

# **Booklet 1. Chapters 1 - 8**

## ***ISRAEL'S NEW START WITH GOD UNDER SOLOMON***

An outline is all that is possible, but I trust it will encourage the intelligent reading of this part of God's Word, and help you to listen afresh to what God is saying to us. Much of what is written concerns things which we can't readily understand and appreciate, and there are many things that might interest us that are left out. But what is written is recorded for our learning; and due reading, study, thought and prayer will bring to our notice much that is relevant to our own spiritual state, and daily life.

E. Read

Explanation of Signs

PEACE/Fellowship is KJV/Niv, as usual, but to save space this is rarely used. Text is generally NIV.

LXX= Septuagint OT. Mss= Manuscripts. Cp= Compare with these Scriptures.

Magazine, Edited by H Shanks. In that magazine Atheists, Christians, and Jews argue their interpretations of discoveries. In the past some archaeologists were quick to say "Bible proved true by discoveries," on the flimsiest grounds. Currently many more are over-reacting to this by refusing to see support for Bible statements, even when they are obvious. God's Word speaks for itself, and needs no "Proof" except Believing Obedience, Heb 11. But material I have quoted has been tested by criticism, and proved defensible, and seemed to me helpful in understanding what is written in the Bible.

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*No author is named though sources/ alternative records are mentioned. There is no indication as to WHEN it was written. The Jews apparently considered it was written by Jeremiah, using the court records, and oral traditions. In his time the Kingdom was collapsing, and it was possible to see everything in perspective, as the consequences of the ebb and flow of Faith-Obedience/ Unbelief-Apostasy were obvious by then. As a History, written afterwards using assembled materials, not everything fits in smoothly - eg Solomon's horses interrupt the flow in 4:26, because they had to be supplied with food, and appear again in the list of building projects. There are verdicts on Solomon in Kings that he is unlikely to have written, and Ecclesiastes is the message of Solomon/ Solomon's life as a warning sermon, viewed in retrospect through his "Wisdom," whether it was recorded in writing by him in a state of remorse or by another, as Prov 25-29 were.*

*Each king is introduced, date of accession given, and, in Judah, his mother is given - an acknowledgment of the importance of the Mother's role. Then there is an assessment from the point of view of God's will and purposes; concluding with his notable deeds, and references to secular historical sources. As the "Former prophets" they speak for God in history, using or omitting facts (eg That before God appeared to Solomon he already had an Ammonite wife isn't mentioned until her son Rehoboam became King.) to get their message across.*

*The books were written in Hebrew, so the Massoretic Text is the basis of our English translations. But the LXX and other translations shed extra light on the text, especially when the Hebrew is confused or unclear. The Dead Sea Scrolls have only parts of 1 Kings 1, 3, 12, 22, but the Isaiah scroll shows us that a similar text to the Massoretic text was in use in the time of Christ. \*\*2 The older LXX Mss differ a good deal from the Massoretic, but later LXX conform more closely to it.*

Footnote \*\*1 Chronicles wasn't completed until long after the exile as 1 Chr 3:17-24 lists 8 generations of David's royal line beyond it.

Footnote \*\*2 Some of the NT quotes seem to be from the LXX, not from the Hebrew Massoretic Text. After the destruction of Jerusalem the Jewish Massoretic/ Textual Scholars collected all the OT Mss they could, and, where there were any variations in them, selected what they thought was the best Text, and destroyed the old copies. The Dead Sea Scrolls were missed, and they may be a fair sample of the OT Text in NT times. It seems that at least 60% of them are close to what became the Massoretic Text, but about 5% are closer to the LXX, and 5% closer to the Samaritan Text. BAR 1995 No. 2.

eg. Solomon is presented in all his glory, with everything presented larger than life. It does so to awaken, and cultivate a hunger for the coming of that Messianic Kingdom where everything is glorious.

It's foolish to criticise a painting for being different from a photograph of the same scene, or to criticise CHRONICLES for not agreeing exactly with KINGS, (Or John with Matthew.) I concentrate on the record in Kings using Chronicles only where a gap seems to need filling.

Each book of God's Word is like a separate jig-saw puzzle picture. When we take pieces from several Gospels, or from Kings and Chronicles and try to fit them together to make a fuller picture we find some pieces don't fit. This isn't because those pieces are WRONG. It's simply that we haven't been given ALL the pieces of information needed to make that fuller picture. If we had them we would be able to see how the pieces we do have fit together, and if we needed to know that, God would have given them to us.

And it isn't God's intention that we should be able to build any DOGMATIC Systematic Theology, Systematic History, Systematic order of Future Events, the date of Creation etc. We insult God, and confuse and divide His people when we insist on using His Word for such purposes. Each part of God's Word is to be used for the purpose for which He gave it, 1 Tim 1:8.

Footnote \*\*3 The Jews rated KINGS as HISTORY, placing it in the FORMER PROPHETS. They placed CHRONICLES in the WRITINGS along with Job, Psalms, etc. The Hebrew language is poetic, figurative, rather than mechanically factual, but the WRITINGS are especially so. As the Pentateuch was especially revered as God's Word it was copied most carefully, and comes down to us with few textual uncertainties. The PROPHETS were rated next in value to the Pentateuch, and in the care taken in copying. But there was much argument about which of the WRITINGS, such as Chronicles, should be included in the Bible. By 600AD Jewish scholars had decided to exclude from their Massoretic text the books which remain in the LXX Apocrypha. But the low rating they gave to even the WRITINGS they did accept means they were less fussy about copying the text carefully. This leads to such discrepancies as Ithra/Jether an Isf adite, 2Sam 17:25 1 Ki 2:5, IshMadite, 1Chr 2:17, Al mug/Al gum wood, etc.

on with what GOD CANE DOWN IN CREATION: But as a car battery has a LIMITED LIFE unless it's recharged as it runs, unless in Christ man gets back into touch with God, that life is used up runs out, ending in endless death.

The record of THIS intervention by God begins in Samuel. God provides deliverance for His people by David - A REJECTED KING - that empowers Peace under a REIGNING KING - SOLOMON. In the times of the Judges, individual tribes/groups of tribes went their own way largely ignoring God, His purposes, and each other. This meant that they fought on equal terms with Edomites, Midianites, Ammonites, Moabites, etc, and were too weak to displace the stronger Amorite and Philistine towns so survived on the poorer hill country, \*\*5 and aimed only at survival. The limited Religious/ spiritual unity provided by Shiloh, Josh 18:1-10 21:1-2; 22:10-12 Judges 18:31; 21:12, 19-21; 1 Sam 1:1-28 2:11-20 3:19-21; 4:3-22 was lost when the Ark was taken, and perhaps soon afterwards the Tabernacle was burnt along with Shiloh Ps 78:58-64 Jer 7:12-14; 26:6-9. God showed He was able to look after the Ark, and Samuel rallied them from utter defeat and despair.

Saul started a unified state, and David completed liberating Israel from enslavement by the surrounding small nations, and under him Israel finally entered into possession of the whole land \*\*6 But in both cases it took time to win support from all the tribes. Solomon ignored any need for tribal support, and largely ignored tribal boundaries when he reorganised the districts, 1 Ki 4:7-19.

Footnote \*\*4 The history of the Temple is recorded in 1 Ki 6-8; 2 Ki 11:1-21; 12:4-16 18:4-16 21:4-15 22:3-7; 23:1-6, 11 24:13 25:13-17.

Footnote \*\*5 Josh 17:14-18 sums up the problem faced by the Israelites until under David they conquered the fertile plains of the land. Their small poor villages, (depending on small dry fields, and cistern stored water) in the hilly, scrub country have been excavated at Ai, Khirbet Radcan, Gibeah of Benjamin, and at Izbet Sartah (Ebenezer?) 2 miles from Aphaek, etc. They contrast sharply with the luxury of the contemporary Amorite and Philistine towns such as Aphaek. Ceiling beams only 5 feet 6 inches from the floor suggests that poverty had stunted the growth of the Israelites. BAR 1978 No 383, No 5.

Footnote \*\*6 Entered into their Rest PHYSICALLY, but failed to do so SPIRITUALLY, Heb 4:6-11.

substantiated, Jerusalem was more acceptable to all tribes than a tribal centre such as Hebron. It was important that the TEMPLE and the PALACE be a magnificent sight to those who came to Jerusalem, as they symbolised the twin centres of the national identity - God, and the King from the God-appointed house of David.

It's obvious that from Judges onward the Religious Life of the people failed to centre on the Tabernacle/ Shiloh. Godliness moved some like Samuel's parents to go to Shiloh to keep a Feast, \*\*7 1 Sam 1:3; 2:12-17. Worshipping at the Tabernacle required travelling a distance for most of God's people, and in unsettled times such travel was less than safe, 2 Chr 15:1-6, and a High Place - Bamah would be conveniently close. God's people worshipped Him at such places, but High Places usually had an association with Amorite Worship of Baal and Asherah, and so were a negative influence. See 3:1. Note 11:1-13; 12:31-33; 13:2-5; 32:33; 14:23; 15:12-14; 22:43.

When the Ark had been taken there seemed no alternative to worshipping at High Places. Samuel built an altar to the Lord at Ramah, 1 Sam 7:17, and worshipped at a High Place at an unnamed city in the land of Zuph, 1 Sam 9:5-19. People were going up to the Lord to Bethel, 1 Sam 10:3. Samuel gathered them to the Lord at Mizpah, 1 Sam 10:17. Saul's Kingdom was renewed before the Lord at Gilgal, 1 Sam 11:15. That God ACCEPTED worship at HIGH PLACES if the offerer was well-intentioned seems obvious from His appearing to Sdomon at Gibeon.

But when the whole land was under ordered government and the Temple had been built, all worship was to be centralised there. But it seems that a concerted effort by the Priests and the King to enforce this was not made until the time of Hezekiah and Josiah. But worship of the Lord mixed with worship of Baal continued at High Places until the Exile broke the old associations.

Footnote \*\*7 Apparently the Feast of First Fruits/ Weeks, or of Tabernacles. Of the other great feasts, Ex 23:14-17; Lev 23; Deu 16, Passover seems to have been forgotten, 2 Ki 23:21-23. The Day of Atonement Lev 23:27, 28; 25:9; Num 29:7-11, was vital to the spiritual life of Israel, but in their spiritual deadness it seems that they soon ignored it as I can find no mention of it being kept.

had direct hand on them - down Egypt's river, and made marriage alliances also with the royal families of surrounding petty Kingdoms - a Political/Economic TRIUMPH and a Spiritual DISASTER.

## DAVID & SOLOMON

David's reign is given in detail, Solomon's only briefly, and mostly concerning the Temple, Peace, Glory, and finally heart apostasy. And on the information given, in the end the folly of his personal life was as great as the spiritual wisdom and Temple building of his early life. There is no evidence given of a deliberate desire to walk with God when his initial blessings wore off. Although Solomon's reign is impressive/memorable in MATERIAL terms, David is far more important and influential in SPIRITUAL terms. See Appendix II.

The Northern Kingdom had little sense of calling for God-given role. It lived for the present self-preservation, and selfish enjoyment, as patterned by Jeroboam, who followed his own ideas, 1233 "It was more exposed to foreign pressure and influences than Judah - Galilee of the Gentiles," Isa 9:1.

## TRUTHS EXPRESSED IN KINGS

The LORD IS SOVEREIGN. He alone is GOD, Creator and Sustainer, OVER the Universe, yet active WITHIN it, and He is in control of Israel and of the Nations. What God purposes HAPPENS. He KNOWS EVERYTHING, foretells and forewarns, 1 Ki 3:4-15; 8:10-12, 27-30; 6:9, 2-9; 11:29-39; 13:1-5/2 Ki 23:15-16; 16:1-7, 12-13; 1 Ki 17:3-24; 18:41-45; 19:1-8, 15-18; 20:13-30; 22:7-38; 2 Ki 2:1-14; 5:10-14; 8:7-15; 9:6-10; 13:14-25; 14:25-27; 17:13-23; 19:14-36; 20:1-21; 21:10-15; 22:14-20. He is ALL-POWERFUL, PRESENT EVERYWHERE, and all must deal with Him, 1 Ki 8:27-30; 4:1-43; 18:38; 2 Ki 17:36-39; 19:14-19.

While God is SOVEREIGN, and prophecies are fulfilled, human responsibility/stewardship are also obvious. Human actions produce the Judgments as a natural result, not an arbitrary intervention by God. Men are shown to sow and reap, and justly suffer the consequences of their disobedience, 2:26-27; 3:14; 8:31-53; 9:4-9; 11:9-40; 12:1-16; 14:10-11/15; 25-30; 16:2-4/8-13; 16:33-34; 20:35-43; 21:21-29; 22:17/22-30; 38; 2 Ki 9:25-37. Cp Acts 2:23; Rom 1:18-32; Gal 6:7-10.

19/ 19:3-37, 21:7-13, 22:11-20, 23:1-27. This unique relationship with God makes iddatry particularly sinful and dangerous. Reading Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea etc sharpens ones realisation of this.

Kings is a history of the interaction of Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility in the working out of God's purposes for His covenant people, Israel. This record of the Kings of Israel and Judah is what God in His wisdom has chosen to give, in the form which he has chosen to give us. That is all we KNOW for certain, and it's certainly all we need to know. For those who feel a need to dig beneath the surface, I attempt to supply information in Appendix 1. But with the caution that if it lessens the conviction that we have an urgent need to read these books as an inspired message from God, with a view to learning life-lessons from them, your reading of anything I, or others, have written is worse than a waste of time. I

## 1:1-53 TRANSITION - David to Solomon

1:1-4. David OLD- They had no Geriatric hospitals, so he's provided with an attractive young woman with the status of a concubine, but in fact a nurse and bed-warmer. Galen the Greek physician made a similar recommendation. Today hypothermia sufferers may be put into a sleeping bag with someone who shares their body warmth with them. Many cultures acknowledge the right of the elderly to have a grandchild etc to fetch and carry for them. While to us Abishag's position may seem unfair it would have been a life of luxury compared with domestic or farm work. As often, the Bible states what is done, but gives no verdict. This incident is essential background to the rest of the chapter.

David was about 70 years old, 2 Sam 5:4, worn out with a desperate, demanding life - heroic heights of faith and depths of folly. Defender of Israel under erratic, jealous Saul. Then, as King he battled with the encroaching neighbouring Kingdoms, lapsing into the tragic sin with Bathsheba just when Peace for Israel was within sight. He then had to

King, ignoring God, and the revealed will of God that coronation should be King, 2 Sam 12:24-25, 1 Chr 22:9-10, 28:4-7. Chariots and Runners- Bodyguard/ runners/ heralds such as those Joseph had, Gen 41:42-44 and Absalom, 2 Sam 15:1.

