the last verses of this chapter, from here to the end, could have been left out of the Biblical record. They are bad news.

After Jehoiada died the political leaders of Judah came and humbled themselves before Joash. Their plea is unbelievable in view of what has just been described with regard to the cooperation of the people in the rebuilding of the temple. They wished to rebuild the sites of idol worship. Joash may have been influenced by flattery. He allowed them to proceed.

**2 Chron. 24:18 And they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass.**

Previously in the chapter this present writer suggested that time might have passed which was not mentioned. Surely it must have taken some time before

the princes of the people would have made so complete a reversal of attitude that they would once again neglect the temple and turn to idolatry.

**2 Chron. 24:19 Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear.**

The Lord still did not give up on them. He sent prophets to warn them of the dangers to which they were exposing themselves. Pride filled people do not wish to be told they are wrong. Judah had become independent. They would go their own way. They felt they did not need the testimony of their true Lord.

**2 Chron. 24:20 And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you.**

The Lord caused His Spirit to come upon Zechariah, who was the son of Jehoiada. He cried out to the people that they were wrong. They had trespassed against the Divine commandments. This would lead to their destruction because if they forsook God, He would also forsake them. Under those conditions there was no possibility that they could prosper.

Remember, this was not just any man out of the masses of the people. This was the very son of Jehoiada, the High Priest who had done so much for them while Joash was maturing.



**2 Chron. 24:21 And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD.**

One would think the people's hearts would have been pricked by the earnest plea made by Zechariah. They were not! At the command of Joash, they stoned this good man to death in the very court of the temple.

**2 Chron. 24:22 Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The LORD look upon it, and require it.**

What a tragic change this was. Joash had been protected and trained by this man's father. Now he caused the murder of his son. It would have been just a little less serious if the son had not been trying to rescue him from future tragedy.

Zechariah's dying statement was that the Lord would see what had happened and require a just punishment for the sin.

**2 Chron. 24:23 And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus.**

The Lord did see, and he did require justice to be done. He allowed an army from Syria, which was just to the north of Judah, to invade the nation, destroy the leaders, and take spoils back to Syria with them.

**2 Chron. 24:24 For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the LORD delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash.**

The band of Syrians was not huge. Though it was a small number compared with the number of the army of Judah, they succeeded. The reason for this success against the people of God was that Judah had decided not to follow the Lord. He had forsaken them for a time.

**2 Chron. 24:25 And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great diseases,) his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings.**

When the Syrians left, they had not taken the life of Joash, but the King James Version says they left him in great diseases. Other versions speak of his distress as being physical damage instead of disease. After the Syrians were gone some of his own servants conspired to kill Joash. He had little chance to defend himself. He was helpless. His death resulted from his slaughter of the sons of Jehoiada the High Priest. The only one we can identify is Zechariah who condemned him with a message from God.

Joash was buried in that part of the city of Jerusalem called the city of David, but he was not honored by



burial in the sepulchre of the kings. He did not deserve to be.

Jesus referred to the death of Zechariah in Matthew 23:35.

*Mat 23:35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.*

Jesus called him the son of Barachias, but this may have been his grandfather. Jehoiada was his father.

**2 Chron. 24:26 And these are they that conspired against him; Zabad the son of Shimeath an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith a Moabitess.**

The two men who killed Josiah were sons of a Moabitess and an Ammonitess. Had Josiah displayed a shortage of wisdom in the choice of servants from those who had been long time foes of Israel?

**2 Chron. 24:27 Now concerning his sons, and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the house of God, behold, they are written in the story of the book of the kings. And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.**

More information is said to have been available at the time of the writing of Second Chronicles in a book of the record of the kings. This is probably not a reference to the Biblical books of First and Second Kings. We are not certain as to the nature of the burdens mentioned.

## *Chapter 25*

The general scene becomes more gruesome as we move along. War becomes the order of the day. The reality of the situation is that both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah are becoming more and more estranged from dependence upon the Lord. Both will finally depart to the degree that they will be taken into captivity.

Amaziah begins his reign well, but then becomes puffed up and makes foolish decisions. He defeats the Edomites and then adopts their gods, promotes idolatry and is slain by his own people.

**2 Chron. 25:1 Amaziah was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.**

Amaziah was still somewhat immature at the age of twenty-five to assume the duties of the throne. He did have a long reign of twenty-nine years. His mother is named to identify him from other sons of his father Joash.

**2 Chron. 25:2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart.**

Things began well for the new king. He respected the will of God in that he followed the commandments, but he did so without being whole-heartedly committed to Him who gave the commandments.



**2 Chron. 25:3 Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father.**

One of the first things he did was to punish the conspirators who had murdered his father. This was probably as much to prevent danger to himself as it was to see justice done.

**2 Chron. 25:4 But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.**

It is a mark on his side that he did not kill the children of the murderers. They were not guilty and did not deserve to die for the sins of their fathers. The quote is from Deuteronomy 24:16.

*Deu 24:16 The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.*

**2 Chron. 25:5 Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin: and he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield.**

Next Amaziah prepared to organize the military of the nation. He selected officers and took a count of the number of available men who could be called upon in case of conflict. From throughout the tribes of Judah and Benjamin he found 300,000 who qualified. This was a smaller number than had been available in earlier counts.

**2 Chron. 25:6 He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver.**

We come now to a very questionable decision. He reached out to the northern kingdom for another 100,000 men and hired them to supplement those from Judah and Benjamin. A large sum of money was paid for their services. In a situation where there had been lingering hostility between Israel and Judah we wonder at Amaziah's neglect to consider the danger involved in bringing that large number of soldiers from Israel into Judah.

**2 Chron. 25:7 But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim.**

A prophet came to Amaziah with a message from the Lord. He was warned not to make use of the men hired from Israel. God was most unhappy with Israel for their idolatrous behavior and this would result in a partnership with those God had condemned. Ephraim was sometimes used as a name for the northern tribes just as Judah was used to represent both Judah and Benjamin.

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2 Chron. 25:8 But if thou wilt go, do it; be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down.

The prophet continued by telling Amaziah that if he persisted in using the men hired from Israel, he would be allowed to do so, but he needed to know that the battles in which they fought would be lost. God could help when men were with Him. He could also cause defeat if they were not with Him.

2 Chron. 25:9 And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.

Amaziah was willing to listen, but he had spent a large sum of money to hire the northern soldiers. Would he have to accept the loss of the money?

The answer was that it was far better to lose the money. God was capable of seeing that it was more than made up for.

2 Chron. 25:10 Then Amaziah separated them, to wit, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger.

Amaziah finally did what the prophet of the Lord had told him should be done. He removed the hired soldiers and told them return to their homes. This

insulted their pride and cause them to become heated with anger. We have difficulty understanding why they would not have been happy to return home with the money in hand and with no risk to their lives. This is a sign that we do not very well understand the mind set of military leaders.

2 Chron. 25:11 And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand.

The valley of salt was a depression south of the Dead Sea. It was in the territory dominated by the Edomites, or children of Seir. In the ensuing battle 10,000 of the Edomites were killed. Amaziah had obeyed the Lord and the Lord had given his forces victory.

2 Chron. 25:12 And other ten thousand left alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were broken in pieces.

Another 10,000 were captured alive and taken to Petra where they were thrown over a precipice and died on contact with the ground below.

This commentator has always been revolted by the sort of things described in these last chapters of Kings and Chronicles. After reading them dozens of times, it seems the feelings of repulsion increase every time the chapters are examined.

2 Chron. 25:13 But the soldiers of the army which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go

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**with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Bethhoron, and smote three thousand of them, and took much spoil.**

The soldiers who had felt insulted by being sent home to Israel before the battle with the Edomites occurred decided to get even by attacking cities in Judah while Amaziah's troops were fighting in the valley of salt. They managed to kill some 3,000 of the people of Judah and carried off a large amount of loot.

What a nice world in which to live!?

**2 Chron. 25:14 Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them.**

Here we come to a second major decision which Amaziah demonstrated absolute foolishness. After having been given the victory over the Edomites, he was drawn to the idols the enemy had worshiped. He took them and bowed down before them, as well as burning incense to them. What great logic??

**2 Chron. 25:15 Wherefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?**

The Lord Jehovah is a jealous God. He does not like it when His people divide their attentions between

Himself and pieces of gold, silver and brass. He sent another prophet to ask Amaziah a penetrating question. Why would he wish to worship gods who could not defend their own worshipers against the army Amaziah had sent. There was really no way Amaziah could successfully answer the question. He had done foolishly.

**2 Chron. 25:16 And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldest thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbore, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.**

In a defiant response Amaziah asked God's prophet if he really considered himself qualified to give the king counsel. He warned the prophet that he had best be cautious in that he might be killed.

The prophet answered Amaziah back that as a result of his refusal to respect the divine commands, God would destroy him.

**2 Chron. 25:17 Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one another in the face.**

The advice that Amaziah took here was not that of the prophet of God. It was advice from his own counselors who were puffed up, along with the king, as a result of the victory over the Edomites. They had advised him to attack Israel. He took the advice and



challenged Joash who was the king of Israel. This was not the Joash discussed earlier in the book.

**2 Chron. 25:18 And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.**

The challenge was almost amusing to Joash. He returned a message to Amaziah telling him a parable illustrating just how ridiculous he thought the situation to be. The thistle is known as a scrubby little plant that is good for nothing and about the only reason for paying any attention to it on that occasion it can cause trifling annoyance. The thistle in the story was Judah. The thistle had the audacity to ask the hand of the daughter of a cedar in marriage. The cedar was Israel. The cedar was one of the most magnificent and useful of all the plants. It was stately and beautiful. It could be used for furniture and had a pleasant aroma.

It was incredible that the thistle would consider itself to be socially prestigious enough to think it could ask for the daughter of the cedar. Instead of getting the hand of the daughter of the cedar, the thistle was trodden down by a wild beast and destroyed.

**2 Chron. 25:19 Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldest thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?**

Joash accused Amaziah of becoming so proud of the victory over the Edomites that he was ready to meddle in matters which he would be far wiser to leave alone. What Amaziah needed to do was stay at home and avoid getting hurt.

**2 Chron. 25:20 But Amaziah would not hear; for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom.**

Amaziah was not persuaded. He overestimated his power. He had defied the Lord and worshiped the idols of the Edomites. Now God would allow him to find out just how drastic a mistake he had made. He would permit Amaziah to be defeated by Israel.

**2 Chron. 25:21 So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, both he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Bethshemesh, which belongeth to Judah.**

Anyone who has ever seen two sixth grade boys ready to get into a fist fight can understand the statement that the Joash and Amaziah saw one another in the face. Noses can get pretty close to each other just before the fight begins.

**2 Chron. 25:22 And Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to his tent.**

**2 Chron. 25:23 And Joash the king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, at Bethshemesh, and brought him to**



**Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate, four hundred cubits.**

With the Lord having abandoned Judah, Amaziah found himself routed. His army fled. He was captured by Joash and hauled to Jerusalem. In addition, the army of Israel broke down about six hundred feet of the wall of the city of Jerusalem and entered the city. Jerusalem of course was a cherished city which had been claimed by Judah.