Born next after Absalom- 2 Sam 2:4, so normally had the right of inheritance - his older brothers Amnon and Absalom were dead, and Chileab, either dead or a nonentity. He followed the example of Absalom, his self-willed, recklessly ambitious older brother who had worked in an underhand way 2 Sam 15:1-12, and was almost successful. He decided to ignore God's will/ David's will, make himself King, and David would have to accept his coup.

His father had never- Although David was a strong character what was said of Eli, 1 Sam 3:13 was true of him. Deprived of his wife, 1 Sam 25:44 He collected women as his fancy moved him. (God permitted this, as He permits the sinful folly of Marriage break-ups etc today, if His children insist on it.) Instead of the united, disciplined Godly home-life God decreed in Deu 6:1-9, David's children grew up in the idleness and luxury of a royal harem, where each wife pushed her children forward, and encouraged their selfish ambitions while trying to outmanoeuvre her rivals for the King's favours. It was impossible for David to give fatherly care to all of them, and interest taken in one son would be resented by the mothers of other sons. As a result Amnon, Absalom and Adonijah were spoiled rotten. They had the self-confidence gained from being allowed to do what they liked without their behaviour being called in question, or their father discussing with them what was right, God-pleasing and appropriate to Kings sons.

David's sin with Bathsheba disgraced God, and cursed his family with an example that resulted in violence and sexual sin among them, 2 Sam 12:9-12 Cp Sowing and reaping, Gal 6:7-8. Although granted forgiveness and cleansing, Ps 51, he seems to have not thrown off the burden of guilt. This seems to have crippled his ability to rule effectively, 2 Sam 15:2-4. or deal with the sins of his sons, 2 Sam chapters 13-15. Awareness of our own sinfulness should keep us humble, but right is still right, and wrong still wrong. A parent, elder etc who is aware of his own sin, and has repented of it and been forgiven/ cleansed must still teach and enforce God's will, doing so humbly and with fellow-feeling, Gal 6:1.

valley from Jerusalem to be safe from interruption, close enough for a convenient return in triumphal procession. Cp Absalom's coup 2Sam 15:1-12. By not inviting the others he gave them a strong hint that they had no future in his Kingdom. He would have no obligation to them that a Host has towards those who have eaten with him, no commitment to allow them have a share with him in his Kingdom.

ZADOK the Priest- Descended from Eleazar, Aaron's successor as High Priest, 1 Chr 6:1-8, 5053 \*\*8 (It seems as if scribes repeated some names in 1 Chr 6:1-15, or omitted some in Ezra 7:1-6. Don't get into arguments about Genealogies, 1 Tim 1:4.) Priest along with Abiathar son of Ahimelech, 2 Sam 8:17; 2025 etc. Had charge of the Ark, 2 Sam 15:24-29. Possibly the Zadokim, 1 Chr 12:26-28

BENAIAH- Greatest of the Mighty Men, 2 Sam 23:20-23 THE MIGHTY MEN/special guard WHICH BELONGED TO DAVID. Responsible to Him with no other duties. Adonijah's coup ignored David. NATHAN THE PROPHET - God's spokesman to David, 2 Sam 7:4-17; 12:25. A prophet was God's direct spokesman, when God chose to use him.

1:11-14 NATHAN spoke to BATHSHEBA SOLOMON'S MOTHER. Nathan didn't need a special message to act at this point. He knew it was God's will that Solomon be King and build the Temple. When we know God's will - eg for all men to repent and be saved - it's up to us to do everything we can to make it happen. A DEAD Solomon could never build the Temple, and a Nathan or Zadok set aside as Abiathar was, 2:26-27 might be able to do little for God. Their own selfish interests happened to coincide with God's interests in this case, as it does sometimes. Bathsheba must tell David what has happened, and remind him of his promise that Solomon would be King, and of God's word on the matter. Nathan gives good advice and, better still, acts to support it (Did Abishag help keep David in ignorance of what was going on- or was it only later that Adonijah fancied her?)

Footnote \*\*8 Priests (and their whole tribe of Levi) were set apart to approach God on behalf of His people by offering sacrifices, etc. But as God was Holy it was His will that His people live Holy lives in fellowship with Him, so His Priests were to guide and give verdicts on the whole of people's lives. They must KNOW God, and His will, teach, encourage, lead by example all His people to know Him, and to live in fellowship with Him, Lev 9:10-11; Deu

Elohim was commonly used in the OT, but never My Jehovah, etc - Suggests that Elohim was used for what He is in relation to mankind, Jehovah for what He is in Himself. The oath had been in response to Nathan's message that Solomon would build the Temple and reign, 2 Sam 7:14-11; 122425 This oath may not have been widely publicised, as to do so would have endangered Solomon as a child - tempted the mother of a rival son to poison him, etc. OR it may have been regarded as the sort of thing a King might say to his favourite wife of the moment, and forget about later and say the same to another.

1:2227 Nathan bowed himself- The Hebrew reads "his nose earthward." He made every effort to avoid antagonising the King, arousing any childish petulance common in the aged. Life and Death were at issue, as well as the furtherance of God's purposes and His promises to David, so Nathan acted wisely as he had done in bringing home to David his personal guilt in the matter of Bathsheba. Apart from the requirements of formal court speech, the repetition of statements to David would focus David's limited powers of concentration to make the meaning clear to him. Done without your servants being told- Suggests they couldn't truly serve the King if He didn't keep them informed as to his wishes. Cp Jn 15:15 He is made to realise that as a result of Adonijah's action the nation as a whole needed/expected David to make a formal, public statement

1:2831 I will carry out today- He renews his sworn promise to make Solomon \*\*9King, basing his action on God's goodness to him. It was against the background of God's merciful dealings with him, that God had made His promises re Solomon, and David had taken up those promises and said his Amen to them. David must act today, or it would be too late. We too may have found it easy to take a stand on God's promises and promise to do something, but our life can run out without it being done, unless we often recall what God in His Grace has done for us. Good intentions can be an insult to God, Ecc 5:2-6; Lk 9:62 Jas 2:14-16

Footnote \*\*9 SOLOMON- From SHALOM- Peace completeness, welfare, health. First used in Gen 15:15 Shall go to thy Fathers in PEACE= tranquility. Ps 41:9 My FAMILIAR friend= the one with whom I felt at home. Gen 43:27 Is your father WELL?" Shalom is a harmonious state of spirit, soul, heart, mind, body, and socially, which enables one to

Kings made in a royal procession publicly symbolizing that David had handed over the exercise of Kingship to him. A ride down through the city to Gihon, (the spring-fed pool was the main water supply,) would make this obvious, and stir up popular support. Springs were important focal points for life in arid lands, surrounded by open space markets, etc so a good place for assembling a crowd.

Benaiah gladly accepted David's handing over authority to Solomon and asked God's continued blessing on him to an increased degree. He with the King's bodyguard would provide protection and show the people that this was an official action. Pelethites- Philistines, including those from Gath, 2 Sam 18:2, (if named from their homeland, who earlier came from Crete so Cherethites. Foreigners with personal loyalty to the King and no loyalty ties to local relatives etc knew that his safety and their safety stood together. But IF named from the occupation Executioners and Runners.

Zadok God's Priest, had access to the Sacred Oil used in the worship of God, and the right to use it. He with Nathan, God's spokesman, were to publicly anoint Solomon King. This publicly proclaimed that Solomon was being made King in fellowship with God, as well as with King David. Saul, 1 Sam 9:15-16, 10:1 and David, 1 Sam 16:1-13 had been anointed at God's express command. In this case it was in fulfillment of God's fore-telling. It had also an association with God's empowering by His Spirit. He anointed one for the work God had given him, 1 Sam 10:9, 16:13. Blowing the Temple trumpets to assemble God's people was also following Bible rules, Lev 23:24 Num 10:2-10.

SIT UPON MY THRONE - After a royal procession back up through the city. This would make it clear to all that King David had commanded Solomon to be the RULE R- Nagid- Chief, Leader. Linked with Nagad to tell - so the one who gives orders. It's used of Saul, 1 Sam 10:1, and David 2 Sam 7:8. The PEOPLE said GOD SAVE A LONG live- Chayah- Live, KING SOLOMON.

All the people rejoicing so greatly the EARTH RENT /shock- An example of what is NOT meant to be taken literally! The people in general responded spontaneously. Saul hadn't been accepted until he won the hearts of the people by delivering Jabesh-Gilead, 1 Sam 11:12-15. David had to wait until 7 years after Saul's death, 2 Sam 5:1-5.

supporters would share his success but it might well be at their expense. A residual loyalty to David would be pleased to see him take action, and give some confidence that he would have chosen for the welfare of the community as a whole.

1:41-53 ADONIJAH heard- Full of self-importance, he seems to have imagined that the news of his coup had reached the city and they were shouting "Long live Adonijah!" JONATHAN son of ABIATHAR gives an excellently factual report. He was too important to have been omitted accidentally from the guest list. As earlier, when David was fleeing from Jerusalem, 2 Sam 15:33-36 17:15-21, he had probably been left on guard to warn if Benaiah etc were marching armed towards En Rogel or the like. He adds eye-witness details that make it all too obvious that in every way Solomon has been accepted as King.

The King bowed himself- Having apparently been carried on his bed to the outdoor celebration, is seen to be approving. He gives Solomon his blessing and pours out his heart-thankfulness to God, for God's blessing. And he claims for Solomon the proclaimed purposes of God which were now beginning to be fulfilled. This reinforces in Solomon's mind the basis of the Kingship, and its responsibilities to do the revealed will of God. Solomon reigned/ took over responsibility for the ruling of the country. While David the man survived, David the King ceased to be.

1:49-50 Adonijah- No heroic response. He wasn't supported by a clear conscience before God, and he and his friends crumple and scatter when the pressure comes on, Prov 28:1. They faced the expressed will of David, the support of the people in general, AND the core Zadok/ Nathan/ Benaiah and the Kings Guard they had by-passed.

Horns of the Altar- Horns symbolised strength, horns of the altar, sacredness as they were smeared with the blood of the sacrifice, Ex 27:2; 29:12; Lev 4:18; 9:9, etc. To take hold of the horns of the altar was seen as bringing the man under God's protection, sanctified, identified with God, and his murder would then be an insult to God. But according to God's law His protection covered only the innocent man-slayer, as with the Cities of refuge, Ex 21:12-14; Num 35:6-25. People who have ignored God all the good days of their life, turn to Him in panic when the bad times come. An insult to God, and seldom a real change of heart, Ps 50:16-23 \*\*12

**\*\*NOTE\*\*** We need to distinguish between statements which have spiritual authority PERMANENTLY for God's people, and those which while truthful, are merely part of the background of the revelations of God's will - court politeness. "May the king live forever - in his dotage! Things merely permitted at that stage of development - concubinage, polygamy, as a step towards God's ideal to be dropped as soon as sufficient progress has been made. David in his Kingship had taken steps cautiously feeling his way forward in fellowship with God. That Solomon should reign was God's will - but elements of political manoeuvring and expediency are there from the start, and such worldly wisdom soon dominated to personal and political disaster! That God's will was done doesn't mean that God approved of all the actions of Nathan, Bathsheba, Benaiah, Solomon, etc. They sowed and would reap. That there were elements of fallen humanity in their actions didn't prevent them from achieving God's purposes, claiming His blessings and reward. All lives are Lord-related History.

## 2:1-11 DAVID'S Last EXHORTATIONS & their out-working

2:1-4 Be STRONG, Be a MAN - Be what a man should be, act the God-intended role. Cp Moses to Joshua, Deu 3:16-8, 23; Josh 1:6-9; Ps 19:7-14. These verses express his concern for Solomon's Spiritual life, it being the key to God's fulfilment of His promises. David's commitment to the Lord personally - Obedient Faith in God and His revealed will - set the standard by which Kingship was always judged in Judah, at least by the writer. Prov 4:3-9 speaks of David spending time admonishing Solomon as he grew up and here at the last he speaks strongly to him of his spiritual responsibility as God's Servant-King. But Solomon failed to refresh his spiritual life in God as he grew into the privileges of Kingship, and David's influence faded. Then Solomon's self-centred self-indulgence and political expediency came to dominate his life. What we are becoming is always more important than the work we try to do, Deu 4:9, 1 Tim 4:16

KEEP/Observe- Shamar- To protect, keep, take heed to, observe, as Adam was to KEEP the Garden of Eden, Gen 2:15. He was to take an intelligent interest in it with a view to its upkeep. Solomon is urged to

judge and giving a verdict that upholds the rights of all concerned, as in Ex 23:1-9, Ecc 12:14. His TESTIMONIES/requirements- Eduth- From Edah- testimony. What God says about things. These different aspects of the Law overlap, but are all listed as a reminder to live by every aspect of God's revealed will in its bearing on every aspect of life.

As written in the Law- Torah- At the HUMAN level, the Father and mother give the young INSTRUCTION/ Torah, Prov 18: 6:20 This was effective in the measure they knew, taught, and demonstrated God's Torah which He gave to Moses for Israel. Of Moses- Called the LAW of the LORD, Ps 119:1, of God, Neh 8:18 \*\*13 God gave it that Israel might live, Deu 4:8, and each King was to write himself/ have prepared for him, a copy, Deu 17:18 The Priests were to study, apply, and teach it, 2 Chr 15:3; Jer 18:18 God promised that the day would come when He would write this LAW in men's hearts, Jer 31:33

Prosper- Sakal- To be wise, intelligent, prudent, successful. LXX Suriemi- To set together, understand, perceive. Sun- Together. Noeo- To understand, grasp with the Nous/ mind. It was unwise for Eve to seek wisdom in defiance of God's command!

That the Lord may CONTINUE/Keep HIS WORD/promises- Literally make His Word continue standing. God is committed to His promises, as they are part of His eternal purposes for mankind, but as Holy and Righteous He cannot use us, or bless us, unless we co-operate and share His aims and character.

To walk- One step at a time, in each decision made. Before Me- Before His Face aware that He sees all, and is pleased, or distressed, frustrated, angered. IN TRUTH/faithfully- Emeth- Usually translated TRUTH, True, Truly, so in LXX Aletheia 100x Pistis- faithful 16x Neh 7:2, etc, Dikaios Right, Neh 9:33 with all their heart- Deu 4:29 10:12, in contrast to Gen 6:5-6. Never FAIL a man on the throne- From his life's experience of struggling to fellowship with God acceptably in his daily life and service, aware of his own weakness and failures and the reason for them, David gives this testimony to Solomon, which is also his Testimony to us ALL.

Footnote \*\*13 You may meet some who say the expression "Law of Moses" always refers to the ceremonial Law of sacrifices, etc no longer binding. And the expression "Law of the Lord/ God" always refers to the moral Law, 10 Commandments etc, which are still binding. BUT

when the King reigns in power.)

2:5-6 You know what JOAB did to me- Cp done to Christ's own in His time of rejection, Acts 9:4-5. Shed the blood of WAR in PEACE - To kill in a time of Peace is Murder. Blood on his girdle- Symbd of strength prepared for action, 2 Ki 4:29 Job 38; Jer 1:17, etc. (Some Mss say David's girdle - Joab's actions gave the impression that David approved.) And his shoes- symbd of his behaviour. He walked in the ways of murder. Joab \*\*14 was an outstanding soldier and general, recognised from the time of the capture of Jebus, 1 Chr 11:6. He showed common sense in killing Absalom, and his rebuke of David, 2 Sam 18:14; 19:1-8, and in objecting to the census, 2 Sam 24:1-3. But Amasa was obeying David when Joab murdered him while greeting him as a friend, 2 Sam 20:9-10. Abner was under David's protection having agreed to a peacetreaty, killed in the gate of a city of refuge because he was foolish enough to trust Joab. He had defied David in these actions, and David had disowned Joab's action as soon as he had heard of them, but had not acted physically against him, 2 Sam 3:20-39. David seemed unable to decide what to do about Joab's mixture of loyalty and defiance. Joab had lived to old age, but not earned respect.

2:7 Show kindness- Chesed, 3:6. to the sons of Barzillai- His loyalty to David the King in his rejection 2 Sam 19:31-39 requires rewarding when the King reigns in power. (If we suffer with Christ, we reign with Him, 2 Tim 2:12.) The witness of his loyalty, a joy to reward, stands in contrast to the equally righteous but unpleasant, regretted rewarding of Joab's murdering and Shimei's cursing, Ezek 33:1.

2:8-9 Shimei cursed- Qala- To curse, despise, sneer at, weaken. Shimei's action deserved death, but David, acutely aware of Absalom's worse sin, which was an outcome of his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam 12:11) ignored the sin of Shimei as a fellow-sinner, and forbade killing him at the time, 2 Sam 16:5-14. He came to meet me, and David had accepted his apology, and agreed to spare his life, 2 Sam 19:16-23. Some suggest that David, humble, thankful, generous in victory, had turned spiteful in old age. But David spoke words of forgiveness when Shimei asked for it backed by 1000 men! - when David's hold on the Kingdom was weak.

Footnote \*\*14 Joab's mother Zeruiah, (no mention of his father) and Amasa's mother Abigail were David's sisters, 1 Chr 2:12-16. The Hebrews used nick-names to show someone's

skilful, practical. Like the WISE MEN of Egypt, Gen 41:8, or the skilful craftsman of Ex 36:4; Isa 40:20 It was associated with shrewdness and cleverness rather than virtue, Ex 7:11; 2 Sam 13:3; 14:2, but GODLY wise men apply their knowledge of God to all the practical issues of life in order to develop true Wisdom, Prov 1:7. (Not like foods depending on their own wisdom, Prov 3:7; 26:12) Wise in the sense of applying principles in such a way as to use the situation to make the best outcome more probable. Cp "Government is the art of the possible." David was a man of deep emotions and convictions, lovably honest before God and man but with little of the shrewdness that makes for wise government, 2 Sam 19:1-8

2:10-11 David.. buried- Decent burial was an honored end to life, Gen 15:5; 1 Sam 31:11-13 etc. Reigns over Israel forty years- A statement of fact in David's case, 2 Sam 5:4-5. But also seems to symbolise that a Ruler had done his work well, Judges 3:11; 5:31;

## 2:12-46 Solomon ACTS to ESTABLISH his Kingdom

(When someone is given a position they need to exercise it wisely. Plans need to be committed to the Lord, Prov 16:3, as He can make permanent only that which is righteous. Solomon's actions were WISE in worldly wisdom, but God's verdict on them isn't given.)

2:13-17 ADONIJAH to BATHSHEBA - As Queen Mother she would be in charge of the royal harem, as well as having a mother's right to ask favours of her son. He may also have hoped for her womanly sympathy. What he says is an odd mixture of cautious diplomacy, pious acknowledgment of God's will, and arrogant boastfulness - possibly ambition

Give me ABISHAG - On the face of it this was reasonable. Surely she deserved a husband (If she wasn't married in the interval after David's death.) But there's no indication of it being an unselfish or romantic action on the part of Adonijah. There were two queries: Public Morality - While she hadn't been David's sexual partner, she had lived with him in the intimacy of a concubine, and would be considered such by the world at large. As such she was forbidden to marry David's son, Deu 22:30

But she had training against her and she would have known Abishag had been David's nurse rather than his concubine, and may have been sympathetic towards such a young woman deprived of marriage. OR possibly guessed how Solomon would react, and while passing the request on in a neutral way may have been quite well pleased at the thought that Adonijah would no longer be a threat. Solomon seems to have taken no action against the other brothers who had gone along with Adonijah, and nothing suggests he was quick-tempered or a vindictive ruler. We read into all such briefly recorded Bible situations, our own prejudices and suppositions.

2:2225 You might as well ask the Kingdom for him.. he's older. And for Joab,, The three MAY have been involved in the request for Abishag, but in any case here was the occasion when THRONE WISDOM saw the chance to take action and dispose of potential trouble-makers, and repay past debts. IF Adonijah had become King the other two would have shared the power. Their fates were linked with his by their own actions. A hesitant or mild action on the part of Solomon might have been taken as indicating that he was uncertain of his right to be King, or unable to maintain it.

GOD DO SO TO/ May God deal with me- Backing up his intention with a binding oath, as in Ruth 1:17; 1 Sam 3:17; 14:44; 2 Sam 19:13; 2 Ki 6:31. As the Lord lives who established me, perhaps meaning that his having Adonijah killed was God-approved as a continuation of the process of establishing his position as King. Saul had been God-appointed, and David refused to cut his reign short, 1 Sam 24 etc.

2:2627 ABIATHAR thrust out- With a warning that acknowledged his past help to David, 1 Sam 22:23; 2 Sam 15:24-29. Anathoth was 5 kms North of Jerusalem. Jeremiah later came from a priestly family there, Jer 1:1. Being dependent on his own fields, cut off from food provided as the priest's share of the sacrifices would impoverish his family as Eli had been warned would happen, 1 Sam 2:30-36 etc. KJV may give the impression that fulfilling the prophecy was Solomon's purpose, but Hebrew doesn't distinguish between PURPOSE and RESULT - Eg Isa 6:9-13. God's Sovereign purposes involve human sovereign actions in their outworking. Solomon acted for his own reasons, with the RESULT that God's will was done. Only when we

combat? (Beniah and he had long been rivals as well as fellow servants of David.) He may have hoped God would protect him, but stubbornness was normal for him.

His blood on his head, the house of David free of it. David had disowned the murderous actions of Joab IN WORDS, 2 Sam 3:27-39 but continued to benefit from Joab's actions in general. By executing judgment on Joab, David's dynasty cleared themselves of any complicity in the sight of men. And fulfilled the Lord's command that the Murderer must be killed for his crime, Gen 9:6. Men more righteous, both had been obeying their King, and they weren't acting provocatively when murdered.

On David.. his house.. peace forever- Solomon's wish-prayer-intention was all very well, but it was far less important than the later DISOBEDIENCE of Solomon. Ongoing consequences of sin are obvious, Ex 20:5, etc. But ultimately God holds each person responsible, Ezek 18 \*\*15 See also 2Sam 21:1-14.

In WILDERNESS/desert- The word often means that, and it could be used symbolically for Joab was an uncultivated man! But probably simply means OPEN COUNTRY as Joab grew barley there, 2 Sam 14:30

2:35 BENAIAH in command of the armed forces. ZADOK sole High Priest

2:36-46 SHIMEI - Under house arrest, forbidden to cross the Kidron into Benjamin territory where he might stir up rebellion. (He had cursed David on behalf of King Saul's family, 2 Sam 16:5-8, and had 1000 supporters in 2Sam 19:16-17. He had the potential to make trouble, and was likely to do so if the right chance came.) Three years cooped up was a "long time" to him. Technically Shimei didn't cross the Kidron, as he went West to Gath, rather than North across the Kidron, and he had a reason for his action. BUT he hadn't asked permission and couldn't expect to be given the benefit of the doubt. The execution was based on his PAST behaviour, and his casual attitude to the restriction was taken as indicating an attitude consistent with his past actions. This world is full of people who assume that as God hasn't yet intervened in Judgment, they are safe, but when He does they will face the

In the Bible records he never seems to express conviction of sin, or ask for mercy. Solomon's judgmental actions settled accounts left over from David's reign, removed possible trouble-makers, as well as making it obvious that he would take decisive punitive action if his rule was challenged in any way. In this he was playing his part in establishing the throne of David in response to God's promise. But putting others right is easier than keeping ourselves on the right track. Solomon's failure to do that meant that God righteously stirred up new trouble-makers, 11:14-40

Solomon could never generate the heart loyalty that moves men to reckless gestures on their behalf, as David did, 2 Sam 23:15-16. Even the cautious conformists among us feel the calculating quality of these actions, but those today who live in rebellion-torn countries would wish they had been under the rule of Solomon. Few Israelites of his day would have considered such punitive actions too high a price to pay for the thirty years of peace and security that followed. Those who eat an omelette seldom complain that a few eggs were broken!

Scripture reports honestly the actions of flawed human beings. Solomon calls on the Lord to approve and bless his actions, but they are not taken in sensitive obedience to any directive from God - merely actions of human sovereignty using what God has given him. And for these actions God will in due course call him to account. Even those blessed by God may choose to use cunning to make what God has promised happen. Rebekah did, Gen 27 and although God allows it, like her they pay a high price for their unbelief. Such actions are stated, but not praised in Scripture, and men reap what they sow. In general the writer shows Solomon cashing in on God's dealings with David, with only a little personal involvement of his own with God.

### 3:1-28 WISDOM asked for, Granted, & Used

- 3:1 SOLOMON made an Alliance with Egypt- An arrangement with Pharaoh with mutual political/ commercial benefits. Egypt secured its trade route to the North, 1Q28:29. Solomon shared the profits, and made his southern border secure. Married Pharaoh's \*\*16 Daughter- Pharaohs had plenty of wives and daughters. Earlier Pharaohs refused any marriage alliances with foreign Kings so this shows how low Egypt had sunk, how high Israel had risen. Marriage with Egyptians wasn't

Still- The word suggests it was something that needed to be changed. People sacrificed in HIGH PLACES- Bamah- Local places of worship, on hilltops, under important trees, 1 Ki 14:23 but also in towns, 2 Ki 23:13. Worship at religious sites used by the Canaanites before the conquest under Joshua, was banned, Deu 12:2-4, 13. But as they were conveniently placed, Israelites made use of them. Samuel made offerings at Bamah, 1 Sam 9:12. But even with the best intentions, worship at such places easily became mixed up with Heathen worship.

\*\*17

There was also the risk of people thinking that the God worshipped at Bethel might be different from the God of Gibeon, with different requirements. The idea of One God, One Law, and One people was at risk. So the offering of sacrifices (etc) was centred in the Temple when it had been built, and this was enforced by Hezekiah and Josiah.

No TEMPLE house built UNTIL for His Name- The Tabernacle is called the house of the Lord in 1 Sam 1:9, 3:3. The Ark captured by the Philistines had not been returned to Shiloh, perhaps because Shiloh had been burned, Ps 78:58-64 Jer 7:12-15, 26:6-9. The Ark was kept for 20 years in the house of Abinadab, at Kirjath Jearim, 1 Sam 7:1-2, and sacrifices and worship seem to have been offered at a number of places, Nob, 1 Sam 22:9-10, Gilgal, 1 Sam 10:8, Gibeon, 1 Chr 16:39 etc.

SOLOMON loved \*\*18 the LORD, Walking in the statutes of David his Father- Solomon seems to have had no direct contact with God, or His Word at his age. David loved the Lord, and showed it by His walk. He was deeply aware of the Grace of God to him/ at work in his life Ps 18:31:19-23 34:8-10, 51. Solomon, as son of Bathsheba for whom his father had murdered Uriah, had good reason also to be conscious of God's Grace to him.

Footnote \*\*17 Those Bamah which have been discovered have one or more Massebah= Upright Stones associated with God, Gen 28:18-20 31:13 35:1-7, or with Baal, Judges 6:25-28, etc.

and trusting assurance. We Christians love Him because He first loved us (1 Jn 4:19, 11:7), and show that Love by letting Him transform our lives, and by sharing His Love with each other.

Sacrificed and burned incense- Sacrifices were GIVEN to God, for various reasons. The smoke rising from burning them symbolised this in High Places- Again a reminder of the need for a Temple, and a foundation for the idea that Solomon's love for God would result in his building the temple and so concentrating the true worship of God in the place that God Himself had chosen, Deu 12:1-14.

3:4 The King went to Gibeon \*\*19 to offer sacrifices- The form of the Hebrew suggests he was in the habit of doing so. Gibeon was 7 miles West of Jerusalem. Although it was in Benjamin's tribal land, Josh 10:25 and associated with Saul, 1 Chr 9:35-39 the city was allotted to Levites, Josh 21:17. Gibeon was the only city to make peace with Joshua, Josh 9 and they had been given a subject status which meant that they had to provide wood and water for the Tabernacle. This could be taken as placing them in God's service at a lower level than that of the Levites. When the Lord abandoned Shiloh and allowed the enemy to take the Ark, the Altar of Sacrifice from the Tabernacle was taken to Gibeon, 1 Chr 21:29-30 2 Chr 1:5-6, so it was an appropriate place for Solomon to offer sacrifices. 2 Chr 1:2-3 records he was accompanied by officials, perhaps to give thanks for the establishment of the Kingdom, and also seeking God's blessing on it. This fits in well with what follows.

1, 000 BURNT OFFERINGS- Olah, from Alah to go up it was the basic offering, the first offering dealt with in Leviticus 1. We owe to God our total being and service, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with ALL.. Deu 6:5, but we all fail. The offerer brought the animal before the Lord/ the Lord's altar, and placed his hand on its head to show the animal was taking his place. It was killed and its blood sprinkled around the Altar as a reminder of atonement for sin/ the need for sin to be dealt with before such an offering was acceptable. Then the whole animal placed on the altar fire so that all but the ashes ascended to God. This pictured the total surrender of the heart and life of the offerer to God, and the vast number offered by Solomon emphasised this total and thorough paying of Himself in God's hands, for the purposes and work of God. While the offering of so many animals could be a flamboyant display of a King's wealth. \*\*20 That God responded by revealing Himself to Solomon and

Footnote \*\*20The Greek historian Herodotus records that Xerxes offered a thousand animals at Troy. And that Croesus King of Lydia offered 3000 at Delphi. Such massive sacrifices impress people with the religious devotion of the Offerer.