**2 Chron. 25:24 And he took all the gold and the silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God with Obedom, and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.**

The army of Israel took the treasures which were in both the palace of the king and in the temple of God. Obedom was in charge of the wealth of the treasury. Joash also took prisoners and returned to Samaria which was a part of the northern kingdom.

**2 Chron. 25:25 And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years.**

Joash did not kill Amaziah. In fact Joash of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of Joash the king of Israel.

If the reader can follow the duplicate names in the last chapters of Second Chronicles and Kings he or she is to be commended. It can be done, but it is not easy.

**2 Chron. 25:26 Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel?**

The words “first and last” are of interest. Perhaps the first were those acts when he first became king and acted with wisdom. The last would then be those unwise decisions he made when he became puffed up and independent.

**2 Chron. 25:27 Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the LORD they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there.**

It really did not matter that much that Josiah allowed him to live after he was defeated and captured. He later found himself the victim of a conspiracy on the part of his own people. It is extremely probable that he was despised after the misery he brought upon the people by worshiping idols and suffering defeat after challenging the cedar of Israel.

**2 Chron. 25:28 And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.**

Amaziah was given a respectable burial in Jerusalem, which would be the city of Judah. But it will be easily seen that he was not buried with honors.





## *Chapter 26*

This chapter covers the reign of Uzziah, the boy king of Judah. This man had the second longest reign of the kings of Judah. Most his reign was commendable. He strengthened both the city of Jerusalem and also the southern kingdom as a whole. He did, however, make one serious error. He assumed the role of a priest when he was not qualified. Leprosy and isolation were the results of this sin.

**2 Chron. 26:1 Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah.**

After the death of Amaziah, the people seem to have had no opposition to appointing his son Uzziah as his replacement on the throne. Yet he was but sixteen years of age and must have required the advice of older and more experienced counselors.

**2 Chron. 26:2 He built Eloth, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.**

One of the first actions after his father's death was to build up the city of Eloth, or Elath. This was a port city and was important to the health of the nations trade. It was a positive movement.

**2 Chron. 26:3 Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.**



Uzziah's rule lasted for fifty-two years and was second only to Manasseh's rule of fifty-five years. Once more we are given the name of his mother to differentiate from his father's plurality of wives.

**2 Chron. 26:4 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did.**

Most of his actions were in accord with the will of the Lord, just as was the case with his father Amaziah. Nevertheless, both of these men failed to be loyal in their last days.

**2 Chron. 26:5 And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper.**

It becomes clearer from this verse that Zechariah was one of those who helped him make decisions at the tender years from teenage to maturity. Zechariah received special insight into the will of God through visions which he experienced. During those years in which Zechariah helped guide him Uzziah made good decisions and God was with him.

**2 Chron. 26:6 And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines.**

The Philistines controlled much of the coast of the Mediterrean on the west side of Judah. Under Uzziah's

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leadership the Philistine cities of Gath, Jabneh and Ashdod were taken and Judah was able to build cities in that area. Uzziah's strength was growing.

2 Chron. 26:7 And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gurbaal, and the Mehunims.

The Arabians were another longtime foe of God's people. Uzziah was also able through the aid of the Lord to bring about respect from the Arabians.

2 Chron. 26:8 And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly.

The land of the Ammonites was east of the Jordan. They found themselves needing to pay tribute to Judah as the influence of Uzziah grew rapidly. Egypt lay to the west of Judah and at quite some distance. Thus, the name and fame of this young king became influential to the east, the south and the west. Nothing is yet said about his relationship with the northern kingdom of Israel.

2 Chron. 26:9 Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them.

At strategic points such as the gates and the corners of the wall of the city of Jerusalem, towers were set up for watchers to spot any dangerous foes which might approach the city.

2 Chron. 26:10 Also he built towers in the desert, and digged many wells: for he had much cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains: husbandmen also, and vine dressers in the mountains, and in Carmel: for he loved husbandry.

Nor did Uzziah forget the rural portions of the land. He built watchtowers in the mountains and in the lower country to protect both plant and animal husbandry. Rulers who build cities and ignore the health of agriculture will soon find their nation struggling. Food is vital to national prosperity.

2 Chron. 26:11 Moreover Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, one of the king's captains.

Under Uzziah the military was organized and made more efficient. Three leaders were appointed to oversee the armed forces. They were Jeiel who kept count of the numbers, Hananiah a chief captain, and Maaseiah who was directly over the men.

2 Chron. 26:12 The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred.

There were twenty-six hundred officers serving under Maaseiah and Hananiah.



2 Chron. 26:13 And under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy.

The number of fighting men under the command of the twenty-six hundred officers was 307,500. This was still short of the number mentioned at it's peak, but with better weapons and protective gear.

2 Chron. 26:14 And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones.

They were provided with short range impliments such as swords, spears, slings, and defensive armor such as helmets and habergeons which were coats of mail.

2 Chron. 26:15 And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

In Jerusalem engines were placed upon the towers and walls. These were not engines as we would use the word today. They were not moving vehicles. They were moving large stones and capable of throwing them into the midst of an attacking army.

This may have been the first use of this type of weapon. We do hear of their use before this in other historical records

2 Chron. 26:16 But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

Now we come to the sad part. Just as a number of other kings became puffed up over their successes, Uzziah began to be overconfident and trespassed against God's boundaries. He went into the temple and intended to burn incense upon the altar. This was an act only permissible to priests. The priests had their realm of authority. The king had another. Jesus could act as Prophet, Priest and King, but Uzziah was not the Son of God.

2 Chron. 26:17 And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the LORD, that were valiant men:

Eighty-one priests followed the king into the temple. These were men of courage. One does not usually challenge the actions of a king. Still, God is pleased when underlings stand up against what they know to be sinful teaching or actions on the part of spiritual leaders. These priests knew very well that Uzziah was not permitted by the Lord to do what he had set out to do.

2 Chron. 26:18 And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the LORD, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the



sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the LORD God.

The priests respectfully warned Uzziah of the danger involved in his intended burning of incense on the altar. They were not defiant, but they were insistent. They reminded him that only the descendants of Aaron had that privilege. It would not go well with him if he burned the incense.

2 Chron. 26:19 Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censor in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, from beside the incense altar.

Rather than desist from the sin, Uzziah became angry. This is all too often the response of those in authority when they are informed of foolish actions they are about to take. Uzziah decided to go ahead with his plan. He had a censor with fire in his hand ready to ignite the incense. Before he even had the chance to set the incense on fire, he broke out with leprosy on his forehead. This happened in view of all the eighty-one priests who had only tried to save the king from just such horror as he suffered.

2 Chron. 26:20 And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the LORD had smitten him.

It did not matter how much prestige one enjoyed when leprosy struck. That person was separated from

the rest of society. As they started to thrust him out from their midst, he realized his plight and went out on his own. He knew this was punishment from the Lord.

2 Chron. 26:21 And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

Uzziah suffered from the leprosy from that time until he died. He was not permitted to come near the temple. He had to live in a house which was severed from the rest of the people. Although we may not in these latter days see such quick and visible punishment for sin, the Lord is just as displeased with trespasses now as he was in the time of Uzziah.

Jotham, Uzziah's son began making the decisions Uzzah would have made. Uzziah was still the king in name. However, Jotham was the real ruler.

2 Chron. 26:22 Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.

We do not any full record of the rule of Uzziah in the Bible book of Isaiah. There were apparently records written by him that God did not see fit to have included in the Old Testament. He did mention Uzziah in Isaiah 1:1 and Isaiah 6:1.

Isa 1:1 The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Isa 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Chron. 26:23 So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

Uzziah died at a relatively ripe age and was buried in the same field as other kings. He was not buried in the sepulchre of the kings because of his leprous condition. Even after death the people were fearful of contact with him. His son Jotham then became king of Judah.

Chapter 27

We have been left with very little information on the short reign of Jotham. His activities for the most part follow in the same path as those of his father. Nothing of particular notice is included. Even a comparison between the material here in 2 Chronicles and that found in 2 Kings adds but very little to the whole picture.

2 Chron. 27:1 Jotham was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.

Jotham had been active politically from the time his father became unable to attend to the affairs of the throne. At the time he reached the age of twenty-five he began his own official rule and continued for sixteen more years. He is identified through his mother just as were several others of the kings of this period.

2 Chron. 27:2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah did: howbeit he entered not into the temple of the LORD. And the people did yet corruptly.

Jotham followed in the steps of his father Uzziah in that which was right. There was one significant difference. He did not make the mistake of trying to assume the duties of the priests in burning incense in the holy temple. In spite of Uzziah's dedication to God, the people failed to live in loyalty to the commandments of the Lord.

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**2 Chron. 27:3 He built the high gate of the house of the LORD, and on the wall of Ophel he built much.**

This does not necessarily mean that Jotham was responsible for building a high gate which was not present before this. The wall of Ophel was a portion of the wall of Jerusalem. He found it in a state of disrepair and built it up again to what it should have been.

**2 Chron. 27:4 Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Judah, and in the forests he built castles and towers.**

He added new cities in the mountain areas of the land. Observation towers were erected in the forested areas. The general security of the land was increased through his building projects.

**2 Chron. 27:5 He fought also with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them. And the children of Ammon gave him the same year an hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year, and the third.**

We do not know the immediate differences which brought about these battles with the Ammonites. They may have been paying tribute and then refused to continue. They may not have been paying the tribute and Jotham decided to force them into paying it.

The amount of tribute paid by the Ammonites was large. For three years in a row this tribute was collected.

**2 Chron. 27:6 So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the LORD his God.**

Jotham became strong because he listened to the will of God and walked in the ways which God laid out as pleasing to Him. Anyone can plan ahead and prepare their ways. It is far more valuable to allow the Lord to direct our steps.

**2 Chron. 27:7 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.**

Not much added material is found in the Bible books of Kings. It does seem that there were other activities of king Jotham which were not vital in our own efforts to please Jehovah. Thus they are not included.

**2 Chron. 27:8 He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.**

**2 Chron. 27:9 And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.**

Jotham must have reigned until he was forty-one years old. He then died and was buried in that portion of Jerusalem called the "City of David."

## *Chapter 28*

A drastic change now takes place in the religious life of the southern kingdom. Ahaz becomes an idolator to the very core. The consequences of his leadership in the land are horrible. God allows invaders to come in from every direction. Misery abounds. Satan is being given an open door and he takes full advantage of it.

**2 Chron. 28:1 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father:**

Several of the kings came to the throne at an age which prevented them from developing the experience and the wisdom to govern effectively. Ahaz as certainly one of them.

Not only did Ahaz not do the which was right. He did just about everything wrong! David was not his immediate father. He was his ancestor. David had his weak moments. Ahaz moments were almost all weak.

**2 Chron. 28:2 For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim.**

For some time the kings of the northern kingdom had embraced idolatry and worshiped Baalim as he was represented by molten images. Ahaz was drawn into the same despicable behavior.

Note that the text says he walked in the ways of Israel. He was not a king of Israel, but did walk in their ways. Your attention will be called back to this point in the latter part of the chapter.

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2 Chron. 28:3 Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

Incense was burnt to send up a pleasant odor to the gods. Ahaz burnt incense to honor the false gods. He even burnt his children as sacrifices to these gods. Molech was especially known for child sacrifices.