The offering of 1000 animals symbolised Solomon's placing himself totally in the hands of God for His service. The mechanically-minded among us may ignore the symbolism, and note that on an altar that would have room for only 2 or 3 animals at a time, it would take at least a week to reduce them all to ashes, even with relays of priests. The word thousand may be used loosely as we might say "A thousand thanks" or the people said "Saul has slain his thousands," 1 Sam 18:7, but it probably means that Saul donated 1000 suitable animals as burnt offerings, and they were killed and offered over a period of time.

3:5 The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream- Cp Gen 28. GOD said ask- God showed that He had accepted the sacrifice and was eager to bless Solomon and his Kingdom. (This makes his later apostasy so much more sinful.) He is free to choose, and what he chooses will limit what else God can give him. What WE ask God for shows what our true nature and ambition is, and this sets the limits to which God can bless us/work with us.

3:6 Shown great MERCY Kindness Chesed- Mercy, Steadfast Love, Loving Kindness etc. This is the key to the whole of the OT revelation. It has three strands, Strength, Steadfastness, and Love. It's both a legal obligation and Love - Covenanted Kindness involving mutual and reciprocal rights and obligations between parties in a relationship. The word is used of the relationship of marriage, family, friends, guests, master/ servant, etc. Behind all these relationships, inspiring and empowering them, is God's relationship with His people Israel. It is His COVENANTED LOVE & CARE, that stands at the back of all blessing and discipline, success or failure, joy or sorrow, their only hope and security. He does not abandon His covenant, no matter how they fail to keep it, but their sinning against the covenant brings disciplinary punishment. As Ps 136 re-echoes His MERCY endureth forever. (As it's a reciprocal relationship the word is used also of the response of reverent thankfulness of men.)

To my Father David- David's life was the product of God's Covenant mercy-kindness, not vice-versa. It was God's purposes and will in the

according to Ephraim's faith, and Ephraim's faithfulness, the principles and purposes God has already established. The faithful outworking of God's Love and Goodness on behalf of those in need, on the basis of a previously established relationship.

In Ex 34:6-7 the promises made to Abraham led to obedient Faith. Here, promises made to David led to David's obedient faith and that led to the establishment of Solomon's Kingdom. Still, David's responsiveness to the Grace of God in a sense determined how much of God's Grace and blessing he was able to experience/ receive, and it would do so also for his son Solomon. This moved Solomon to make the request which he made.

**RIGHTEOUSNESS-** Tsedaqah LXX Dikaiosune. Righteousness between men is a matter of rightly carrying out their responsibilities in relation to each other. Cp Jacob's claim in Gen 30:33 David had shown righteousness in dealing with Saul, and rightly links that fact with God's deliverance, 2 Sam 22:1-21. God approves of such RIGHTEOUSNESS between men, and His people should show it in everything they say and do. But God's word makes clear that no man's righteousness is ever adequate for him to be acceptable to God/ able to be blessed. The first time the Hebrew word for righteousness is used is Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him as RIGHTEOUSNESS, Gen 15:6. Righteousness, the state of being right with God, was granted to Abraham by God in Grace linked with Abraham's obedient Faith. His offering of Isaac in obedience to God's Command was also an ACT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. God, through Moses, warns Israel that their righteousness didn't qualify them for the Land of promise, Deu 9:4-7.

**Uprightness of heart-** David's faithfulness was made possible by God's faithfulness to him, and what David did rightly and to the Glory of God was a reflection, and echo, of what God was to him, and what his fellowship with God moved him to ask for from God. And yet God was able to exercise His Love and kindness towards David, because of David's responsiveness in seeking God and His will.

**Given him a son to sit on his throne-** Solomon credits God for the way things have worked out so far, and acknowledges the terms under which God's Grace is made effective in human lives and situations.

us AND a right sense of our inadequacy to handle or manage the work to which He has called us, and a sense of the greatness of our privilege and the importance of what God is doing. Note how often full titles and relationship is repeated.

But a little child- He is married, and father of Rehobam 11:42 14:21 but with little experience of ruling. The task was demanding as the Kingdom had been established only recently, rent by Absalom's rebellion, and David's battles. Also his personal problems, and semi-senility had distracted him from carrying out normal Government, 2 Sam 15:2-6. David liberated Israel, but his rule wasn't efficient.

HOW TO GO OUT OR COME IN/ carry out my duties- Solomon confessed he didn't know how to carry out daily obligations and routines, 1 Sam 18:16. Among God's Chosen People- A wonderful privilege but God's purposes required that Israel live and be governed by His Laws - rightly understood, loved, and applied. And after hundreds of years of failure, only a small start had been made under King David. God's CHOOSING formed the basis of all His dealings with Israel. Sadly, so often, their CHOOSING went against His, and they robbed themselves of blessing. Solomon's task was very demanding as Israel was God's Chosen Nation, with the central role to play in God's eternal purposes for mankind. (Others weren't left without a witness, but it was only a vague one, Acts 17.)

A GREAT PEOPLE - Great in number, complexity and in God's will intended for great things - difficult/humanly impossible to achieve, with difficult people - as their history from Moses on showed. Too numerous to be counted, Gen 13:16 16:10 etc. Solomon shows an awareness of the fulfilment of God's earlier promises.

3:9 Give an UNDERSTANDING - Shama- To hear, listen intelligently, understand, and do what is appropriate. HEART - A Hearing heart is the patience to listen carefully so as to grasp the essence of what is said, understand the thinking behind it/see beneath the surface including what ISN'T said. A heart to hear, understand and judge God's people in righteousness. Cp our HEARING what God says in His Word.

To JUDGE - Shaphat- To judge, pronounce sentence, give reasoned rulings, and see that the verdict is carried out, whether in punishment or deliverance, and so maintain rights, law and order. Used of a third party

promises made to David in 2Sam 7, so he asked for practical skill in ruling a numerous, diverse, and turbulent people who had a high destiny.

That I DISCERN - Bin- To Consider, and come to a conclusion, as in Deu 327, 29 1 Ki 3:21 When I CONSIDERED the baby, it wasn't mine. Those who exercise BIN, become "Men of UNDERSTANDING," Prov 282 between GOOD and EVIL. For who is able to Judge YOUR so great people. GREAT - Kabad- Heavy. Heavy in the sense of being numerous, and in having an important, honoured role in God's purposes. And being responsible to move such a difficult people towards achieving it was an impossibly heavy responsibility.

3:10-13 The LORD - Adonai was PLEASED - The Lord was pleased that Solomon asked for the ability to do well the task in life which God had given him - That of Ruling/Judging well, Cp 1Ki 4:29-34 1Q1-9, 23-25 We too can confidently ask God to enable us in His work. So many prayer requests are directed at the FRUIT of Godly living - Joy, Peace Success.. Solomon went to the ROOT need, which if granted would produce as fruit many of the things a King could desire - Success Riches and Long life. These as the by-product of wise living, can be received with thankfulness to God. But to make them our goals will always destroy our Godliness and frustrate God's purposes in our lives.

I will give you a WISE - Chakam- an UNDERSTANDING /discerning= Bin HEART - To an outstanding degree I have also given...Riches, Honour.

3:14 IF - There was no limit to what God was giving Solomon, but for Solomon to possess, enjoy, and exercise this wisdom, understanding, riches, and honour throughout a long life he must choose to walk in God's WAY S- His daily life and lifestyle must be such that God could have fellowship with him in it. to KEEP God's STATUTES - Choq- Statute, regulation. The job specifications and rules that went with the position God had granted to him. First used in The priests had a Choq/ PORTION assigned to them, Gen 47:22 and COMMANDMENTS - Mitsvah. He must walk righteously before God, or anything that God gives Him will be made worthless as David did; then I will lengthen - That Solomon died in his early sixties, his wisdom marred by folly, his

and made a FEAST - Mishteh- A Feast, party, from Shathat- To drink. Cp Feast for Isaac's weaning, Gen 218 and Jacob's wedding, Gen 2922 Such feasts were made voluntarily when the offerer had something to celebrate. for all his servants- A Feast to honor God involving all his officials and friends. acknowledging/ proclaiming the received gift of Wisdom.

3:16-23 Two women harlots- Secular/ money-making Prostitution was common then as now, and religious prostitution was also common. Both were condemned and disdained in Scripture. Nothing is said about the WRONGNESS of their life, but the facts are displayed in their sordid sadness, not glamourised as in the modern world. Poverty/ exclusion from normal life meant sharing life with their own kind. This made the exchange of babies possible, and there were no witnesses.

Kings were expected to be accessible to their subjects, reserving feasting etc for the end of the day, Ecc1016-17. Solomon as judge must decide the case by his knowledge of human nature, and by the reactions of the women. One must be the mother, and should be given her rights. One must be lying out of envy that couldn't stand to see her rival happy. So a test was needed that would compel envy - and mother-love - to declare themselves, and gain their reward.

3:23-25 JUSTICE - Each take half- Would Solomon have done this? is an irrelevant question. The test must be a bold action - a man about to swing a sword- was effective. The Mother had faced the apparent death of her baby, then realised the fraud of her companion, and the taunts that she had lost it by neglect. And now faced cold, impartial justice and death for it. In order to save her baby's life she would sooner part with it - as in more recent times mother-love has triumphed by adopting out a baby to give it a better chance in life.

3:26-27 The verdict of WISDOM She is the Mother- Mother-love preferred her son to live, even if in the care of another. \*\*21 Jealousy would settle for depriving a rival. Even if she wasn't the mother, her attitude showed she should have been/would be the better mother.

Footnote \*\*21 Compare this with the situation where quarrelling Leaders are willing to divide an Assembly!

The Bible takes life as it is and deals with it in fairness as the people deserve to be dealt with. God is like that/deals with everyone fairly whatever their circumstances. It also shows that beneath the surface of a sinful life there can be traits which are potentially God-honouring - Cp Rahab, Zaccheus, etc

#### 4:1-19, 22-23, 26-28 Solomon ORGANISES his Kingdom

(Saul had only an Army Leader, David added a Secretary and a Recorder. This quote from the court records, 11:41, shows how Solomon developed an efficient Government organisation.)

4:1-6 Chief officials- Sar- Anyone who rules over others. AZARIAH son = Grandson of ZADOK - Zadok was already elderly by Solomon's Coronation. His son Ahimaaz, 2 Sam 15:27 may have died, or been disqualified. The genealogy in 1 Chr 6:9-10 seems confused. the PRIEST = High priest. Mentioned first as vital figure in central Government NATIONALLY as well as spiritually/ in relation to God

4:3 ELIHOREPH and AHIJAH sons of SHISHA - Possibly called Seriah, 2 Sam 8:17, Sheva, 2 Sam 20:25 Shavsha, 1 Chr 18:16 But Elihoreph seems an Egyptian name, Shisha seems to be the Egyptian name for scribe. So, sons of an unnamed scribe, OR as with Sons of Prophets, 1 Ki 20:35 2 Ki 2:3, Sons of Belial, Judges 19:22 1 Sam 2:12, etc, members of a professional guild of scribes who had completed an apprenticeship. As such, qualified to set up an efficient administration. SCRIBES/ Secretaries- Saphar- To number, count, and to record in writing. So Sopher = Scribe, and Sepher = book

JEHOSHAPHAT the son of AHILUD - In David's list, 2 Sam 8:16 the RECORDER- Zakar- To remember, to keep in mind with a view to action. First used in Gen 8:1 God REMEMBERED Noah. It's often used of God keeping in mind His Covenants and promises.

BE NAI AH - Commander in Chief.

Israd, with the key of David over his shoulder. Cp Christ in that role, God-appointed, and acting on His behalf, Rev 37.

ADONIRAM son of ABDA WAS OVER/in charge of THE TRIBUTE /forced labour - Unpopular idea but common in surrounding nations- to carry out public works economically Note Samuel's warning of this in 1Sam 8:12

4:7-19 District Governors. provided for the King and his household \*\*22 each in his month- Household would include those who worked for the Government, including the armed forces. That two were Solomon's sons-in-law suggests that this describes a DEVELOPED state of the Kingdom, not its initial state. Six tribes are mentioned but districts often don't follow tribal boundaries as it's adapted to cope with the inclusion of major Canaanite city states such as Megiddo, Taanach, and Bethshan.

Only a general description is given. The seemingly haphazard elements may be due to the need to group districts in such a way that essential items - four, olive oil, wine, dried fruit, etc - should be available at all times in the right proportions.

The names of the district Governors are a mixture of Isradite and Canaanite names - only one name - Jehoshaphat - includes the name of Jehovah. It's certainly NOT the kind of list that Yahwist fanatics would have compiled at a later date. Judah is omitted (It's added in some Ms to 4:19b) Judah may have been levied for fresh fruit and vegetables as distant districts couldn't supply these. Grazing for animals awaiting slaughter would also be needed. But if omitted, or let off lightly, this would have added to the resentment of the northern tribes. Only the land of Israd is included. Those outside the land acknowledging Solomon sent tribute at their own discretion, 4:21.

4:22-23 Fine FLOUR, MEAL, FAT OXEN.. Storable material provided at this level would provide adequate stores, allowing for wastage through vermin, lapse of time, and carelessness. And, the universal habit of Government property "disappearing" to the benefit of local officials, their friends and families. This is a quote from Government records, and as with modern Government reports, one can expect it to give an impression that is as impressive as possible. Eg giving the PEAK

Olive Oil (and possibly Flour) would have had to fill their quota of these each year, as a form of Tax.

4:26-28 Solomon had 40000\*\*23 STALLS OF HORSES for his CHARIOTS and 12000HORSEMEN- Solomon ignored God's ban against multiplying the number of a king's horses or wives, or treasure, and the need to write for himself a copy of the law, Deu 17:15-17. This suggests that while God granted rational peace to Solomon, instead of honoring God in his life, and trusting God to maintain that peace Solomon trusted in the worldly wisdom of a well-equipped army, Egypt style. The District Officers... saw nothing was lacking.. BARLEY, STRAW- for horses, being part of the obligation of district Governors.