2 Chron. 28:4 He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

Ahaz copied the idolatrous practices of all the surrounding nations. High places were manmade elevations built for idol worship. Hills were natural elevations which were also easily seen from a distance. Under the green trees was a comfortable place to practice the sin of fornication with the priestesses who were no more than professional whores.

2 Chron. 28:5 Wherefore the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter.

The True God arranged for Ahaz and his people to be punished for their spiritual adultery by allowing the king of Syria to invade Judah. Many of the people

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were captivated and taken to Damascus which was the capitol of Syria.

At the same time Pekah the king of Israel invaded from the north and killed 120,000 in one day.

**2 Chron. 28:6 For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers.**

All of this misery was the result of the neglect of the king of Judah and his people for the will of the Lord of heaven and earth.

**2 Chron. 28:7 And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son, and Azrikam the governor of the house, and Elkanah that was next to the king.**

Zichri, one of the powerful soldiers of the north killed three key figures. One was a son of Ahaz. One was in charge of the king's house. One was next in authority to the king.

Ephraim is used in this verse for the ten northern tribes, just as Judah was often used to represent both Judah and Benjamin.

**2 Chron. 28:8 And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.**

One hundred twenty thousand had been killed in one day. Now 200,000 are taken captive, along with

much spoil, and are taken to Samaria in the northern territory. This would have amounted to a significant percentage of the entire population of Judah.

**2 Chron. 28:9 But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded: and he went out before the host that came to Samaria, and said unto them, Behold, because the LORD God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven.**

The Lord did not intend for the punishment to go so far as to destroy the entire population of Judah. He did wish to see them punished, but not to the point of annihilation. To prevent complete destruction God sent a prophet named Oded to speak to those of Israel who had taken the captives from Judah. Oded told them that He had been angry with Judah and had allowed them to be captured, but that it had gone too far with the mass killings and abuses.

**2 Chron. 28:10 And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you: but are there not with you, even with you, sins against the LORD your God?**

The men of Israel had decided to make their captives from Judah slaves. That was not right. Israel must be careful that they did not meet punishment on their own part. They certainly were not spiritually pure either.

**2 Chron. 28:11 Now hear me therefore, and deliver the captives again, which ye have taken**

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captive of your brethren: for the fierce wrath of the LORD is upon you.

What then needed to be done to make amends for the abuses which had been heaped upon the captives from Judah? They were brethren to Israel. They needed to be delivered before the wrath of God fell upon the Israelite captors.

2 Chron. 28:12 Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim, Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against them that came from the war,

There were strong leaders in Israel who saw just how dangerous it was to make slaves of their brethren from Judah. These leaders told those who were bringing the captives to make slaves of them that they must be released.

2 Chron. 28:13 And said unto them, Ye shall not bring in the captives hither: for whereas we have offended against the LORD already, ye intend to add more to our sins and to our trespass: for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel.

These leaders informed the Israeli army that they were not free to bring their captives into the north. God's message had come to them that he was already much angered by what had been done. If they then continued with their present plan there would be major punishment ahead.

2 Chron. 28:14 So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation.

The army which had brought the captives to the north listened and agreed to free the captives and release the spoil they had taken from them. They left and the leaders who had warned them were left to cure the wrongdoing.

2 Chron. 28:15 And the men which were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria.

The officials than arranged for the people who needed clothing to have it provided. They gave them food and drink, and gave them the opportunity to be cleaned up. Those who could not walk were placed upon beasts of burden and were taken to Jericho in southern territory. They were allowed to rejoin their brethren from whom they had been taken.

2 Chron. 28:16 At that time did king Ahaz send unto the kings of Assyria to help him.

Ahaz had even more troubles facing him. He made the decision to ask Tiglathpilneser, the king of Assyria for help against his foes.

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**2 Chron. 28:17 For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives.**

The Edomites had noticed the weakened condition of the southern kingdom and saw it as an opportunity to rebel and plunder as they pleased. Now Edom was taking captives to their land.

**2 Chron. 28:18 The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country, and of the south of Judah, and had taken Bethshemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof, Gimzo also and the villages thereof: and they dwelt there.**

The Edomites had come from the southeast. The Philistines added to the burden by invading from the west. They had succeeded in dominating a number of population centers in Judah.

**2 Chron. 28:19 For the LORD brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the LORD.**

Judah had found herself at the mercy of the Edomites and the Philistines because of the weakened condition arising from Judah's rebellion against God.

Strangely, Ahaz is called the king of Israel here. He has been identified as the king of Judah before. The reason for his being called the king of Israel here is that God Himself still considered both the northern and the southern kingdoms as Israel. See verse 2.

**2 Chron. 28:20 And Tilgathpilneser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not.**

Tiglathpilneser had been invited to help Ahaz, but when he arrived he did not help him. He instead made the situation even more distressing. Everyone was participating in the humiliation of Judah for having practiced idolatry under Ahaz.

**2 Chron. 28:21 For Ahaz took away a portion out of the house of the LORD, and out of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave it unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.**

In order to reimburse Tiglathpilneser for coming to help him Ahaz had taken valuables from the temple, from the king's palace and from the princes of the land. Tiglathpilneser had not seen it as a means of helping Ahaz out of his difficulties. The agreement with the Assyrian king only caused the loss of that which was paid to him, with absolutely no help in return.

**2 Chron. 28:22 And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the LORD: this is that king Ahaz.**

The thing for Ahaz to have done was to admit his dependence upon the Lord and cease from turning his land into a hotbed of idolatry. That was the farthest thing from his mind. He reached out even farther to the idols and insulted the only true source of help to which he might have turned.



**2 Chron. 28:23 For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.**

Ahaz' line of reasoning was that the Syrians were doing well with the help of their gods. He was not doing well with his gods. It must be that he needed to sacrifice to the gods of Syria. Perhaps they would help him. It did not turn out in harmony with his logic. They ruined both him and his people.

**2 Chron. 28:24 And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem.**

How wrong can a proud man become? Ahaz had been carefully warned about his evil ways. He would not listen. He closed the temple. He cut the vessels of service in the temple into pieces and used them to set up altars to the false gods all over the city of Jerusalem.

**2 Chron. 28:25 And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers.**

What a sad picture this is! Ahaz could not have been any more insolent than he was toward the Lord. Everything he could have done to embarrass Jehovah,

he did. Everything he could do to praise his idols he did. Yes, the Lord was provoked to anger, and well He should have been.

**2 Chron. 28:26 Now the rest of his acts and of all his ways, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.**

The prophet Isaiah lived at the same time as did Ahaz. Here we have one of the very worst rulers living at the same time as one of the greatest prophets. Ahaz had no excuse at all for his misplaced loyalties.

**2 Chron. 28:27 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.**

It is a wonder this wicked king was not buried in the trash heap in the valley of Hinnom. He had been a king of Judah, so he was buried in the city of Jerusalem, but he was dishonored by being denied the privilege of burial in the king's sepulchres.



## *Chapter 29*

It is almost beyond comprehension that the son of a man as evil as was Ahaz could become as fine and good a king as Hezekiah became. The comparison between the record of Ahaz and that of his son Hezekiah proves conclusively that men can overcome evil surroundings and become faithful servants of the Lord.

**2 Chron. 29:1 Hezekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.**

Hezekiah, like several other kings, began to rule at a somewhat tender age. Most of us can remember the differences in our spiritual maturity when we were twenty-five and ten years later at the age of thirty-five. This did not prevent him from having a righteous rule from those early years. We wonder just how much influence Ahaz wife and Hezekiah's mother had upon him. She could have been one of the great women of the Bible.

**2 Chron. 29:2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.**

We have discussed David's life more than one time previous to this. Just as David had weaknesses in his life, we can presume Hezekiah had weaknesses in his. God chose not to tell us of any lurid details of Hezekiah's life, as he did tell of David. David was Hezekiah's father only in the sense of being in the direct line of his ancestry.

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2 Chron. 29:3 He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them.

The young king began right away to reverse the horrible sins his father Ahaz had committed during his rule. Ahaz had shut the doors of the temple of God. Hezekiah proceeded to open them again in preparation for bringing the worship of Jehovah back into the lives of the people.

2 Chron. 29:4 And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street,

2 Chron. 29:5 And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place.

The priests and the Levites were still there. They had been forced to stand by and see the temple abandoned. Now they were challenged to clean themselves up in the sight of the Lord in order that they could serve in the capacities God intended. When they had purified themselves they were to also sanctify the temple and remove that which did not belong there so the temple could be used for its intended purpose of worshiping God.

The filthiness which is mentioned could have been of spiritual nature in the way of items used for idolatrous activities, or it could have been trash and garbage which had accumulated. It could have been both. They were to rededicate the temple to its intended use.

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**2 Chron. 29:6 For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs.**

Ahaz and his followers had spurned the will of God. They had turned both their faces and their backs away from the house of God. It was no wonder that ill fortunes had come upon the people.

**2 Chron. 29:7 Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel.**

The doors of the front entrance of the temple had been closed. The lamps which were to burn continually inside the temple had been extinguished. The offerings which were supposed to be offered regularly in the holy place were not being presented before the Lord.

**2 Chron. 29:8 Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes.**

God's resulting wrath had been visited upon His people to the extent that Judah and Jerusalem had become a topic of mockery. They certainly had to agree with that conclusion.

**2 Chron. 29:9 For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this.**

One hundred twenty thousand had been killed. Two hundred thousand had been taken captive. This had come about because of their disdain for the Lord.

**2 Chron. 29:10 Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.**

**2 Chron. 29:11 My sons, be not now negligent: for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense.**

Hezekiah was still talking to the priests and the Levites. The king desired to make a covenant with God that they would serve Him and pray that His anger against them might be turned away. The priests and Levites were important to the success of the plan. If they would take the lead, the people might be influenced to follow them.

**2 Chron. 29:12 Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites: and of the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel: and of the Gershonites; Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah:**

All three of the major lines of the priests are mentioned. We have the names of the Kohathites, the Merarites and the Gershonites.

**2 Chron. 29:13 And of the sons of Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and of the sons of Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:**

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2 Chron. 29:14 And of the sons of Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.

Now we have the descendants of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun added to the list. These were the chief of the singers and musicians in the days of David.

2 Chron. 29:15 And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and came, according to the commandment of the king, by the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD.

The priests and Levites did as Hezekiah commanded them. They first cleansed themselves and then entered into the temple in preparation for cleansing it.

2 Chron. 29:16 And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD, to cleanse it, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD. And the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron.

The priests were privileged to go into areas of the temple where Levites who were not priests were forbidden. The priests removed the filthiness from the inner parts and the Levites took it from there and cast it into the brook Kidron where it would be washed away.

2 Chron. 29:17 Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the

LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end.

It required sixteen days for the complete sanctification of the temple. They began on the first day of the first month (Abib) and they completed the task on the sixteenth day. They just missed having it completed by the fourteenth day of the month, which would have been the day of the Passover.

2 Chron. 29:18 Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the shewbread table, with all the vessels thereof.

We can almost sense the pride of those who had participated in the cleansing. They had prepared everything for the upcoming worship as the temple was again ready for that purpose.

2 Chron. 29:19 Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they are before the altar of the LORD.

Ahaz had shown no respect whatsoever for the vessels which had been used in the temple worship. He had even broken some of them in pieces as spoken of earlier. All of this had been overcome. Could it be that God would turn away His punishments and once again bless the people of Judah?



2 Chron. 29:20 Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD.

2 Chron. 29:21 And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats, for a sin offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the LORD.

King Hezekiah took the lead in helping the worship to be reinstated. He gathered the chief men of the city and together they went to the temple.

In the past God had commanded one of each of these sacrifices. Since this was a very special occasion seven of each of these animals was presented. Seven was the complete number. Hezekiah commanded that the sacrifice begin.

2 Chron. 29:22 So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and sprinkled it on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar.

2 Chron. 29:23 And they brought forth the he goats for the sin offering before the king and the congregation; and they laid their hands upon them:

The bodies of the animals were burnt upon the altar and their blood was sprinkled upon it. These were to take the place of the sins of the people. Jesus Christ replaced the body and the blood of the bulls and goats

with His own precious body and the blood He shed on the cross for the sins of those who will live for Him.

2 Chron. 29:24 And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

2 Chron. 29:25 And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the LORD by his prophets.

2 Chron. 29:26 And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

David, Gad and Nathan had all commanded that cymbals, psalteries and harps be used. There is difference of opinion as to whether these instruments were to be played during the worship, or were only used as a means of calling attention to the upcoming worship.

2 Chron. 29:27 And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel.

The reader would do well to examine what the prophet Amos said about David's use of instruments of music in the worship of the Lord. (See Amos 6:1-6.)



Amo 6:1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!

Amo 6:2 Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines: be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?

Amo 6:3 Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;

Amo 6:4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;

Amo 6:5 That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David;

Amo 6:6 That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.

2 Chron. 29:28 And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.

During the entire time that the burnt offerings were being presented on the altar, the people worshipped. The singers sang and those with the trumpets let it be known that the ceremonies were being continued.

2 Chron. 29:29 And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped.

When the offerings were completed, the king

and all who were present bowed before the Lord and worshipped. Him.

2 Chron. 29:30 Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.

The king commanded the Levites to sing praise to God using the words which David and Asaph had written. Many of the hymns which are sung all these centuries later could have been sung by the Levites on that occasion.

2 Chron. 29:31 Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the LORD. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart burnt offerings.

Everyone in the congregation knew how far they were permitted to enter into the temple. They brought free will sacrifices to honor the True God. It was truly a happy day.

2 Chron. 29:32 And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was threescore and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, and two hundred lambs: all these were for a burnt offering to the LORD.



2 Chron. 29:33 And the consecrated things were six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep.

The number of these offerings tells us of the attitudes of the people toward the call of Hezekiah to reinstate the worship as God had commanded it in the years gone by. They were overjoyed.

2 Chron. 29:34 But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.

The flaying of the animals had to do with skinning them and laying out strips of the meat. There were so many of the animals that there were not enough priests to take care of this work. The Levites were called upon to assist since they had been more responsive than many of the priests in preparing themselves to perform that work.

2 Chron. 29:35 And also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service of the house of the LORD was set in order.

All of the various offerings which God had spelled out were once more presented to Him. The acts of Ahaz the father of Hezekiah had been reversed by his son.

2 Chron. 29:36 And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.

It did not take years for this reformation to be made. God had made it obvious through the defeats and the captivities of the people of Judah that there was a desperate need to reestablish respect for the covenant in which He had promised to be their God if they would be His people. The change was embraced by both the Lord and His people.



Chapter 30

Since the time that the united kingdom was separated into the ten tribes of the north and the two tribes in the south, the passover had not been observed. Under the supervision of king Hezekiah we see a grand revival of this major festival. It brings a little joy to our own hearts to see the happiness in those of God's people, even if this would not be a lasting ceremony.

2 Chron. 30:1 And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel.

The temple had been cleansed and sanctified. The priests and Levites had undergone purification and were ready for service. Hezekiah became very bold. He sent letters of invitation to all parts of the land announcing that a passover feast would be held. He even sent the messengers to the tribes in the north.

The Assyrians had come in by this time and had carried off many of those in the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. They had not taken all of them. The ones who remained were asked to come if they chose to do so. Though such movement from the north to the city of Jerusalem had been forbidden by previous kings, it was allowed at this time.

2 Chron. 30:2 For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the Passover in the second month.



King Hezekiah called a counsel to discuss the possibility of having the Passover one month later than the ordained time which was the fourteenth day of the first month. It was agreed that it would be held on the fourteenth day of the second month.

2 Chron. 30:3 For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.

Because of the difficulties in getting the temple cleansed and the priests sanctified in time the decision had been made. They felt they would be justified in doing this because of God's allowing a similar postponement in the past. (See Numbers 9:5-11.)

Num 9:5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

Num 9:6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day:

Num 9:7 And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel?

Num 9:8 And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.

Num 9:9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 9:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying,



If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD.

Num 9:11 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

2 Chron. 30:4 And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation.

2 Chron. 30:5 So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.

There was reason to believe the delayed date would be acceptable to the Lord. It was pleasing to Hezekiah and the people. Therefore the announcement was to be made all the way from Dan to Beersheba, covering all of the territory which had been a part of the united kingdom.

2 Chron. 30:6 So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.

The posts were runners who carried the message throughout both Israel and Judah. Of course our modern day word “postman” is a carryover from the posts of days such as these.

Hezekiah was calling all who would to rededicate themselves to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If those who could would return, it was felt that God might see that those in Assyria could be released.

2 Chron. 30:7 And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.

He pointed out that it would certainly be foolish for those who were still free in the north to act like those who had been taken captive had acted. Since they had given up on God, He gave up on them.

2 Chron. 30:8 Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.

If they would only humble themselves and take part in the Passover, God might very well reward them by removing His anger from them.

2 Chron. 30:9 For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.



Hezekiah was very persuasive. These persons in the northern territory would find God to be both merciful and gracious to them if they would turn toward Him.

2 Chron. 30:10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

As the posts moved through the northern tribes, they found some who scorned the invitation, laughing at it and mocking them. These people had been steeped in idolatry for so long that they had lost all affection for Jehovah the True God.

2 Chron. 30:11 Nevertheless diverse of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.

Even so, there were some who walked to a different drummer. They were receptive to the invitation and came to Jerusalem to participate in the upcoming Passover.

2 Chron. 30:12 Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the LORD.

The hearts of the people in Judah were far more excited about being a part of the celebration. They recognized this as a reunion between the Lord and His people from both Israel and Judah. God had welcomed them and they were ready to obey.

2 Chron. 30:13 And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation.

It would be interesting to know just how many did gather in Jerusalem for the event. We are only told that the number was great. All was being made ready for the feast which had been held just one month late.

2 Chron. 30:14 And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron.

The altars of incense were those which had been used in the past for idolatrous worship. These altars were removed and thrown into the brook Kidron which acted as a repository for garbage.

2 Chron. 30:15 Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD.

The priests and the Levites had reason to be ashamed. If they had moved quickly to sanctify themselves it might have been possible to keep the feast on the normally scheduled first month. They did, however, finally prepare themselves and brought in the offerings. It seems that the one who offered the sacrifice killed it. The Levites collected the blood and then the priests took it to the altar.



2 Chron. 30:16 And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites.

They took their places as had been commanded by God through Moses. The Levites had collected the blood and the priests took it from them and sprinkled it on the altar.

2 Chron. 30:17 For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the LORD.

Since there were a large number of persons in the gathering who had not been properly cleansed, the Levites who were clean performed the duty of slaughtering the animals for them.

2 Chron. 30:18 For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one

Those who had come from the northern kingdom for the Passover had not been cleansed. It was wrong for them to eat according to that which was written in the law. But, Hezekiah pleaded with the Lord to forgive them for this shortcoming.

2 Chron. 30:19 That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.

2 Chron. 30:20 And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

God heard Hezekiah's intercessory prayer and accepted the sacrifices of those who came to Him in humility. One must be careful about following this practice. There were times like this when God did pardon transgressions. There were other times when He refused to do so because of the pride of those who came before Him.

2 Chron. 30:21 And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the LORD.

The people rejoiced in keeping the feast of the Passover. There was great happiness for the seven days devoted to that feast. The priests and Levites played loud instruments and sang along as they praised the Lord.

2 Chron. 30:22 And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.

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The words of Hezekiah were an encouragement to those who taught the Word of the Lord. Confessions of the people were made to Him in hope that they would not endure the fate which their stubborn fathers had suffered in being taken captive.

**2 Chron. 30:23 And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness.**

It was agreed by the whole congregation that another seven days should be added to the first seven, totaling fourteen days of rejoicing and praise.

**2 Chron. 30:24 For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves.**

This very large number of animals which was offered would hardly make up for the omission of many Passovers while idolatry controlled the affections of the people. It did help to heal the wounds and appease the wrath of the Almighty.

**2 Chron. 30:25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.**

What a heartening thing it is to read of those who had come to Jerusalem from the northern kingdom and

shared in the confessions and praises which were being presented before Jehovah.

**2 Chron. 30:26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem.**

**2 Chron. 30:27 Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.**

The priests and the Levites were supposed to lead the rest of the people. This they did. As they called for God's blessings upon the people, their prayer ascended to God's presence in heaven. Both the people and the Lord heard the prayers and were pleased.



## Chapter 31

What a bright spot the life and work of Hezekiah is after reading of the filthiness which had been in the temple and the idolatry of the people of both Israel and Judah. This righteous king attempted to put everything possible back into the order which the Lord had caused to be installed. The great Passover feast had been held. There was a need to get everything back to a day to day and a month to month obedience to the Lord's will. Even the northern territory of Israel will be involved.

**2 Chron. 31:1 Now when all this was finished, all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.**

That which was finished was the purification of the people, the priesthood and the temple. The Passover had been held and all was ready for a resumption of the offerings and sacrifices.

The next order of business was to destroy all traces of idolatrous worship. It seems that "all Israel" is speaking of both those of Judah and of the northern kingdom who had come southward to Jerusalem for the Passover. The effort was not confined to Judah. It also reached into into several of the northern tribes.

1. The images were broken in pieces.
2. The groves were cut down.

3. The high places were destroyed.
4. The altars were demolished.

After these things were completed, everyone returned to their own cities and homes. This may have been a greater victory than any defeat of a national foe. Idolatry has been an instrument in the arsenal of Satan in every part of the world through most of history.

**2 Chron. 31:2 And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the LORD.**

The organization of the duties of the priests and Levites had been badly neglected. The king set out to assign each of them to courses which had been the practice in the time of David. Among the assigned duties were the offering of sacrifices as well as the offering of praise and thanksgiving at the temple. The “tents of the Lord” referred to the temple. God does not permanently dwell in houses made with hands. His throne is in the heavens. Thus the temple was a tabernacle or tent which He used to communicate with His people.

**2 Chron. 31:3 He appointed also the king’s portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the law of the LORD.**



As the civil government of our own day has a treasure containing national financial resources, the king had a similar storehouse. Hezekiah commanded that a portion of this store be made available for evening and morning sacrifices. They were also to be used in sabbath offerings as well as the set feasts like the Passover, Pentacost and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The reader should note the overall view given here.

1. Morning and evening (daily)
2. Sabbaths (weekly)
3. New moons (monthly)
4. Set feasts (annually)

The king's treasury was to be a part of all of these.