#### 4:20-21, 24-25 National & Family PEACE & PROSPERITY

4:21, 24 SOLOMON REIGNED- Mashal- To rule over, be the dominant defining feature, as the Sun/Moon rule over day/night, Gen 1:16 from the RIVER- Always the Euphrates. The Philistines- Who had been Israel's oppressors in 1 Sam. to the border of EGYPT. Acknowledged as Overlord in varying degrees of friendship and submission. Don't imagine a slavish attitude. David had fought to deliver Israel/ remove threats to the borders of the land, and the Syrian lands joined in, 2 Sam 8. But once his army under Joab had demonstrated that the local Kings couldn't defeat Israel, armed opposition ceased, and they settled down to function under the nominal headship of Israel, who kept the peace and kept the trade-routes open until the end of Solomon's reign. Such cooperation, or passive resistance, usually flared into open defiance at the death of a King, and continued unless his successor promptly and competently suppressed it. God preserved Solomon in peace as he promised, but his rule wasn't such that in secular, or spiritual terms it deserved to continue unchallenged. With the division of Israel, Syria promptly became the dominant power North to the Euphrates.

This is a greater area than was promised to Abraham. Solomon had done nothing to EARN the right to be ruler of this area. It had been granted to him in Grace & he himself acknowledged at times. And

mentioned as being different for Horses & Chariots in Ex 149, etc. But in Kings seem to refer to chariot horses, 2Ki 212, etc, so some have suggested the 12,000 were 2 horses and a spare for each chariot.

4:20 25 JUDAH and ISRAEL many as Sand- As promised to Abraham, Gen 2217. EATING, DRINKING, MAKING MERRY - A somewhat idealised picture of life, drawn from the court records, with the normal bias required in any report made by a Government department in any age.

Judah and Israel DWELT SAFELY - The Hebrew words suggest that they settled down to a stable secure way of life \*\*24 where they could plan and work, confident that what they achieved wouldn't be taken from them. Every man UNDER HIS VINE and FIG TREE, from DAN to BERSHEBA all the days of Solomon- An idyllic picture of everyone free to enjoy life on his family property, as God's promised heritage. This ignores the fact that there was obvious "fraying round the edges" in Solomon's later years, that came to a head in open rebellion after his death. The verse sounds like a popular summary/proverbial saying. It was only relatively true in Solomon's time, but the concept is taken up as being promised to be achieved under the reign of that greater than Solomon - the Messiah, Zech 310

#### 4:2934 Solomon's SUPERIOR WISDOM

4:29 God GAVE Solomon WISDOM- Chokmah- Technical skills and special abilities, in Ex 283, but generally practical wisdom to live successfully - the ability to make the right choices at the right time. It requires diligent pursuit, Prov 21-6. to gain as much information as possible, evaluating it, so as to be able to recall items and apply them promptly to all situations that arose. Pride and self-reliance are the enemies of wisdom, Prov 2612 LXX for Wisdom are Sophos- Wise, learned. Phronimos- sensible, thoughtful, prudent. Suretos- intelligent etc. UNDERSTANDING.. LARGENESS of HEART...

4:3031 Solomon's Wisdom EXCELLED ALL .. of the EAST - Job's land and of EGYPT. He was WISER- Wisdom was rated highly in the East, especially as shown in successful living as a Ruler, Priest,

is comparable to what us "Oldies" see as being "Normal life" (along with a much lower standard of living) now threatened under the impact of godlessness, greed, violence, etc. as the average inhabitant with no fear of God sets out to demand and grab his selfishly viewed "rights!" and ignores his responsibilities to God, the state, and his neighbour.

Therefore true wisdom acknowledges God, and operates on the basis of due respect for/fear of God, Job 28:28 and takes God and His will into account at every step. To be meaningful, and ultimately successful, a life must be lived in fellowship with God and His purposes. Biblical Wisdom therefore is both moral and spiritual. (Much of Solomon's WISDOM in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes lapses far below the Wisdom he showed in his prayer at the temple Opening.)

ETHAN HEMAN .. SONS OF MAHOL - They appear in 1 Chr 2:6, Ps 88:1. If not living in the time of Solomon they could have been added by a later scribe. HIS FAME - Shem was in ALL NATIONS round about

4:32-34 3000 PROVERBS- Items of wisdom summed up in witty Proverbs, easily remembered by hearers for their own use. SONGS-Shir- as in Ex 15:1. Deliverance from Egypt gave them something to sing about. Shir features in the titles of many Psalms, Psalm 72, 127, being attributed to Solomon. Maybe most of his songs were secular, such as the Song of Solomon. Shir also means SINGERS, those organised for temple worship, 1 Chr 15:16, to entertain Kings, 2 Sam 19:35 Ecc 2:8, or lament at funerals, 2 Chr 35:25

of TREES.. BEASTS, Birds CREEPING THINGS, FISH- A keen interest in Creation around us, an understanding of how it works, and a desire to apply to our lives what we learn, is God-honouring wisdom. The Koran, Sura 27 mistranslates this to make Solomon UNDERSTAND the languages of all these creatures. ALL CAME TO HEAR .

## 5:1-18 PREPARATION for BUILDING Temple & Palace

5:1 HIRAM KING OF TYRE - The name Hiram is on the Sarcophagus of a king of Byblos, about 1200BC. So it's not surprising that a king of nearby Tyre should also be called Hiram. EVER A LOVER OF/on

accumulating materials for it, 1 Chr 22 & 28 To say build to the NAME of the Lord avoids giving the impression that God lived in the Temple as a King lives in his palace

Footnote \*\*25 1Chr 228-9 gives a further reason - David had been involved in much violence and slaughter. That being so, a Temple built by him wouldn't easily become A house of prayer to ALL nations, 841-43 Isa 567; Mk 11:17, to the descendants of those killed in his wars.

The Lord my God has given me REST - The Kingdom was secure, within and without, so Solomon was free to take up David's plan 1Chr 2211-16; 289-21. To BUILD... as the Lord told David my Father, your Son who I will put on your throne in your place WILL BUILD - David had impressed on Solomon his obligation to God to build the Temple.

Therefore command.. CEDAR trees out of LEBANON - A mutually helpful trade treaty already existed between David and Hiram, 2 Sam 5:11; 1 Chr 226. Solomon asked for a major extension of this. My servants will be with your servants and I will give Wages. No one so skilled ..as the Sidonians- Sidon had been the first dominant city of Phoenicia, and the skilled woodworkers are called Sidonians. Tyre moved ahead, and was later the dominant city. The local workman had for generations felled and processed cedar, so acknowledging their superior skills, and offering to supply men to work under them, is natural. \*\*26

5:7-12 HIRAM rejoiced . said Blessed be the Lord who HAS GIVEN to DAVID A WISE SON over this great people. Whatever Hiram's PERSONAL attitude was towards the Lord, Political and Economic mutual benefits would be good reason for acknowledging that David and Israel's God had provided well in Solomon becoming King. Acts 122023 records Hiram's successors saying Herod's speech was the voice of a GOD, for similar reasons, and a modern "Christian" Lebanese would surely be willing to say to a Moslem "Blessed be Allah who gave you the wisdom to buy from me!"

I will do all you want concerning timber. He would deliver them to Solomon by rafting the logs down the coast. At the mouth of the Yarkon River near, Tel Aviv, are the remains of the port they seem to have used. In exchange SOLOMON gave 20 000 measures of WHEAT and 20

a burden, so recruited to bear burdens - do burdensome labour for the public good/ the state. out of ALL ISRAEL - Freeborn Israelites included, as distinct from the permanent slave-labour force, of aliens, 9:15-23 2Chr 2:17-18 30 00MEN- These labourers had two thirds of each year at home to work at their farms, etc, so would be given food while they worked, but no wages.

Footnote \*\*26A papyrus describing the adventures of an Egyptian named Wen Amon, sent to acquire cedar logs, C BC 1000 talks of 300 men with 300 oxen going into the forest to fell logs, and after leaving them to season over the winter hauling them out to the shore.

ADONIRAM/Adoram- Mentioned as tax collector/ Levy raiser under David, 2 Sam 20:24 70 000 that BORE BURDENS- Transport men, hauling timber or stone. 80 000 HEWERS- Those who cut out large raw stone blocks. 3,300 Foremen.

they brought GREAT stones- Large stone blocks as they were quarried from the seam of hard limestone. See 7:10 COSTLY stones- Costly because skilled men had to spend much time to shape them - they weren't just stones picked up from the fields, and roughly fitted together. HEWED/dressed STONES- The word has the idea of a special effort being made to keep the edges straight and square. The samples still preserved have a two inch wide margin ground flat on all sides of the face of the block to ensure that it fits neatly. Stones from Herod's buildings have a wider margin. For the Foundation. The craftsmen of Solomon and Hiram and the STONE-SQUARERS/ Men of Gebal prepared the timber and stone.

## 6:1-7:51 Building the Temple & Palace

(The Hebrew is difficult to understand as it is copied from records using technical words for out-of-date processes etc. Eg The Temple was floored with Berosh timber- which may be Fir, Pine, Cypress or Juniper! The LXX Greek adds to the confusion by using a variety of words in different MSS as the scribes tried to make sense out of obscure Hebrew words. We can learn some things from the surviving remains of Temples built at that time - It is a Phoenician style temple, rather than a Canaanite one.

In the Babylonian Flood story the "Gods" were starving until their "Noah" fed them with the sacrifice, Gen 8:20. The Bible makes it clear that God has no

statement (and it's always best to assume that what we read in the Bible means literally what it seems to say, until proved otherwise,) it would make the date of the Exodus about 1500-1450BC. (Others argue from Ex 1:11 it was about 1300BC.) So far it has been impossible to get confirmation from secular history of any date. Egypt naturally didn't record and publicise what from their point of view would have been a disaster. Some people see 480 = 40 x 12 as symbolising that God tested Israel in a kingless state thoroughly, and proved them as failing, before setting up a centralised Kingdom and Temple. 12 generations Aaron to Azariah, 1 Chr 6:3-10 of 40 = thorough testing, as in Deu 8:2; Mk 1:13, etc (years.)

It MAY be possible to fit together watertight genealogies and time lines from Abraham to Solomon, but it would be time consuming and profitless and God's Word was designed for a higher goal, 1 Tim 1:4-5. We're to take the statements of God's Word as they stand and use them to profit, when we see that potential in them. Fourth year Solomon's reign Month Ziv- Flowers. Seventh month.

6:2-6 The Temple was cubits \*\*27 long, 20 wide, 30 high- A stone building roughly 30 x 10 x 15 in modern yards or metres. It wasn't a BIG temple by world standards, but against the housing anywhere in Israel, "God's House" was quite impressive. The massive squared blocks of stone used in the foundation and walls, declared the permanence of the Covenant and of God's wish to dwell among His people indefinitely. Jeremiah protests against the false sense of security some gained from this, Jer 7:1-15. That the Temple was built outside the city limits was a reminder that God wasn't a product of human minds, hearts and wills. He was separate, and they must come to HIM physically and spiritually, out of their normal lives and functioning.

6:3-4 An entrance porch was as wide as the Temple, and extended out 10 cubits. It seems to have had a roof supported on pillars, but no side walls. Narrow window openings high in the walls, above the roof of the circling store-room building, let out the smoke of incense, and let some light in, while the depth of the stone walls would keep the rain out. Lamps seem to have provided light by day and night, though this wasn't so in the "darkness" of Eli's time, 1 Sam 3:3. Apart from the Day of Atonement the only activities carried on in the Temple were the offering

built into it, and the rooms were 1 cubit wide at each higher level. This building would have supported the Temple in an earthquake. Access to the store-rooms was through a single door (on the South side, so Sunlight would enter) so it provided secure storage of temple treasures, priests garments, material for meal offerings, incense, olive oil for the lamps, etc.

Footnote \*\*27 The length from elbow to the tip of the middle finger was a cubit, so it varied. The Siloam Inscription in Hezekiah's tunnel, 2Ki 20:20, says it's 1200 cubits long, this gives a cubit 17.5 inches long. Rabbis said that a cubit for Solomon's temple was 16.9 inches/ 42.8 cm, Herod's temple 17.2 inches/ 43.7 cm.

6:7 Stone made ready- Shalem- Perfect. From Shalom- Peace wholeness. The local white limestone was soft enough to be sawed and shaped when quarried, but hardened on exposure to air. As noted, the timber beams of the store-rooms didn't have to be fitted into the wall, so the ready-made blocks could be fitted together quietly. This reminds us of the silent building of the invisible Church as its Lord fits together the living stones which He has prepared for it, Acts 2:47, 1 Pet 2:5.

6:9 Roofing- The ceiling made with cedar planks carried by cedar beams, was probably covered by hard-packed clay and powdered limestone. This was rolled smooth and hard to give a cement-like waterproof surface and sufficiently mounded for water to run off.

6:11-13 The Word \*\*28 of the Lord to Solomon- The Temple was accepted by God as fulfilling His purpose of living among His people, as promised to Moses, and His purpose that David's son, ruling in peace should build it. But Solomon is reminded that David's loving appreciation of God, and the Faith/ Obedience by which he had expressed it, were linked with the giving of the promise. These were the conditions under which the promise would remain operative for David's descendants to enjoy the promised blessings. It was up to him to continue to fulfil these conditions after this good start. This moral requirement for men to fellowship with God in achieving God's purposes was very different from current Heathen religion which was concerned with outward forms of humouring the whims of Gods. Such religion is natural to man, and prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah

dealing with man are said to be: "If we do for God what He wants, He'll do for us what we want. That's nonsense. It's only in fellowship with Him that men can do what God's revealed will says, and the blessings they receive are part and parcel of that fellowship.

Footnote \*\*28 In Hebrew The WORD- Dabar of the Lord. I SPOKE- Dabar to David. Dabar means both word, and thing. What man says may soon be empty, worthless and forgotten. What God says is solid, eternal, utterly reliable, 1 Pet 1:24-25. In keeping with this the Hebrew simply says that the word WAS to Solomon, not that it CAME to him. Presumably it came through a Prophet, as after the direct personal appearance at Gibeon, 1 Ki 3:5, God appeared to him a SECOND time, in 1 Ki 9:1-2, which rules out a direct communication this time.

## 6:15-38 The TEMPLE INTERIOR & Completion

6:15, 18, 29, 35 The walls and ceiling were lined with cedar planks, the ceiling supported by cedar beams - light, strong handsome wood \*\*29 Although only dimly visible to the few priests privileged to work inside the Temple this was beautifully carved to honour God. (Much that is costly in the heart of the Believer is unseen by man, but greatly valued by God.) Carved is Qala- To sling a stone- as David at Goliath, 1 Sam 17:49 It may mean that the wood was carved with a circular motion, into circular forms, OR as if MOVING rather than static/ formal as Egyptian art was. The Floor was covered with planks of Pine. Gold was hammered into the carving of the walls (Pure gold is soft) and the floor covered with gold. Some suggest this is ridiculous, impractical, or too expensive. But Solomon was eager to show as far as possible the Glory of God in the temple, and His testimony to the greatness of God spread widely 1Q24

6:33-34 The entrance Doors were double folding ones made of pine wood. It sounds as if there may have been smaller doors within the main doors. The door posts were of long-lasting olive wood

6:16, 19-22, 31-32 Inner Sanctuary- Formed by screening off the inner 20 cubits of the Temple and set apart as the HOLY OF HOLIES \*\*30 as belonging to God alone. Only the High Priest entered there, only once a

in the Tabernacle it was 10 cubits x 10 in the Temple it was a cube, 20 cubits each way. The Heavenly Jerusalem is also a cube, Rev 21:16. A perfect cube must symbolise something, perhaps that God in Himself, and His actions, is totally consistent. The writer describes the temple as a spiritual statement/symbol, rather than giving the facts a craftsman would need to know if he was to build a similar building, so he doesn't mention the 10 cubit gap between the ceilings of the Inner Sanctuary and that of the Temple in which it stood.

Footnote \*\*29 Later an inscription by Nebuchadnezzar claims to have built a road for cedar to be hauled out of Lebanon, and brought massive, strong, tall, cedar logs of wonderful beauty for the temple of his god Marduk.

Footnote \*\*30 In Hebrew Qodesh Qodesh. From Qadash to sanctify, be Holy. Qodesh is used of things or people belonging to God, Ex 20:10, 282, 30:25, 31; Lev 10:10, 27:10, etc. God Himself is HOLY - uniquely, without imperfection or equal, Ex 15:11. The outer sanctuary is THE Holy place and the Inner is the HOLY OF HOLIES, Ex 26:33.

While it states that the Most Holy place was screened off from the body of the Temple, seemingly with elaborately carved cedar panelling similar to that on the rest of the walls, this isn't made clear. 2 Chr 3:14 mentions a Veil/curtain like that in the Tabernacle. Perhaps the gold-covered screen and doors were hidden behind it, or just possibly the door-posts and doors were fitted into it. Gold chains - symbolising that priests were normally excluded from it. Olive wood doors, carved with cherubic, palm trees and flowers, overlaid with Gold.

6:31 ENTERING/entrance is Pethach. Door is Deleth - something swinging, as something to shut and BAR entry. First used in Gen 19:6, Lot went out at the door Pethach, and shut the door Deleth after him. This is a reminder that God provided a way into His presence, but that provision was also a barrier against unlawfully coming into His presence. Christ Jesus the Lord is both the way into the holiest, Heb 10:19-20 and the One from whom Christ rejectors flee, Rev 6:16.

6:20 Altar of cedar, overlaid with Gold - As the Acacia wood one had been in the Tabernacle, Ex 30:1-3. Physically this incense altar was in the Holy Place so that the priests could serve it there, directly before the screen which divided off the Holy of Holies. Spiritually it belonged in the Holy of Holies in the direct presence of God. Annually it did enter there in the form of the censer which was filled with embers from the

That the Most Holy place was covered with Gold FIRST, then the outer Temple Floor walls, floor and ceiling, is to me a symbol of the fact that Fellowship with God= SALVATION, begins with God and works out from Him if we let it. If our inner life with God is covered with Gold the outer life of fellowshiping in the Church of God can be also - all that men SEE of us, touch of us, being lived IN CHRIST. The timber of Cedar, fir and olive are each different, their different qualities appropriate for God's purposes, are beautiful when OVERLAID WITH GOLD - as you and I are IN THE GOLD OF CHRIST. Let's function that way.

Footnote \*\*31 The Cherubim in Ezek 10 seem something like the carved "throne Guardian" figures from Palaces in Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, etc - composite creatures symbolising the varied and contrasting powers and glories of impressive Creatures. Ox, Eagle, Lion, Man, in God's service, and proclaiming His Glory. The Seraphim= Burning ones, in Isaiah 6, angelic beings proclaiming and guarding the Holiness of God and His throne, may also be Cherubim.

6:36 Inner Court was unroofed, but surrounded by a solid wall of three rows of squared stone topped with a row of cedar beams. \*\*32 This would shelter and screen from view the court that surrounded the temple. This court was where the offerers brought their offerings, and the priest offered them, etc. The Altar of sacrifice and Sea were there. It's called the court of the Priests 2 Chr 4:9.

6:37-38 Completed in Eleventh year, month- Yereach. But which is the Eight month- Chodesh. As in 61, Yereach the word in use in Solomon's time with the NAME of the month is quoted from the court records. Chodesh the later word, with its position among the 12 months apparently added by the Editor to explain in the language of his day which month is meant, as in 61; 8:2.

## 7:1-12 SOLOMON BUILDS HIS PALACE

7:1 Seven years for God's House, thirteen years for his own house may seem as if Solomon loved himself more than he loved God, but that may not have been true at his sage. Wealth and materials stockpiled for the

7:2-6 Palace of Forest of Lebanon- The massive cedar pillars 45 feet high looking rather like a forest of tree trunks. These supported the roof, of cedar beams on which further rooms were built. It was decorated with Gold shields, 1Q16-17. Later desperate times saw it being used as an armoury for storing actual weapons, Isa 228. With a roofed-over, unwall ed PORCH/Colonnade extending from it.

Footnote \*\*32 Or possibly it means a cedar beam inset along the seam where every third row of stones met, as a gate complex from Solomon's time seems to have provision for one to be inset like that

Footnote \*\*33 It sounds to be similar in design to ruins of the time in surrounding countries - Sheltered courts, with rooms on three sides, the entrance on the fourth. Pillars to support a roof over the courtyard, perhaps.

7:7-8 Hall of JUDGMENT /Justice where he heard petitions and settled disputes, seated on his throne. This was walled with Cedar planks, as were the Palace living quarters for himself and his Queen from Egypt

7:9-11 The construction of these buildings was of stone carefully sawn into large blocks that fitted neatly together to give smooth walls inside and outside the buildings. Some of the foundation stones were up to 10 cubits (about 5 yards or metres) long This is a reasonable claim judging by remains of ancient buildings in Israel. Herod's Temple foundation stones are far bigger. The smoothed stone walls were topped with cedar wood beams. Solomon aimed at demonstrating in the buildings that God was a great God, and that Solomon was a great King.

7:12 The Great Courtyard that enclosed the Temple and Palace buildings, was of three courses of squared stones topped with one course of squared cedar beams. That the Great Court surrounded both the Palace and, higher up the hill, the Temple court, could symbolise that the Temple should rule the palace - God should rule the King, and the Nation, and all life and action within it. But the tendency with fallen humanity is the vice-versa of this.

times are made of Bronze, that seems to be the common meaning of the word. Solomon needed an excellent craftsman to master-mind and supervise the work, as well as the best materials. Solomon himself seemed to have directed Hiram in general terms. (1 Chr 28:11-19 says David was inspired to give Solomon directions. But this is much less obvious than in the construction of the Tabernacle where God Himself gave the detailed plans direct to Moses, Ex 25:9-40:26-30 etc.)

A widow's son of Naphtali - So, if circumcised, rated as a Jew. Northern Naphtali was near Tyre. The city of Dan seemed to have been absorbed by Naphtali by this time, which may explain 2Chr 2:14. His father was of Tyre. The wording suggests Hiram learnt his skills from his father. As always, God made available both the materials and the ability needed for His work to be done, leaving the responsibility to use them well in the hands of His human servants.

7:15-22 BRONZE PILLARS. Free-standing pillars, added to the Temple entrance porch after the structure was finished, 6:38 so listed among the furnishings. As they weren't needed to support a roof as pillars normally do, they must have had symbolic importance. That the pillars were made of BRONZE, as were the Altar of Sacrifice, the Sea and movable water tanks/ Lavers seems to proclaim that only those for whom blood atonement had been accepted, and who had washed themselves in water were to enter the House of God. \*\*34

The pillars were named JACHIN - He shall establish/He establishes. BOAZ - In Him is strength/by His strength. They were huge - 12 cubits round and 18 cubits high with an ornamental crown of beautifully patterned network, flowers, fruit, etc 5 cubits high. They stood magnificently at the entrance of "God's House" proclaiming that God Himself was established and in Him alone there was real strength. And reminded everyone that God had established Solomon and his descendants as King, and it was God alone who could provide the strength needed to shepherd the people of God wisely and well.

7:23-26 The BRONZE SEA - As this tank held about 11,500 Gallons/ 40,000 litres of water, calling it a "sea" was excusable. It was cast in one piece with its wreath of ornamental gourds and a lip like a lily flower -

still needed, and the water of life to our unsaved neighbour, and minister Christ the bread of life to our fellow church members. If, as we try to so our hands are soiled with Pride, Selfishness, Rivalry, Resentment, Criticism, Worry, or Discouragement, etc we may do more harm than good

- 12 OXEN- Baqar- cattle, (not breeding bulls- Shor, Job 2110), four of them facing in each direction, supported the Sea on their backs. (Incidentally, the Sea was placed in the South East Corner, where the river flows from the Temple in Ezek 471, but that is a life-giving river of living water -this a tank of cleansing water.)

Footnote \*\*34 The main feature of the Temple Court, the Bronze Altar of Sacrifice isn't mentioned here. 2Chr 4:1 says it was 20cubits square and 10cubits high, so that a large number of sacrifices could be offered at the same time, 86265. Perhaps as no Altar of sacrifice is needed in the Millennium, it's not mentioned here in the foretaste of the Millennium.

7:27-39 TEN MOVABLE STANDS of BRONZE- The stands were 4 cubits square, with the round bronze LAV ER/ basin fitted closely inside them. Everything except the interior of the basins was carefully ornamented. This was done to honour God whose concern for Adam and Eve moved Him to provide for the beautiful as well as the useful in the garden of Eden, Gen 29. As God's children and servants we should value natural beauty, but be especially concerned that our lives and work should display spiritual beauty, as well as practical usefulness Cp Mt 2610. The stands were 3 cubits high each cast in one piece complete with axles. As the wheels were 1.5 cubits in diameter steps would be needed for easy dipping of water from the basins, or washing things in them. Having wheels made them movable, but when their basins were filled with about 800litres of water they would be too heavy to move easily. They were placed more or less permanently along the sides of the Temple courtyard. When animals had been killed, skinned and cut up, the pieces were washed in them, 2 Chr 4:6, before being offered on the bronze altar in the centre of the court, in front of the Temple entrance

7:40-45 Basins, Shovels... The huge bronze pillars that stood before the Temple entrance, witnessed to the power and righteousness of God. The Altar of Sacrifice, the Sea and washing basins witnessed to the Holiness

times of the rings. Even the speed of a cast, with some copper still in it has been found. The local inhabitants would have provided a pool of skilled and unskilled labour to carry out the orders of Hiram of Tyre. A great amount of experience and skill would be needed to cast the larger bronze items, and Hiram would have been glad that he didn't have the distraction of having to weigh up how much bronze went into each item! Clay is mentioned because it was needed for moulds. \*\*35 The rough scrub/jungle growth of the Jordan flood plain provided wood for the charcoal needed for the smelting.

Footnote \*\*35 Casting at that stage was by the "Lost Wax" method in use in the Middle East from 2500BC to the Middle Ages. A clay core was moulded, and patterned if the inside of the casting was to be patterned. Beeswax was moulded over this core to the thickness required and the outside of the wax was carved to provide any pattern desired on the outside of the bronze article. The clay moulds were then baked as a unit, and the wax ran out through holes provided in the outer mould. Molten bronze would then be poured in through these holes until the mould was filled. (Clay spacers might be required to keep inner and outer pottery clay moulds correctly spaced.) When the bronze had hardened, the clay mould was broken off from it.

7:48-50 Golden covered Altar - 6:20 Golden Table - On which Bread was placed before the presence of God/ the Holy of Holies as in Ex 25:23-30. Note showbread/ table at Nob when David and his men ate of it, 1 Sam 21:6. 2 Chr 4:8 says 10 tables, presumably forming one table. \*\*36 Its secondary function providing Holy bread for the Priests and families would make more bread appropriate with the staff expansion caused by the Temple being set up.

The Lamp stands - The Tabernacle was lit by a lamp on the top of each of the seven branches of a Golden lamp stand, Ex 25:31-40 etc. In the larger Temple there were ten separate lamp stands five on the right and five on the left, facing the Holy of Holies, but the function and symbolism remained the same. Golden censers, tongs, wick trimmers, etc were provided for use with these three items.

Footnote \*\*36 At a later date 2 Chr 13:11 speaks of a Table, and a Golden Lamp stand. Perhaps they were considered to be combined as ONE UNIT, as being the "Temple-Bigger-and-Better" equivalent of the ONE Table and One Golden Lamp of the Tabernacle, and having collectively the same function. Or when the originals had been looted by Pharaoh Shishak, 14:25, ONE Gold Lamp stand, and ONE Gold-covered Table were all they could afford.

Footnote \*\*37 In 1 Chr 29:1-20 we read that David's Joy in the Lord and prayers had inspired others to pray and give also, and strongly convicted Solomon that he must make the temple as worthy of God as possible. Cp the requirement that we Do all things to the Glory of God Rom 15:7; 1 Cor 10:31, Phil 2:11 in the Temple of the church 1 Cor 9:13-14; Eph 2:19-22, and the temple of our bodies, 1 Cor 6:19.

## 8:1-66 THE CONSECRATION of the Temple

(The opening of the Temple and this prayer marks a grand NEW BEGINNING WITH GOD for Israel under Solomon. Joshua to Samuel records the depressing failure of Israel to live by God's Law to His Glory in the Land He'd given them. From the disgrace of ELI's family, and the capture of the Ark of the Covenant, Samuel and David had struggled to turn them back to God, and to free Israel from their enemies.

The NEWNESS of this new beginning is emphasised by everything being centred on Solomon and what God had promised to David, the Law of Moses being left as a general background only. The break is in some ways like the break between the OLD Covenant of Moses, and the NEW Covenant in Christ which marks the NT Church. But the "If any man..." appeal to the individual of the Gospel, goes back to Abraham and individual Faith. What happens under Solomon points forward to the future Kingdom to be centred in Christ as the SUPER-SOLOMON-SEE D-OF-DAVID, reigning in Wisdom, Peace and Righteousness (Isa 9:6-7.)

An appropriate ceremony was needed to celebrate this and to solemnise the people with their responsibility for the next phase. ALL were invited/required to come as an expression of the new order - Israel as a united nation under God and God's King - not acting piecemeal at will in response to changing situations, Deu 12:1-14; Judges 17:6; 21:25

Footnote \*\*38 Also called the Ark of Testimony Num 4:5, as it held the stone Tablets/Testimony, Ex 25:16, etc on which were recorded the core of the terms of God's Covenant with Israel made at Sinai - the terms on which saving fellowship with Him was possible. It was too holy for even the priests to touch. The High Priest stood before it only once a year, shielded by clouds of incense, and sprinkling blood on it from a distance, Lev 16:12-16. A reminder of the infinite Holiness/otherness of God from Man who even at his best is condemned by the limited standards of his own conscience. Yet, sprinkled with blood, it bore witness to God's saving presence among His people. Solomon's prayer and David's Psalm 51 bear witness to this, even if the Day of Atonement wasn't kept.