**2 Chron. 31:4 Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the LORD.**

The priests and Levites were to be occupied with the supervision of the various religious services. They would not have the time to care for flocks and fields. They were to be supported by tithes and offerings. We immediately recall the words of the apostle Paul when he stated the same basic thought in 2 Corinthians 9:8-10.

*1Co 9:13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?*

*1Co 9:14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*

**2 Chron. 31:5** And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.

The people responded right away to the commandments which they received. They brought in *abundantly* from the firstfruits of their labors.

**2 Chron. 31:6** And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid them by heaps.

King Hezekiah had taken the lead by assigning offerings from the royal storehouse. The people who dwelt in Judah were quick and eager to follow that lead. They brought in heaps of all of their produce and laid them before the Lord.

The heaps would refer to the grain. But they also brought tithes of the flocks.

**2 Chron. 31:7** In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month.

Certain products would be harvested early in the year. Others would come later. These contributions were given as they were harvested.

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2 Chron. 31:8 And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD, and his people Israel.

When Hezekiah and the princes of the people viewed the large amount of offerings the people had brought to the work of God, they blessed both the Lord and the people of Israel. We can readily see what it would mean for them to call for God's blessings upon the people who had given so freely.

It is harder to see how men could bless God when God owns all the earth. It may be that the blessing was a prayer that the tithes and offerings which had been given would be utilized in such a manner as to promote the will and the glory of God. Men are given the power of choice. When they use that power to please God and promote His cause they have blessed Him.

2 Chron. 31:9 Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.

2 Chron. 31:10 And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the LORD hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store.

Hezekiah seems to have been just a little concerned over the amount which had been given. Had they deprived themselves to the point of want in order to give this much? Azariah, the High Priest assured the king that this was not the case. Since they had been

bringing in these large amounts of tithes and offerings they had had all they needed, and had even had more than they needed.

It has been said that it is not possible to outgive the Lord. Hezekiah and his people were seeing the correctness of that statement.

2 Chron. 31:11 Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of the LORD; and they prepared them,

2 Chron. 31:12 And brought in the offerings and the tithes and the dedicated things faithfully: over which Cononiah the Levite was ruler, and Shimei his brother was the next.

There was such an abundance of these gifts that Hezekiah ordered special chambers be made ready that the dedicated things might be made use of in the future as they might be needed. Two Levites were made overseers. They were Cononiah and his brother Shimei.

2 Chron. 31:13 And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Asahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, were overseers under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God.

Under Cononiah and Shimei there were a number of other overseers of lesser responsibilities.

2 Chron. 31:14 And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter toward the east, was

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**over the freewill offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the LORD, and the most holy things.**

There were two basic types of gifts. There were the tithes which were assigned as mandatory. Any who did not bring in the tithes was amiss. Then there were the freewill offerings which were voluntary offerings. Kore was assigned to oversee the distribution of these goods to those who had need.

**2 Chron. 31:15 And next him were Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the cities of the priests, in their set office, to give to their brethren by courses, as well to the great as to the small:**

There were several others serving under Kore. They were to see that all were furnished and that none were favored over others.

**2 Chron. 31:16 Beside their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, even unto every one that entereth into the house of the LORD, his daily portion for their service in their charges according to their courses;**

The males were tallied from the time they reached the age of three years. Every one who came into the house of the Lord was to be given daily portions of supplies as they were needed.

**2 Chron. 31:17 Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the**

**Levites from twenty years old and upward, in their charges by their courses;**

Although they were counted from the time they were three years old, they were not pressed into service until they reached the age of twenty. This was ten years younger than had been true in the past. At first the Levites did not serve until they were thirty.

**2 Chron. 31:18 And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness:**

There was an attempt to follow the genealogical lines of the priests and Levites who had been assigned to different courses in the past and try to assign these descendants to the same courses.

**2 Chron. 31:19 Also of the sons of Aaron the priests, which were in the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, the men that were expressed by name, to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.**

The suburbs of the cities were not just what we would today mean by that term. Around the cities and villages of Israel and Judah were pasture lands. That which was given to the priests from the herds and the flocks was pastured in these suburbs until needed for food or for sacrifice.

We can summarize these last few verses by saying



that the priests and the Levites were well taken care of. Baal was shunted off into the distance.

**2 Chron. 31:20 And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the LORD his God.**

What a wonderful verse! O that the same could have been said of all of the kings of Israel and Judah. Alas, it could not.

**2 Chron. 31:21 And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.**

Those who love the Lord are to keep His commandments with all their heart, soul, mind and strength. Half hearted service is not sufficient. Everything we are and everything we have is to be given to Him with the prayer that it be used for His glory and honor. When that is done, men need not worry about the piercing question God may ask at the judgment, "What did you do with that which I placed in your hand? Will each of us be able to stand along with Hezekiah and honestly declare that we have given all?"

## *Chapter 32*

Everything had been going well under the rule of Hezekiah. The temple had been cleansed and after much conflict in the past, the nation was enjoying a period of peace. This was not to last. The Assyrians had gained much power and under King Sennacherib they felt confident that they could conquer Judah.

**2 Chron. 32:1 After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself.**

Assyria had already carried off the majority of the people in the northern kingdom. King Sennacherib saw no possibility that Judah could provide any significant resistance. His forces entered the land and had taken some of the less important cities. He was ready now to attack the capitol city of Jerusalem.

**2 Chron. 32:2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem,**

The reader should be aware that there are three different records of this conflict with the Assyrians. We have this one in 2 Chronicles. We have one in the book of 2 Kings, and Isaiah devotes two chapters to it. Some of what is said in our comments here will be drawn from one or the other of the other two records.

Sennacherib had settled his army in the region of the Philistines along the coast of the Mediterranean. He

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was in no great hurry to attack the capitol. Hezekiah made full use of the time which this allowed him.

2 Chron. 32:3 He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him.

2 Chron. 32:4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?

One of the first things they did was to divert the water supply in such manner that they would still have a sufficiency, but the Assyrians would suffer from a lack of it. This could be grievous in a hot arid climate. Hezekiah's princes and other men of might succeeded in this defensive move.

2 Chron. 32:5 Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance.

Hezekiah and his people had developed a solid relation-ship with the Lord. That did not mean they could sit back in their rocking chairs and let the Lord put forth effort which they should have done. God wants His people to do what they are able.

The king caused the wall around the city to be built up in places where it had fallen into disrepair. He set towers on the wall and then built a second wall surrounding the original. He provided his army with both defensive and offensive weapons.

2 Chron. 32:6 And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying,

An effective leader is a motivator. Hezekiah called the leaders of his army together and spoke encouraging words to them.

2 Chron. 32:7 Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him:

They were urged to be both strong and filled with courage. There was good reason to show both of these traits. Sennacherib might think that his forces were more powerful and numerous than those of Judah. He was wrong! There were forces supporting Judah that Sennacherib had failed to take into account.

2 Chron. 32:8 With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

It was certainly true that Sennacherib had more soldiers. He may also have had better weapons. But, he was placing his confidence in the fleshly arms of men. Judah had the mighty arm of the God of heaven on their side. This made the battle lopsided in favor of Judah.

David was small and weak in comparison with Goliath. Yet he slew the giant. The spies thought they looked like grasshoppers in contrast with the giants



in the land of Canaan when they entered it from the wilderness wanderings. Yet with God on their side, the Canaanites were defeated.

2 Chron. 32:9 After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he himself laid siege against Lachish, and all his power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that were at Jerusalem, saying,

Sennacherib was so confident of victory that he thought all he had to do was send a threatening letter to Hezekiah and Judah would realize it was useless to fight against him. He did not even go personally to Jerusalem, but sent messengers to deliver the message. He kept the army with him where they were laying siege to Lachish.

One of these messengers was called Rabshakeh. He boldly presented the message from Sennacherib to the forces of Hezekiah.

2 Chron. 32:10 Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem?

2 Chron. 32:11 Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

How could these soldiers of Judah believe they could hold out against the Assyrian army. If they persisted in their defiance they would be starved and killed from lack of water. How foolish they were to think

that the Lord their God would deliver them from such overwhelming power as Assyria had.

2 Chron. 32:12 Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it?

Did Judah really think the Lord would fight for them when their king had destroyed the altars and high places. He had placed all of his confidence in one God and mocked the others.

What Hezekiah had really done was to remove the altars and high places of the false gods. That would not alienate the True God. It would do just the opposite. He was a jealous God and elimination of His rivals was pleasing to Him.

2 Chron. 32:13 Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand?

Sennacherib pointed out that the Assyrian rulers who had preceded him had conquered the lands of other nations. Their gods had not been able to resist the Assyrian forces.

2 Chron. 32:14 Who was there among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?

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Not a single one of the gods of those nations had saved them from defeat. If the Lord's people were wise they would surrender to Sennacherib and admit their helpless situation.

**2 Chron. 32:15 Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand?**

**2 Chron. 32:16 And his servants spake yet more against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah.**

On and on Sennacherib had raved. How does the reader feel that Jehovah was reacting to this outpouring of blasphemy? We shall find out in short order.

**2 Chron. 32:17 He wrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of other lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand.**

**2 Chron. 32:18 Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city.**

In addition to sending the messengers such as Rabshakeh, Sennacherib wrote letters mocking the belief that the Lord would protect Judah. The Assyrians even learned enough of the language of the Jews that

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they were able to call out to those who were on the walls of the city in the attempt to strike fear into their hearts.

2 Chron. 32:19 And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man.

The Assyrians made no difference between the gods carved out by the hands of men, and the God who created the entire universe. The false gods were made by men. The True God made the men.

2 Chron. 32:20 And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.

This combination of a godly king and a prophet of the spiritual power of Isaiah made quite a team. The two of them cried out to the Lord for help.

In cases like this it is always well to pray for what we believe would be in harmony with the will of the Lord and then add the phrase “If it be thy will.” That which seems to be most evident to we mortals may need to be either rejected or modified to fit with God’s overall plan for man.

2 Chron. 32:21 And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword.



The army of Judah would have been at the mercy of the Assyrians had the Lord not intervened. As God did intervene, the scales were weighted the other way. The record in 2 Kings tells us the number of Assyrian soldiers who were slain by the angel was 185,000.

After all the boasting which Sennacherib had done it must have been a most humiliating and embarrassing matter to return to his own land and face his subjects. His shame was so great that two of his own sons killed him in the very house where he had gone to call upon him.

2 Chron. 32:22 Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side.

This event proves the concern God has for those who place their lives in His hand. Jehovah protected His people from the Assyrians and then continued His care by guiding their ways. Other nations were quite satisfied to leave them in peace after the ridicule which Sennacherib faced.

2 Chron. 32:23 And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.

The gifts and presents which were brought to Hezekiah from the nations around were signs of respect for both himself and the Lord who had exalted him.

2 Chron. 32:24 In those days Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he

spake unto him, and he gave him a sign.

2 Chron. 32:25 But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.

Hezekiah then became so ill that it appeared he was about to die. He prayed to the Lord for healing and the Lord responded to his prayer by promising him fifteen more years of life and causing the shadow on the sundial to reverse itself. God's promise was kept.

However, like so many other individuals who had been helped by the Lord, Hezekiah failed to magnify and serve God in return for the blessings he had received. He actually became proud, as if the successes were his own rather than having been made possible by God. God was angry with him. The nation suffered along with Hezekiah for the errors of their king.

2 Chron. 32:26 Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah than did something which most pride filled persons are not apt to do. He humbled himself and admitted his sin. His people did the same. As a result, God's wrath was turned away and did not return through the remaining days of Hezekiah.

2 Chron. 32:27 And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour: and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious

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**stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels;**

After having humbled himself, the treasuries of the nation began to fill with valuables of several kinds; silver, gold, gems and jewels, spices and shields made of precious metal.

**2 Chron. 32:28 Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil; and stalls for all manner of beasts, and cotes for flocks.**

The fields and the livestock were also increased in productivity. Storehouses had to be provided for the grain, oil and wine. Extra space had to be found to corral the cattle and the sheep.

**2 Chron. 32:29 Moreover he provided him cities, and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance: for God had given him substance very much.**

**2 Chron. 32:30 This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.**

These last few verses present a picture of prosperity. The threat of the Assyrians had been dissolved and turned to health and wealth.

**2 Chron. 32:31 Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.**

All was not quite as well as it seemed. Babylon began to eye the nation of Judah. Under the guise of wondering how Hezekiah's God had so wonderfully blessed him, the Assyrian ambassadors were really looking for an opening through which they might have better success than the Assyrians had met.

**2 Chron. 32:32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.**

As mentioned before, the student of the scriptures needs to compare the 18th through the 20th chapters of 2 Kings, and the 36th through the 39th chapters of Isaiah to get as much detail as possible.

**2 Chron. 32:33 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.**

Hezekiah had his bad moments, but like David, he humbled himself and repented of his sins. He died after those fifteen years of life which the Lord promised to him, and was buried in honor in the sepulchres of the kings in Jerusalem.

Many students of the Bible wish they could skip the next chapter of 2 Chronicles. It is not very pleasant. It tells of the rule of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah.





## *Chapter 33*

Back and forth, back and forth moves the character of the kings of Judah. First an evil king, then a righteous one, and then back to evil again. Manasseh is generally considered to be one of the evil ones. That is only partially correct. He began as a fanatic idolator. After he suffered hardship in Assyria for a time, he repented and tried to undo the sins he had committed. He was then succeeded by his son Amon who started in an evil manner and then grew progressively worse.

**2 Chron. 33:1 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem:**

There is little doubt that Manasseh had a co-reign with his father for several years before he became the sole ruler. If we count all of the fifty-five years, he had the longest rule of all the kings.

We are told that he ruled from Jerusalem to show that he ruled from the place God originally pointed out as His choice for the capitol of the nation.

**2 Chron. 33:2 But did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.**

The Lord allowed Israel to take the land of Canaan because the inhabitants were rank sinners and were addicted to idolatry. Mannasseh behaved in such manner that he is described as being as wicked as they were.

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2 Chron. 33:3 For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

The list of his evil works is a long one. His father, Hezekiah, had broken down the high places where idolatry had been practiced. Manasseh built them back up. He built altars at which the people could worship Baalim. Baalim is the plural for Baal. There were multiple locations where this false god could be glorified. He also either dedicated groves of trees which were already growing, or planted trees to produce groves where the sun, moon and stars could be made objects of worship.

2 Chron. 33:4 Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.

Jehovah had made it absolutely clear that the temple was the location where His name, and His alone was to be worshipped. Manasseh built altars for burning incense in the very house of God.

2 Chron. 33:5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD.

Jupiter, Venus, Mars and other objects of the heavens were offered sacrifices in the court of the temple. Manasseh not only did not oppose it. He encouraged it.

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**2 Chron. 33:6 And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.**

How abominable can a man get? Manasseh joined in with those who burned their own children as sacrifices in the valley of Hinnom just outside Jerusalem.

**2 Chron. 33:7 And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever:**

Both molten and carved images were made for worshipping purposes. Manasseh had a carved image made and placed in the temple. There are some who believe the image was of himself. and that he wished to be considered as divine. This temple was the house of the Lord. It was gross error to contaminate it in that manner.

**2 Chron. 33:8 Neither will I any more remove the foot of Israel from out of the land which I have appointed for your fathers; so that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.**

As we normally would read this verse it seems like a promise God made that Israel would never be removed

from the land of Canaan. That is not what this verse means. It is saying that as long as Israel took heed to do all that God commanded and kept the statutes and ordinances given through Moses, God would see that they remained in the land, but if they failed to keep the commandments, they would be removed.

**2 Chron. 33:9 So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the LORD had destroyed before the children of Israel.**

Who would have dreamed that after having seen what God did to the Canaanites in allowing Israel to take the land over those sinful people, that they would then become even worse sinners than those they had driven out?

**2 Chron. 33:10 And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken.**

God warned the people they were in great danger if they continued their evil ways. They would not listen and turn back. God probably spoke to them through prophets or seers.

**2 Chron. 33:11 Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.**

If Israel had kept the word of the Lord, there is no way the Assyrian host could have taken Manasseh



captive. As it was, there was no great difficulty in binding him and taking him captive to Babylon.

**2 Chron. 33:12 And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers,**

The Bible does not give details of what this affliction was. Jewish writers such as Josephus say that he was tortured and told to see if his gods could protect him. They also say that his humbling of himself came about because when he prayed to the Lord, he was allowed to return to Canaan.

**2 Chron. 33:13 And prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.**

This verse seems to agree with the stand described above. After Mannasseh found himself back in his own land, he realized just how wrong he had been in his promotion of idolatry.

**2 Chron. 33:14 Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah.**

The king then turned around one hundred eighty degrees. He tried very sincerely to do all he could

to undo the damage he had done to his people. He strengthened the defenses of the city of Jerusalem. He raised a military force to aid in the defense.

**2 Chron. 33:15 And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city.**

The objects of idolatrous worship were removed from the temple. The altars he had caused to be placed in the hill on which the temple was built were taken completely out of the city.

**2 Chron. 33:16 And he repaired the altar of the LORD, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel.**

He attempted to reinstate everything which the Lord had commanded in the way of peace offerings and thank offerings. He issued commands for the people to cease their idolatry and worship only Jehovah.

**2 Chron. 33:17 Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the LORD their God only.**

He was only partially successful. The people insisted on worshipping at high places, even though they did use these places to worship the only True God.

**2 Chron. 33:18 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, and the**

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words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel.

2 Chron. 33:19 His prayer also, and how God was intreated of him, and all his sins, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, before he was humbled: behold, they are written among the sayings of the seers.

The book of 2 Kings adds more to the details of Manasseh's life, both good and evil.

2 Chron. 33:20 So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

After concluding his long reign, Manasseh died and was buried in his own house. This was an indication that the respect of the people was not great enough for them to place him in the sepulchres of the kings.

Mannasseh's son Amon might have been expected to follow his father's late behavior and send the pendulum swinging back toward a righteous reign. That did not happen.

2 Chron. 33:21 Amon was two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jerusalem.

So many of the kings were in their teens or early twenties when they ascended to the throne! This may well have been one of the major reasons for their lack of judgment. Amon ruled only two years, from age twenty-two to age twenty-four.

2 Chron. 33:22 But he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them;

This young man had the opportunity to see what happened to his father when he departed from the commandments of the Lord. Yet, he set his feet down in the same crooked tracks his father had trodden.

2 Chron. 33:23 And humbled not himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more.

There was one sharp difference between Amon and his father. His father repented of his wicked conduct. Amon did not! He only became progressively worse.

2 Chron. 33:24 And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

The reign of Amon was cut short after two years when some of his servants assassinated him in his own house. We do not know what motivated them to kill him.

2 Chron. 33:25 But the people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead.

If the assassins were intent on taking over the kingdom their efforts were defeated. The people of Judah killed them and made Amon's son Josiah king.



Chapter 34

Josiah was the son of Amon and the grandson of Manasseh. This was not a very strong spiritual inheritance. How did he gain the spiritual strength which he demonstrated throughout the chapter in front of us? We can probably give credit to Hilkiah the priest who tended to him in his formative years.

Josiah attended to the voice of the Lord with all his heart and soul, but he was unable to forestall the punishment which was to come to the land of Judah for their repeated lapses into idolatrous worship.

2 Chron. 34:1 Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years.

One does not have the insight nor maturity to govern a nation at the age of eight years. As in the case of other very young kings, he had the assistance of other older persons until he reached the age of responsibility for national affairs. His reign of thirty-one years would have been most wonderful if the nation had not so completely turned the God of heaven against them.

2 Chron. 34:2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left.

Josiah was perhaps the very best king who sat upon the throne of Judah in Jerusalem. We speak of walking in the "straight and narrow way." That is what Josiah did. His actions placed him in the same category as

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David who, except for one sorrowful period in his life, walked that same God given way.

**2 Chron. 34:3 For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.**

By the time Josiah had reached the eighth year of his reign and was sixteen years old, he began searching for instruction from the Lord. In the twelfth year of his reign, at the age of twenty, he set out to turn the nation back from idolatry to the way of the Lord. He began to remove the high places, the groves, and the images which were so admired by the idolatrous population.

We can imagine that this was a thankless task. The people would definitely not have approved of his actions. Most of them would have followed his commands because he was king and not because they supported his position.

**2 Chron. 34:4 And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strowed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them.**

He supervised the breaking down of the images and the groves. He caused them to be ground into dust. The dust was then strewn upon the graves of those who had offered idolatrous sacrifices.

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2 Chron. 34:5 And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.

Does this verse indicate that Josiah killed the priests of Baal and then burnt their bones upon the altars, or did he dig up the bones of dead priests and burn them? Either way the scene is equally repulsive. He began this purging at Jerusalem and moved out through the land of Judah.

2 Chron. 34:6 And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about.

2 Chron. 34:7 And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

He then carried his efforts into the territory which had been under the control of the northern kingdom, but was now largely in captivity in Assyria. The mattocks are thought to be the ruins of those sites.

Those of Israel who remained in the land of Israel were bondservants of the Assyrians and had little power to resist what was being done.

2 Chron. 34:8 Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land, and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God.

At the age of twenty-six, after Josiah had concluded the purging of the idolatrous items of worship, he determined to repair the temple of God which had fallen into disorder. He picked three influential men to help him achieve this goal.

2 Chron. 34:9 And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin; and they returned to Jerusalem.

2 Chron. 34:10 And they put it in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the LORD, to repair and amend the house:

Reconstruction requires money. The three men collected the money which had been given by those throughout the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, as well as the general territory of both Israel and Judah. They returned to Jerusalem and delivered it to Hilkiah who then gave it to the workmen who were ready to repair the temple.

2 Chron. 34:11 Even to the artificers and builders gave they it, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed.

Artificers were those who were skilled in building and able to take the lead in that which had to be done.

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The artificers then distributed the money among those who had to buy wood and stone for the repair. The couplings appear to be braces which strengthened corners where the walls came together.