At the time of the FEAST/Festival in the month Ethanim, \*\*39 the seventh month. The Temple was completed and furnished in the 8th month, 6:38. Eleven months later the Ark was taken in, the Temple dedicated and the worship commenced. Presumably the delay was so that it could coincide with the Feast of Tabernacles. This was held in the 7th month and held to acknowledge that God who had cared for them in the Wilderness had now given them permanent homes in the land, according to His promise, Deu 12:8-12. The Entry of the Ark and the Glory cloud filling the temple, marked this. But without God's presence among His people their life in the Kingdom would be empty, just as His presence made all the difference to them in their wanderings, Ex 33:14-16. Zech 14:16-21 shows it to be the one Feast to be kept in the Millennial Kingdom.

All the men of Israel - Every Israelite, not just the males. Cp the gathering of ALL Israel, at the Feast of Tabernacles in the 7th year when all debts were to be cancelled, and the law read to all, to remind them of the terms of God's Covenant with them, Deu 31:7-13. The Covenant Tables in the Ark are mentioned, 8:9, and Solomon's prayer is the equivalent of acknowledging and renewing the Covenant.

could not be used in other ways, so would be stored in the Temple store-rooms.

Footnote \*\*39 From Lev 23:23-36 Num 29:1-38, we see there were THREE Feasts in that month, but I can find no references to the other two being kept. Solomon's call for the people to assemble fulfilled the purpose of The Feast of Trumpets, whether or not he was consciously doing so. The Day of Atonement, Lev 16:1-34, on the 10th day of Ethanim, Lev 23:26-32 Num 29:7-11, is seen to be very important in Rom 3:24-26 Heb 9:7-10:22, etc. At least from the time of the removal of the Ark from Shiloh it would have been impossible for it to have been kept. Some form of it may have been included in the two weeks celebration, 8:65. Solomon's prayer speaks much of Israel's sin and forgiveness

Footnote \*\*40 The original Tabernacle had been at Shiloh, Josh 18:1, but whether destroyed when the Philistines captured the Ark, or later, no further mention is made of it, unless it was the Tabernacle with the Altar at Gibeon, 1 Chr 16:39. In fact the Tabernacle at Shiloh is called a TEMPLE - Heykal, in 1 Sam 1:9, 3:3, so it may have been modified into a more permanent building. Partial excavation of the burnt remains of the town of Shiloh shows a suitably sized levelled area alongside it, where the Tabernacle may have stood.

Sacrificing so many sheep.. with the uncalculating spirit of cheerful giving that is a joy to the Lord, 2 Cor 9:7. This was done also when the Ark was brought into Jerusalem, 2 Sam 6:13.

8:6-9 The Priests brought the Ark into the Most Holy Place. ALL Israel accompanied it to the Temple courts, but only the Levites and priests could enter the Temple and install it in its place in the Holy of Holies. All the other furnishings were new, but the ARK itself was the one made for the Tabernacle under Moses, and represented the unchanging ruling presence of God as provided for at Sinai

Beneath the wings of the Cherubim- that faced the screen. The smaller Cherubim on the Mercy Seat lid of the Ark faced inward to its blood stained surface Ex 25:20. The 4 Cherubim were a 4 fold proclamation of the Holiness and Glory of God. Cp Isa 6. A striking reminder of the barrier between God and sinful man. These were not merely excluding man, as in Gen 3:24 but gazing on the mercy seat covered with the sprinkled blood of atonement offerings drawn by the sword of vengeance from the sinless willing victim, Lev 16:1-19, Heb 9:12.

Only \*\*41 the Tables of Stone- Symbol of, and central to the Law/ God's requirements for His people to live in the blessing of covenant

lengthened by honouring parents, Ex 20:12, etc. No where else does it mean drawn out/removed. The Rabbis said the ends of the staves made a bulge in the Temple Veil so witnessing to the priests who entered the Temple that the ARK was there hidden in the Holy of Holies. When the Tabernacle had been in transit everyone had the chance to see that it was being transported, now they had to accept the witness of the Priest. Now the reality of God's presence is witnessed by His Spirit in each Believer, Rom 8:14-17. Unto this day- Written later.

Footnote \*\*41 Heb 9:4 says in the Tabernacle it also contained the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod - unless the form of the statement in Greek has an unusual meaning. But they were put before the Lord/BEFORE the Testimony, Ex 16:33 Num 17:10. As with the incense altar which is said to be both INSIDE the Holy of Holies, and OUTSIDE it in front of its veil, these may be viewed as SYMBOLICALLY in the Ark. The thinking and language of God's OT Hebrew people is vivid, emotionally warm-hearted, pictorial, and full of symbolism. To demand that all its statements conform to each other mechanically as our rationalistic minds demand, and to quarrel over the conclusions we come to, is an insult to the God who chose to give us His Word, in the form He sees as best. The pot of manna, and rod were irrelevant now.

8:10-11 The cloud- Used of the Pillar of Cloud/Fire of the Lord's presence, Ex 13:21 etc, and Glory Cloud filling the Tabernacle, Ex 40:34-38 Used also of the Cloud of incense protecting the High Priest Lev 16:13. The Rabbis referred to the Glory Cloud as the Shekinah - from Shakan to dwell. filled the Temple of the Lord when the Priests withdrew from the Holy Place \*\*42 God graciously acknowledged/accepted/made use of the Temple, proclaiming He would indeed dwell among His people. We read of the Glory Cloud in Ezek 1:25 including the sad fact of His withdrawal because of the apostasy of the Priests and people, Ezek 8:1-10:22 11:22-23 And its return to the New Temple, 43:1-5.

The Priests could not. Since the events of 1 Sam 4 it had been obvious that the Lord was NOT in the midst of His people, marking them off as His people under His protection, and now that state of blessedness had been restored. By taking possession of the Temple He made it clear that He accepted it, but also that He was in charge, and they were there only as He willed, to do His will. At Pentecost God marked the beginning of His NEW way of dealing with His people by Visible Fire coming upon them as individual temples of the Holy Spirit, and uniting them into a

the assurance of the reality of the invisible God, and His saving purposes. He encourages all Israelites to turn confidently in prayer to God using the Temple indwelt by Him as the focus for their prayers. And he asks God to continue to accept the prayers of His people in granting forgiveness and restoration when asked for, according to their need/His desire to bless them. The association of the Nation's future with that of David's dynasty is natural in summing up the role of the Temple.)

8:12-13 The Lord said He would dwell in a dark cloud- Clouding His Glory for the sake of His frail people. Moses draw near unto the THICK DARKNESS, Ex 20:21. I have built a house- The most permanent and glorious Temple that he could, but its glory was as nothing to the Visible Glory of God's presence with which He had honored it.

8:14-21 King Solomon turned from facing the Temple and the Glory Cloud to face the people (As he was on a raised platform, 2 Chr 6:13, he would be visible/audible to those within the Temple court, Cp Neh 9:4-5.)

Footnote \*\*42 2Chr 5:11-14 says the Levites were leading the people in praise and worship at the time.

and blessed them as they stood in God's presence. He blesses them in God's Name, as God's representative King/ Mediator/ Priest/ Shepherd, as Moses had at the inauguration of the earlier stage. (Both had been called to this role on behalf of God/behalf of Israel.) The blessing amounted to proclaiming God's goodness to the nation, with particular reference to the promise to David.

BLESSED BE /praise to THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL who has fulfilled what he promised.. to David- Those specific promises in Sam 7, and behind them the general promises given through Moses. His own Hand- God's direct sovereign actions, Ex 9:1-4; Deu 2:15, etc. His own Mouth- Direct communication through Nathan, to David, in contrast to a spiritual impression which might be misunderstood etc.

Since the day I brought my people out of Egypt not chosen a city or tribe- Although He promised there would be one, Deu 12:1 I chose David- 1 Sam 16:1-13. My Father had it in his heart to build a Temple- See 5:3-5. The Lord said you did well.. But your son shall build. The Lord has kept the promise... and I have built the Temple.

that David's coronation and his assurances after him were that of righteous Kings.)

8:22-23 Solomon stood before the Altar of the Lord- Symbol that the only approach to God was through atoning death. In the presence of the congregation of Israel and spread forth his hands towards Heaven. It's obvious that he is acting on behalf of Israel as KING and Mediating High Priest on their behalf before God, and on God's behalf before them. A role Moses had been given in the Exodus and a role which the anointed Seed of David will take up in the promised Kingdom.

Attempts at analysing this prayer, (or other Scriptures) risks reducing them to a source of doctrinal statements. Or ritualising them as a form to be imitated. In either case we lose the passionate, awed response to having seen the Glory of God accept and claim the magnificent temple he had built to express his Love. Such Glory that even Solomon "In all his glory" was moved to humility and awareness of God's Grace in stooping to beseechman in his helpless need.

There is no God like You- No other God that man has imagined acts as the real God does. (He answers prayers even beyond what we can imagine possible also, today, Eph 3:20-21.) Cp Nebuchadnezzar's response in Dan 4:1-3, 34-37. It was a day of awed remembrance of the saving purposes of God for Israel, similar in spirit to the rejoicing when they had by God's Grace and power crossed the Red Sea, Ex 15:1-21.

You keep your Covenant MERCY /of Love- Chesed- Loyal love, etc. God's love, mercy and faithfulness are inseparable, and these are central to Solomon's thinking and feeling, prayer and worship. Cp God's self-revelation as a God of Loving mercy in response to Moses' prayer re Israel's terrible sin/ Golden calf, and the renewal of the Covenant, Ex 34:6-7; Deu 7:9-10. God's mercy is referred to as an encouragement for men to walk in His ways. With those who walk before God with all their heart.

8:24-26 You have kept your promise to David- As demonstrated in that Solomon had become King, and been able to build the Temple. Now he asks in Faith that the promise that David's family will continue to rule Israel, blessed, and a blessing under God will also be kept. But as in

basis of His promise, and accepting our relevant responsibilities. Like Solomon, we can then live in a personal relationship with God on the basis of His Word, as His Servant/ slaves - Ebed - totally at His disposal with no illusions about dictating to God!

## (b) 8:27-53 Solomon's Intercession

(God's love for His people makes Him eager to bless them, but also moves Him to warn and punish them with a view to their repentance and restoration so that He CAN righteously bless them. God listens to us, not because He needs us, but in Mercy to us. Whatever OUR priority may be, our greatest need is to be forgiven and cleansed so that we can have fellowship with Him - So that He can be to us what He is and desires to be. The background for this prayer is the warnings given in Lev 26 Deu 28:30, a sequence of disasters up to the final one, Exile. Yet even this isn't final, as restoration is promised when Israel seeks it/ is willing to be restored. Solomon speaks confidently as he is asking God to do what God has already promised to do)

8:27-30 Will God dwell on earth? Solomon, under God, has provided the Temple. God has honoured it by visibly taking possession of it, but Solomon showed he had no illusions about God NEEDING a House, Acts 17:24-29 (Or Food offerings, Ps 50) God is CREATOR, infinitely above all His Creation, as indicated by the heaping up of words Heaven, Heaven of Heavens! In talking about God, or to God we too need to keep a due sense of proportion.

Yet HAVE RESPECT/give attention to- Panah- Turn His face towards. As a favour, out of His loving concern for His people. Your servant's Prayer- Tephilla- a Prayer, Praise, Deu 10:21, or hymn of praise, Ps 22:2-25:14-51. The only grounds on which God's people can approach God and ASK His help and forgiveness, CLAIM His promises and a share in His purposes is what God Himself has said and promised. God's word is an unbreakable bond and Solomon dares to claim it/ take it up in Faith. As do believers in all ages.

SUPPLICATION/Plea for mercy- Techinnah- A call for help. From Chanah- To show Mercy, stoop to help an inferior. CRY - Rinnah- A

Temple was built as God had promised, etc; as the place of which He said, My Name shall be there, Deu 5:12. God identified Himself with His people and made provision in the temple for their fellowship with Him/ forgiveness and cleansing from sin, that His required. It was therefore the focus of attention for God's people who wished to Pray towards it in worship, or plead with Him for His merciful help. Solomon asks for them to be heard and favourably answered.

And when you hear, Forgive- Salach- First used in Ex 34:9. God's Name was enthroned in the Temple but far from being limited to a man-made Temple, or to man's thoughts/ feelings/ and works, God Himself is enthroned in the Heavens. And whatever felt needs drive a man to prayer, the infinite Holiness of God in heaven, and the need for man to fellowship with Him in order to be and do what he should, means that the greatest and constant need of man is to be forgiven by God, the Creator and Redeemer. Generally this was associated with the offering of sacrifices, but when the temple was destroyed and no sacrifices could be offered, God assured His people that He would restore Israel out of exile and FORGIVE their sins, Jer 31:33-34

8:31-32 When a man wrongs his neighbour - Re property, and there are no human witnesses, God is appealed to under oath, Ex 22:7-11. Solomon is concerned for God's honour, His name not to be taken lightly, Ex 20:7, as well as for justice between men. God is righteous in all His dealings with men, and He is appealed to, to ensure that human actions be appropriately rewarded.

8:33-34 Israel defeated because they have sinned- As in the case of Achan, Josh 7:1-26 Lev 24:14-17; Deu 28:25 When His people sin God, being righteous can't support them, and the enemy defeats them. It is His desire that this will bring them to repentance so that they will turn back to God, and confess His name/ put themselves truly under His Lordship by amending their ways. Solomon asks that if they do so their sin will be forgiven and they will be restored to fellowship with God. And to their land and families. Cp 2Chr 28:5-15.

Confess- Yadah- To confess, give thanks, praise, as Leah did, Gen 29:35. As well as personal responses to God for His goodness, it's used of public thanksgiving/ praise which is a normal part of worship. It doesn't

8:35-36 No rain- Lev 26:19-20 Deu 28:23-24 Good and well-timed rain was essential for crops in that climate. (Canaanite worship centred on Baal, the Rain-storm God, see Elijah's challenge, chapters 17-18.) Their return to God is again Solomon's prayer request, but he adds a further request that God will intervene positively and Teach them the right way to live. In all ages there is a great need for God to raise up teachers of His Word, and that requires a willful ingression on their part. The spiritual poverty and backsliding in Israel is summed up in their lacking a teaching priest, 2 Chr 15:1-7. When God's servants fail to bring His Word effectively to His people, spiritual deadness sets in, and today we see emptying churches, the drying up of church funds, and closure of churches. The same thing happened then. Contrast 2 Chr 17:7-11; 31:2-6, and, Neh 13:10.