**2 Chron. 34:12 And the men did the work faithfully: and the overseers of them were Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set it forward; and other of the Levites, all that could skill of instruments of musick.**

The Levites had a major part in the work. There were those from the Merarites and the Kohathites, plus others from the other families. Some of the Levites were skilled in playing on musical instruments. There are two possibilities here. These Levites who were skilled of instruments of music may have had the task of repairing the instruments which had been neglected for many long years. They also could have been musicians who played music to encourage the other workers in their duties. Since this chapter deals with the labors of those who did the repair, it seems logical that the Levites who were skilled here were themselves musicians who played for encouragement. The Levites were known for their singing and playing skills.

**2 Chron. 34:13 Also they were over the bearers of burdens, and were overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service: and of the Levites there were scribes, and officers, and porters.**

The emphasis on the Levites is that of supervision, as well as participation in many different tasks. Some were porters who would have carried materials. Some were scribes who were familiar with building plans and records. Some were directors of the work.

**2 Chron. 34:14 And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiyah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses.**

In the course of gathering money which had previously been stored in the temple treasury, Hilkiyah the high priest discovered a copy of the law which Moses had received on Mount Sinai. It is a sad day when the instructions given by the Lord are so neglected that it is a surprise when a copy is found in the very temple in Jerusalem.

As a present day application of this truth we wonder how many persons have a neglected Bible lying buried under other books in their houses, without being read. Why does it take a pulpit pounding sermon, or a serious disease to cause some to remember that book and read it?

**2 Chron. 34:15 And Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah delivered the book to Shaphan.**

**2 Chron. 34:16 And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do it.**

**2 Chron. 34:17 And they have gathered together**



**the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen.**

As the work progressed, Shaphan the scribe reported to the king. The workmen were moving along well. The money which was badly needed had been placed in the hands of the overseers and the workmen to purchase the needed supplies and pay the workers for their labors.

**2 Chron. 34:18 Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiyah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king.**

**2 Chron. 34:19 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes.**

As a part of his report, Shaphan told Josiah about the discovery of the book of the law which Hilkiyah had turned over to him. He then read from the book in the ears of the king. When Josiah heard of the curses God had declared upon those who did just the kind of things God's people had been doing, he tore his clothing in despair. It looked dismal for the future of the people.

**2 Chron. 34:20 And the king commanded Hilkiyah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king's, saying,**

**2 Chron. 34:21 Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the**

**word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book.**

Josiah commanded some of the most dependable men to go and inquire more details of the meaning of the writings of the book. It was clear that the people had not obeyed the will of God. What could they expect as a result?

**2 Chron. 34:22 And Hilkiyah, and they that the king had appointed, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the college;) and they spake to her to that effect.**

God had not restricted His use of prophets to the male sex. In both the patriarchal and the Mosaic dispensations He had spoken through prophetesses. Huldah was such a person. She lived in Jerusalem not far from the temple. The “college” was not an educational institution. It was a location. The men asked Huldah to give them further information as to what faced the people as punishment for their sins.

Such persons as Huldah were needed while the revelation of God was still incomplete. It is not needed since the completion of the New Testament. Christians are now thoroughly furnished unto every good work. That which was in part has been replaced by that which is perfect.

(See I Corinthians 13:10; James 1:25 and 2 Tim. 3:16-17.)

*1Co 13:8 Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues,*

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they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

1Co 13:9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

1Co 13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

Jam 1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2Ti 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Chron. 34:23 And she answered them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell ye the man that sent you to me,

2 Chron. 34:24 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah:

Huldah must have felt much as modern preachers do when they find it necessary to preach a negative sermon condemning the shortcomings of those who are present in the audience. Her answer to the men had to be true to the Lord. It would be most unpleasant.

The people of Judah had gone beyond the point of begging for mercy and having their prayer answered with a promise of forgiveness. The nation would be

cursed with the punishments described in the book of the law.

2 Chron. 34:25 Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched.

The accusations against Judah, as listed by Huldah began with their having burned incense to false gods. These false gods had been made by their own hands. Jehovah's wrath would come. It would be an outpouring. It would not be evaded. They might as well prepare for much grief.

2 Chron. 34:26 And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard;

2 Chron. 34:27 Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD.

Since Josiah had not been lifted up with pride and he did humble himself and try to do the will of the Lord, he would be treated accordingly.

2 Chron. 34:28 Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave

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**in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.**

Josiah would not have to witness all of the discomfort which was to come upon Judah as a people. He would go to the grave before the calamities were poured out.

These were the truths Josiah had called for. Huldah had presented them as she knew had to be done.

**2 Chron. 34:29 Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.**

**2 Chron. 34:30 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD.**

Josiah did not shirk his duty. He passed on the information as soon as possible to the leaders of the land and also to all who could be gathered. A chief executive of a nation can have a positive spiritual influence, or a negative influence upon his people. It must have been an impressive occasion when the king personally read from the book of the law of the Lord.

There is some concern about whether or not this book contained the entire law of Moses. If so, the king had a lot of reading to do, and the people had a lot of listening. It does say he read “all” of the words of the book. This would not be an impossibility. It might have required several days, but the first five books of

the Bible could be read aloud by one man in a lengthy period of time.

**2 Chron. 34:31 And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.**

Josiah provided a sound example before the people as he promised the Lord to keep His commandments with all of his heart and soul.

**2 Chron. 34:32 And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.**

What exactly is meant by saying Josiah caused all the were present to stand to the covenant which he had made with God? Does it mean he caused all of the people to stand immediately after he read the law and declare their willingness to abide by the words of the book? Or does it mean he demanded over a period time that they keep the covenant?

The verse does say that they did what God had prescribed in the law.

**2 Chron. 34:33 And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they**



**departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.**

If the actions of the people in keeping the covenant were heartfelt this was a remarkable thing. Most of us recognize that in any congregation of present day Christians, there are those who only go through the motions. They are afraid not to comply, or they bow to social pressure as their friends attend the services. Now the verse above says Josiah made all who were present to serve God. It seems hard to believe that as long as Josiah was alive the people served with all their heart and soul, and then within a few years after his death they completely reversed their commitment. Nevertheless that seems to be the declaration of this verse.

## *Chapter 35*

The present chapter tells of one of the greatest passover feasts ever held. Josiah wished to not only cleanse the temple and the people; he wished to see that the ceremonies of the worship of Jehovah were reactivated in sincerity and truth.

However, his life came to an end when he mistakenly sent the military into battle with forces of the Egyptian Pharaoh who were marching through the land on the way to Charchemish northeast of Israel.

**2 Chron. 35:1 Moreover Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.**

A passover had been held before this, but it was not held on the fourteenth day of the first month. It was postponed until the fourteenth day of the second month. Josiah wanted this one to comply with the strictest details of God's wishes.

**2 Chron. 35:2 And he set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them to the service of the house of the LORD,**

**2 Chron. 35:3 And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the LORD your God, and his people Israel,**

The priests and the Levites were to take up their previous duties in the services of the temple. The ark

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was placed back in the temple. We do not have a record of it's removal from the temple, but it may have been removed to protect it from possible damage at the hands of invading armies. Josiah considered the situation secure and required that it be brought back.

The reader may recall that the ark was to be carried by staves inserted through rings at the bottom corners and hoisted up to rest on the shoulders of priests. Josiah may have felt that it would never again have to be moved from it's resting place in the Most Holy.

2 Chron. 35:4 And prepare yourselves by the houses of your fathers, after your courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son.

2 Chron. 35:5 And stand in the holy place according to the divisions of the families of the fathers of your brethren the people, and after the division of the families of the Levites.

David and Solomon had divided the priests into family divisions and assigned duties to them on the basis of these divisions. They were expected to verify their groupings and resume those duties.

2 Chron. 35:6 So kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

The passover was held on the fourteenth day of the first month. It was immediately followed by the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread, making eight days

of celebration. The priests and Levites were to cleanse themselves spirit-ually and physically before entering into the sacred rites.

2 Chron. 35:7 And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these were of the king's substance.

The people had come from all over the land. They needed animals they could offer as sacrifices. Josiah did his part by giving them large numbers of lambs, young goats and oxen. It may be wondered why this would count as sacrifices of the people if they were given to them from the royal herds and flocks. We reply that if they were given to the people, the people could have claimed them and avoided sacrificing them. They did not do that.

2 Chron. 35:8 And his princes gave willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover offerings two thousand and six hundred small cattle and three hundred oxen.

The “princes” does not necessarily mean those of royalty. The word, as it is used here, is related to the word principal. These were men who had large possessions. They followed the lead of the king and gave of their animals that those who did not have such abundance would have sufficiency to offer.

The term “small cattle” means sheep and goats. They were called cattle just as were the bovine animals.

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**2 Chron. 35:9 Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethaneel, his brethren, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave unto the Levites for passover offerings five thousand small cattle, and five hundred oxen.**

The chief men among the Levites themselves participated in the sharing by donating thousands of both large and small cattle.

**2 Chron. 35:10 So the service was prepared, and the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment.**

**2 Chron. 35:11 And they killed the passover, and the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites flayed them.**

When all the proper preparations were set in order, the sacrificial animals were killed. Their throats were cut. The blood was collected and the priests used their hands to sprinkle the blood upon the altar. The Levites then skinned them and laid the meat in strips.

**2 Chron. 35:12 And they removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. And so did they with the oxen.**

Part of the animals were burnt without the people eating any portion of them. They tried their best to do everything as Moses had written at the time God gave him instructions at Sinai.

**2 Chron. 35:13 And they roasted the passover with fire according to the ordinance: but the other holy offerings sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and divided them speedily among all the people.**

The offerings made on the passover day were baked over fire. The other offerings which were consumed during the feast of unleavened bread were boiled in pots and pans. The word “sod” is related to our english word “sodden.” Water was used in the pots.

**2 Chron. 35:14 And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: because the priests the sons of Aaron were busied in offering of burnt offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron.**

Themselves refers to the Levites. It was only after the rest were served that the priests and Levites partook. These groups had been so busy with their duties that they had to wait.

**2 Chron. 35:15 And the singers the sons of Asaph were in their place, according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king’s seer; and the porters waited at every gate; they might not depart from their service; for their brethren the Levites prepared for them.**

The descendants of Asaph were responsible for singing and playing. The singers, and the porters who watched at the gates were served by the Levites.

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2 Chron. 35:16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah.

All that was commanded to be done on the day of the passover was done as Moses had written. Josiah, the king, had done his utmost to bring the people back to the memorial which spoke of the escape from the bondage of Egypt when the blood of a lamb was sprinkled on the door causing the death angel to “pass over” that home.

2 Chron. 35:17 And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days.

As mentioned previously, the passover itself was followed by the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread.

2 Chron. 35:18 And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

When it is said that there was no passover like this one kept from the days of Samuel to that of Josiah, it is not saying that new and different things were done. It only tells of the greatness of the numbers of sacrificial animals and the numbers of participants in the ceremony.

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**2 Chron. 35:19 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.**

Josiah was eight years old when his reign began. The eighteenth year of his reign would have placed his age at twenty six years.

**2 Chron. 35:20 After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Charchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him.**

It has been suggested that the time lapse between the great passover and the march of the Egyptians toward Charchemish was approximately fourteen years. The words “after all this” do not demand that it was immediately after the events just recorded.

The king of Egypt brought an army toward the area of the river Euphrates to fight against Charchemish. The most direct route to the Euphrates took him right through the land of Israel. Josiah was alarmed and no doubt concerned over the future of Israel. He decided to oppose the Egyptians.

**2 Chron. 35:21 But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.**

The king of Egypt did not wish to do battle with the army of Josiah. He informed Josiah that he had no



intentions of conquering Israel. He had been commanded by God to hasten to Charchemish and make war with those of that land.

He urged Josiah not to interfere with his forces because if he did so, he would not be attacking the Egyptians. He would be meddling in God's affairs. Josiah would be placing himself in opposition to God and this would result in his destruction.

This seems very strange to us. Egypt lay to the southwest of Israel. The Euphrates was some distance to the northeast of Israel. We are given no reason why God would have commanded the Egyptian forces to chastise those at Charchemish. It does seem, however, that God was not pleased with Josiah for opposing the march of the Egyptians through Israel. We can see evidence of this from that which next took place.

**2 Chron. 35:22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.**

Josiah refused to back down. He continued to stand between the Egyptians and their declared destination. Josiah disguised himself and prepared to fight. Note that the verse tells us Necho's statement that God had directed him to go to Charchemish. These were the words of God; not those of the Egyptian king. Josiah was making a mistake in trying to prevent the march.

Josiah's forces met the Egyptians in battle. Since Josiah had disguised himself, he was not recognized as one who might be captured and used to persuade his own men to retreat. One of the Egyptians shot into the

troops of Israel, and by chance the arrow struck Josiah in the back.

**2 Chron. 35:23 And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded.**

When Josiah realized he was seriously injured, he called for those nearby to remove him from the battlefield. This indicates that although he was disguised, there were some of his servants who were informed of his identity. He would only be a hindrance in his wounded condition. He had to be tended to.

**2 Chron. 35:24 His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.**

We are not told why he needed to be taken out of his own chariot and placed in another. It could be that the second chariot was intended for just such a purpose as had arisen.

He was taken to Jerusalem where he died and was buried with honors in the sepulchres of the kings. He had been a very effective leader of his people. The entire nation lamented his passing.

**2 Chron. 35:25 And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in**



**Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.**

This verse is the first mention of Jeremiah, the “weeping prophet.” If Josiah had lived longer and continued his positive influence on his people, perhaps Jeremiah would not have had quite as much to lament about in his writings. The singers also made lamentations which were written and recorded for posterity.

**2 Chron. 35:26 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his goodness, according to that which was written in the law of the LORD,**

**2 Chron. 35:27 And his deeds, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.**

Jeremiah is recognized in the Bible as one who respected the law of the Lord. It is as if God were allowing the readers of scripture to hear the words, “Well done, good and saithful servant.”

## Chapter 36

We have followed a long and winding road through the study of the kings of Israel and Judah. It is a spotted history, sometimes looking bright and optimistic, and other times looking grim and hopeless. In the time of Saul God's people had asked for a king like those nations around them. God allowed them to have one, telling them that He was their Real King and that they were making a mistake.

We have now seen the truth of His statement to His people. Human kings display all of the weaknesses of other humans. Lust and pride are all too often demonstrated. Lack of vision leads them down paths of destruction. The prophets will speak of a King infinitely greater in wisdom and power than any king of human origin. Jesus Christ is the King of kings. His reign is faultless from the divine point of view. Any failures are due to human failure to follow His teaching and example. His reign will lead to absolute victory over Satan and his followers. Let us follow the story.

**2 Chron. 36:1 Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's stead in Jerusalem.**

The statement that the people took Jehoahaz and made him king leaves us with the impression that the people had more power than was actually the case. Josiah's opposition to the march of the Egyptians toward Charchemish had left the land of Canaan in dire straits. Egypt was intruding from the west and the Assyrians, from the east, had taken the majority of the people from the northern area into captivity.

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The remainder of the people had been in semi-slavery to that power. The people's choice as a replacement for Josiah was not to last long.

2 Chron. 36:2 Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.

After three short months, this twenty-three year old king in name only was removed through the power of Egypt and was replaced. This shows the folly of Josiah's ignoring God's command for the Egyptians to march toward Charchemish. Israel had met defeat and Egypt was able to dominate them.

2 Chron. 36:3 And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold.

Not only did the king of Egypt remove Jehoahaz from the throne; he placed Israel under tribute. No resistance could be offered to the demand for the tribute.

2 Chron. 36:4 And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and turned his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother, and carried him to Egypt.

This king of Egypt was pharaoh Necho whom Josiah had opposed. He replaced Jehoahaz with Jehoahaz' own brother and took Jehoahaz off to Egypt.

Names were quite meaningful in the days we are studying. The changing of a person's name could have

as much impact as if we were to change the title of a person from president to janitor. This can cause much confusion to the student of the scriptures. Some were known by as many as three different names. The king of Egypt changed the name of Eliakim to Jehoiakim.

2 Chron. 36:5 Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God.

As we have seen several time before, this son of a righteous king was evil. His eleven year claim to the throne brought the nation crashing down from the heights it had reached under his father, to sharp disapproval from Jehovah.

2 Chron. 36:6 Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon.

The Assyrians had now lost power to the Babylonians, or Chaldeans. Nebuchadnezzar came and in spite of the Egyptian presence, he was able to capture Jehoiakim, place him in chains and take him to Babylon.

2 Chron. 36:7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon.

At the same time Nebuchadnezzar took treasures from the temple and put them into his own temple where they would give honor to his own false gods. The people of God had become a political football, being tossed between Egypt and the powers to the east of them.

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**2 Chron. 36:8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.**

Much of the material found in First and Second Chronicles is also found in First and Second Kings. Each of these records has some details not found in the other. Both must be examined to get the complete picture.

**2 Chron. 36:9 Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD.**

There is a discrepancy between the age of this king when he began to reign. The age is given as eighteen in the book of Second Kings. That figure fits the statement of the present verse more accurately. An eight year old would not have been more than a figurehead. Jehoiachin followed in the footsteps of his father and promoted wickedness in the land.

**2 Chron. 36:10 And when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem.**

By the end of the year Nebuchadnezzar treated Jehoiachin in the same way he had treated his father. He was taken captive and moved to Babylon. His

brother Zedekiah was put upon the throne under the rule of the king of the Babylonians.

Apparently all of the temple vessels had not been taken before. More of them followed as Jehoiachin was captivated.

**2 Chron. 36:11 Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.**

**2 Chron. 36:12 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the LORD.**

Zedekiah lasted somewhat longer than had his brothers. . He reigned for eleven years. He also led rebellion against the Lord. Jeremiah enters the scene now and presents the Word of God to Zedekiah. This was nearly useless. Zedekiah had no intention of submitting himself to the authority of Jehovah.

More can be learned about the condition of the land by a study of the prophecy in the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations.

**2 Chron. 36:13 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel.**

Zedekiah had no more respect for Nebuchadnezzar than he had for God. He had made a promise before God that he would obey the Babylonian king. He was determined to direct his own ways. This was to lead to further misery.



**2 Chron. 36:14 Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.**

After all of the efforts of such men as Hezekiah and Josiah to cleanse the temple and restore the worship, that house of the Lord was polluted. The abominations of the heathen would have been idolatrous worship and the images which were the objects of the that worship. We can readily understand why God would have been angry with them.

**2 Chron. 36:15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place:**

Instead of immediately bringing the nation to an end, God sent such men as Isaiah and Jeremiah to warn them of their waywardness. This was far more merciful than one might have expected. God is compassionate. He goes to great ends to see that his people have every opportunity to mend their ways.

**2 Chron. 36:16 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.**

God has had more than one kind of messenger. Some of us are God's messengers because we take the messages which have been given to inspired prophets

and relay them to others. This is a valuable service. Preachers and teachers of the Word of God must be listened to with the greatest of respect. To mock those who bring us divine truth is a deadly path of action. During the days we are discussing in this chapter these messengers were often inspired. They received the truth directly from God.

It mattered little to those rebellious Israelites that the Lord was the source of the teachings the prophets laid before them. They mocked the prophets and messengers. They despised the One who had sent them. Dear reader, God is not to be either mocked or despised. Humans sometimes retaliate viciously when they are treated with disrespect. God finally reaches a point at which He also reaches the end of His patience. When God knows there is no hope of successful disciplinary action, we are told “God gave them up.” Every avenue had been followed. No remedy worked!

**2 Chron. 36:17 Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.**

The Chaldeans, or Babylonians, were sent into their midst without compassion. Both young and old were slain. Both men and women met death at their hands. They received no help from the Lord because they had hardened the hearts and stiffened their necks before every attempt He had made to reform them.

**2 Chron. 36:18 And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of**  
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the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.

As we first read that the vessels of the temple were carried to Babylon we may have assumed that all of them were removed from the temple. It was a bit of a surprise to read a verse or two later that the vessels of the temple were carried to Babylon. There is only one possible explanation. The first was a partial removal. The second removed more of these vessels. But look at the pointedness of the verse here. **All** of the vessels, both **great and small** were taken. Also the treasures of the king and the prominent men of the land were taken along with the temple articles.

2 Chron. 36:19 And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

The temple was set afire. The wall around the city of Jerusalem was leveled. Anything of value was destroyed. The temple had been one of the most impressive buildings ever seen. It was in ruins.

At the time I write these words enemies of the United States of America hijacked two great passenger airplanes and caused the pilots to crash them into the two great towers of the world trade center in New York City. One hundred stories each, they were turned into gigantic piles of rubble. Thousands of persons lost their lives. Millions and millions of dollars worth of materials became scrap heaps. The people who witnessed those tragedies in New York might possibly have some idea

of the pathetic situation as one of the wonders of the world was erased at the hands of the Babylonians.

2 Chron. 36:20 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia.

The proud Jews who were not killed were taken as slaves and served in Babylonia for decades. They remained there in captivity until the Babylonian empire was dominated by the Medo-Persians.

2 Chron. 36:21 To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths, for as long as she lay desolate, she kept sabbath to fulfil three score and ten years.

Let's go to the book of Jeremiah and see just what this prophecy was. It is found in Jeremiah 25:9-12 and Jeremiah 29:10.

Jer 25:9 Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

Jer 25:10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

Jer 25:11 And this whole land shall be a desolation,



*and an astonishment; and **these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.***

Jer 25:12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

Jer 29:10 For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

Every seventh years was to be a sabbath for the land. Crops were to be harvested for six years and the land was to lie fallow on the seventh. The Israelites had not obeyed that command. Now that rest was to be had. From 606 B.C until 536 B.C. the people could not work the land. For seventy years it had it's intended rest. Then God would return the people to the land.

2 Chron. 36:22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing saying,

2 Chron. 36:23 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

The last two verses of this book are identical with the first two verses of the next book, which is the book of Ezra. It is appropriate that they be used as a link between the captivity and the return.

As soon as Cyrus, the king of Persia came into power he honored the word of Jeremiah the prophet and had a proclamation written that the Israelites were to be permitted to leave Babylon and return to their own land. This king of Persia had more regard for the Word of the Lord than did those of the seed of Abraham. Cyrus realized that God is the Lord of the entire earth. Cyrus was only king because the real King had arranged it. God had now given him a command to build Him a house in Jerusalem. Anyone of the Israelites who desired to return could do so with the blessings of their Lord.

God did have a hand in this proclamation of Cyrus. Human rulers do not give up their subjects without good reason. Cyrus had a good reason.



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