8:37-40 Famine, Plague. Lev 26:16, 19-26 Deu 28:22, 38-48, 59-61. God sent FAMINE as a warning/correction/punishment, as in 17:1; 2 Sam 21:1; Jer 5:12, 14:12. In contrast to these public calamities affecting the individual,

SICKNESS/Disease is a private calamity, so there's an emphasis on the need for every individual to realise and deal with the sin in his own heart and life. He alone really knows it, and must deal with God about it.

Prayer, SUPPLICATION/Plea- As in 8:28 Forgiveness for sin is impossible until the sin is confessed to be sin. Solomon acknowledges that God can't have fellowship with sin, or bless men whose hearts are resisting His will, so the forgiveness and blessing he asks is for them to live in the fear of God, under the terms He has given them.

Note the universality of sin and the need for the mercy of God, 8:30, 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45 and the temple as a prayer focus- 8:30, 43, 45.

8:41-43A STRANGER/Foreigner- As Gentiles (Naaman, Ruth, etc) see God at work in Israel, they will desire to know Him as their God too. Hear from Heaven- The Temple is the witness to His Name= Who and What God is, but only the Lord could answer their prayer.

44-45 When Your people go to War- No need to be PHYSICALLY in the Temple. By praying towards it they would be clarifying in their own

most desperate situation, Lev 23:19, Deu 33:19, 33:30. Solomon proclaimed that hope. Cp the early chapters of Isaiah. God had promised restoration even in the calamities under which other nations become extinct. And God HAS kept that promise, down to this day, when after 1900 years of Exile Israel is once more a Nation.

Forgive their TRANSGRESSIONS/Offences- Pasha- Defiant Sin, Rebellion against the known will of God, 12:19, Ex 23:21; 34:7. We're sometimes told there was no OT provision for the forgiveness of deliberate sin. This ignores the Day of Atonement which dealt with Pasha, Lev 16:16, 21.

God has COMPASSION/Mercy on His people, but the wonder of His power is that when they repent and truly desire to do His will, He can move even godless Tyrants to act in mercy towards them, Neh 2:1-8; Dan 1:8-16. God loved Israel enough to bring them out of Egypt, into the promised land, to Solomon's time, in spite of all they were, and did. He can and will restore to blessing and joy those who repent and desire fellowship with Him, whatever disaster they find themselves in, Lev 26:41-44; Deu 42:7-31.

8:52-53 May your eyes be open- He repeats his central request, and claims again God's purpose of Sovereign Grace that chose them to be His people. For you singled them out.. as you declared through Your Servant Moses- Deu 7:6-16; 14:2. This is an example, for all time, of believing intercessory prayer. Whereas for Christians such prayer is centred on a PERSON, Christ our High Priest, Jn 15:7; Heb 2:17-18; 4:13-16. In Solomon's time the Temple, the PLACE of the Lord's Name was central to God's dealing with His people. There is no empty vainglory in this as he made clear that he is merely God's tool in accomplishing His stated plan - That the people use the temple as a focus for the God-orientation of their lives, and that God will use it for blessing them, as He brought them out of Egypt to do Deu 42:0 Jer 11:4. If Temple demolished, still pray towards the City, Dan 6:10.

(c) 8:54-61 Solomon Blesses the Congregation of Israel

8:54-56 When Solomon finished Praying he.. blessed- Barak. Berek= Knees. Blessings are rightly asked for on our knees as humble

sovereign. Grace Solomon blesses the people by proclaiming what God has done in fulfillment of His Gracious promise. If we wish to bless others/ be a blessing to them, we also must proclaim the Sovereign Grace of God offered to all men in the Gospel.

REST - Rest in the land is a key word, 8:56 In Deu 129-10 REST is Israel living in peace and security in the land of promise and is followed by the command to bring their sacrifices to the place where He will put His name. Physically, the rest enjoyed under Solomon was fairly complete for some years. But Spiritually it was hardly more than hinted at. They failed to enter into their rest, Ps 95:7-11, just as they had done earlier under Moses/ Joshua. REST is now offered/ enjoyed in Christ who is our Sabbath Rest, Heb 4:9.

8:57-61 May the Lord be with us. Turn our hearts to walk in all His ways- Encouraged by what God has already done Solomon prays that God will continue to be with them. He, and other OT men of God knew that there was no point to the outward form of the Temple (and worship in it) unless God was in it.

Footnote \*\*43 Again assuming the fulfillment of all the promises made through Moses, but without referring to the books which recorded them.

For true REST God must be in men's hearts as they responded to the opportunity for fellowship with God the Temple provided. So he prays not just for EXTERNAL help, but that God's Spirit would never cease working in their HEARTS to bring His people to an obedient walk before Him. He doesn't refer to specific commands, or to the written Law. Obeying God's commands is primarily a matter of heart willingness to do what we know, and God alone can influence us for good in the core of our being, Gen 6:3; Ps 19:12-14; 51:10; Prov 21:1-4; Jn 6:44; Phil 2:12-13. Note the wonderful promise, Jer 31:31, fulfilled in Christ, Heb 8:8-13.

May these words be near the Lord.. He maintain the cause of His Servant.. that all may know the Lord is God- All Solomon has done and said is empty unless it has been in fellowship with the Lord, as part of His purposes of Grace for Israel, and all the people of the World. God alone can make it an effective witness to the world around This witness will be seen in God's keeping His promises to Abraham that their enemies would be His enemies, Gen 12:3 - That God would always be

8:6264 PEAC E/fellowship offerings- A JOYFUL celebration of fellowship with God. \*\*44 That meant that the blood was poured out at the altar and the fat burned on the altar. Then, apart from any meat given to the Priest involved, the meat was taken home by the offerer for a family feast, Lev 1:1-17; 7:11-33 This meant that God, the Priest, and the offerer with his family, had fellowship with each other in this offering. Aaron making offerings and blessing the people are associated in Lev 9:22

Footnote \*\*44 In my childhood I was hungry enough for the joyful anticipation of a feast of meat to overcome my disgust at the messiness of the home slaughter of an animal, and the loss of a pet lamb. But now, like most moderns, the thought of the constant offering of animal sacrifices, horrifies me. In our modern world the meat on our table is separated from the killing of the animal by a decent distance. But the food we live by automatically depends on the death of animals and plants, and even vegetarians among us buy petrol bought by the sale of male lambs to Saudi Arabia for their annual sacrifice. We pay a Moslem priest at the freezing works to say the words that turn each animal's death into a sacrifice to Allah, and so makes the carcass acceptable food for Moslems. (In NT times most of the meat on sale at the market came from animals sacrificed to Idol "gods," 1 Cor 10:25-28) If we view with horror/disgust the OT blood sacrifices, we need to remember that they were the temporary answer to the disgusting spiritual horror of sin against the Holy God of Love, Lev 17:11. Sin that could be undone, finally, only by the physical and spiritual horror of the Cross, Mt 27:46 Jn 1:29 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:23-24 Heb 9:11-14, etc.

Solomon offered 2200 cattle and 120 000 sheep- That the State in the person of King Solomon was the donor of the cattle and sheep meant that even the poorest family had for this once all the meat they could hope to eat. In modern terms it was a grand barbecue! Cp the similar rejoicing organised by King David to celebrate bringing the Ark of God to Jerusalem, 2 Sam 6:17-19. A huge number of sacrifices marked the spiritual importance of the occasion, especially in the lives of the people, by providing a memorable experience of physical pleasure. Acknowledging God and enjoying His blessings in an extravagant Feast. To some the vast number of animals sacrificed presents a problem. Some suggest that as numbers are easy to copy wrongly they may have been. But 2 Chr 7:5 confirms them. The record acknowledges that the huge bronze Altar, 20 cubits square, 2 Chr 4:1, was too small and the centre of the Temple court was used as well.

8:65-66 Solomon observed the Festival.. and all Israel- As his guests, sharing in the fellowship offerings he provided. Great crowds would have assembled and enjoyed camping out on the hills around Jerusalem living in temporary shelters suitable for the warm, dry, autumn weather, as required for the Feast of Tabernacles. But many of the people would have had to stay at home to look after farms, infants, and the aged. In such cases the killing of cattle and sheep, at home, for Feasting was approved, Deu 12:20-22 That the figures are rounded off to the nearest thousand, suggest an intelligent estimation, which could have included these. (Peace Offerings were made at Bethel, Judges 20:26 and Gilgal, 1 Sam 10:8; 11:15.)

Fourteen days of Feasting suggests the Temple Dedication Feast occupied the first week, including the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles followed at its correct time, 15th to 23rd of the month, Lev 23:39 Deu 16:13-15; 2 Chr 7:10. On the eighth day, a day of Sabbath Rest, but as the FIRST day of the week, a day of new beginnings, Solomon declared the celebration to be over, and they returned home.

Footnote \*\*45 This sounds like sober fact compared with the claim made by Josephus that in the time of Nero 250,000 Passover Lambs were killed in 3 hours at Jerusalem - B. J. VI 1x 3. He also claimed that Solomon provided for the Temple 40,000 talents, and 200,000 silver trumpets!

They blessed the King- As King-Priest he is the dominant figure throughout, acting as God's representative/ Servant Zadok isn't mentioned. Solomon's desire to honor God with a feast and generous provision, had ensured that even the poorest had an unforgettable two weeks of feasting. It would promote a wonderful feeling of unity - Crowds from all over the land camping out on the hills together around Jerusalem, feasting in an economy-forgetting abandon appropriate for the joyful Feast of Tabernacles. This unity in whole-hearted devotion to God who had given them the land, and to their God-given King who had provided the animals for the feasting, meant that God's blessings were tangible to the stomachs of the poorest in the land.

Went home Joyful and glad of heart- Appropriate to that Feast, Num 10:10, Deu 27:7. Solomon had fulfilled his responsibilities as God's servant in that those he had served were moved to look beyond him, to

## Appendix I BIBLICAL & CRITICAL VIEWS of I & II KINGS

(Issues which some may feel a need to face in order to be more securely BIBLICAL in their understanding of the setting of Kings, and the form in which it is presented, so that they can apply its message more surely to the needs of today.)

S J DeVries attempts to be both Biblical, and Critical, and I found positive and helpful the following well-supported statements:

Kings is History, not Myth- Babylonians, Egyptians, etc defined their gods in mythological terms. Even the Greek historians, Herodotus etc, didn't distinguish between History & Myth in their writings. The Bible reveals God as acting in History with life-changing promises to Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David and Solomon, so that in 1 Kings Abraham's descendants are occupying the whole land promised to Abraham, Deu 26:5-9. Today Israel still witnesses to the reality of God, by existing as a state in that land - the same race, same religion - after 1900 years exile. NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS EVER HAPPENED!

Heathen "Gods" were only caricatures of human personality/ representations of human abilities and desires, Rom 1:18-25. Israel knew God as a single, whole, complete, integrated Person ruling over all things. A God who refuses to be manipulated but wants men to covenant with Him on His terms - that they cooperate with Him in working out His eternal purposes for their good. The Bible is the history of His as seen by those involved. He was a jealous God who cared so much for His people that He could not accept sharing them with idols. From Samuel on, the main concern is the unfolding of God's purposes in the Kingdom, centred in David and his descendants. It's drawn from historical records, used honestly, with a consistent line of development. It evaluates events and people realistically and presents credibly consistent portraits of those involved. Even its heroes are shown to have flaws that wreck good intentions, and they reap what they sow.

The Jews rightly placed the books of Kings in the FORMER PROPHETS and we should read them as prophetic messages - history centred on relationships

promised them. That someone's David is Jesus KING, or the Old Prophet is a PROPHET, doesn't exempt them from having their sin exposed.

These books have long been used as a source of Role Models for us to imitate or avoid. But right actions are produced by right beliefs, so the more we try to see the recorded events as they saw them, the better we can stand with them and learn from them to honour God in OUR situation as THEY did in theirs. And recognise the place their decisions played in the unfolding of God's eternal purposes - without that we're ignoring the reality of God's Sovereign existence, as well as the 3-dimensional reality of each character and his choices.

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But most of DeVries comment is unprofitable chaff, not wheat - learned speculation that disqualifies itself by ignoring God's over-ruling of the writers and their circumstances so that what we hold in our hands is the Word of God, effective in our lives for HIS purposes, 1 Cor 10:11; 1 Tim 3:15-17; 2 Pet 1:19-21. Those who in reading the Scriptures ignore God, and His revelation of Himself, are fools, Ps 14. This faces us with the dilemma stated in Prov 26:4-5.

If we answer their arguments according to their folly by applying to THEIR statements the rational scepticism with which THEY attack Scripture, we risk becoming like them - occupied with the chaff of arguments based on human wisdom, 1 Tim 6:20-21; 2 Tim 2:23-26. Those not born of the Spirit, indwelt and taught by Him, can know nothing of God's truth, 1 Cor 2:6-16. It's godly wisdom to ignore what the Enemy says about God's Word. Those who read/apply Scripture with only an uneducated understanding, will gain more benefit than will any man who allows his own cleverness to dominate as he reads it, Prov 26:12. Reading the works of such men, (Liberals or Fundamentalists) makes it harder to meet God in His Word, or be taken up into His purposes.

If we don't answer them they will imagine their arguments are unanswerable. So for the sake of those who have to wrestle with Liberal/ Critical ideas, in their own minds or the minds of those they love and witness to, I have attempted to do a little answering of the folly of human scepticism of Scripture.

The MORAL/ SPIRITUAL - Atheists (who say there is no God) and Agnostics (who say we can't know anything about God if there is one) can cheerfully claim that the Bible was written by liars and cheats, as they themselves, having no God, have no basis for moral or spiritual beliefs. Those who deny that God exists have to say that all records of miracles are lies, and all prophecies were written after the events happened.

Those of us who know, and live in fellowship with, the God of Abraham, Moses, David and Solomon can cheerfully ignore such folly. But can point out that the coming of the Bible to any community has always brought moral and spiritual improvement. So if the Bible was written by liars and cheats, people DO pick grapes off thorn bushes/ figs off thistles, Mt 7:16-18. It's even greater folly to claim that the True God could be revealed by means of lies told or acted.

Footnote \*\*46 Some of the semi-Christian apocryphal books are frauds like that. Some Religious leaders still do "tell lies for God," but the Bible condemns all such hypocrisy, Rom 3:8.

The RATIONAL - If there is no mention of a certain thing, some will assume that it didn't exist at that time, but equally it may be that no-one sees any need to mention it because EVERYONE then knew about it. When Aristotle wrote his book "The Politics," he doesn't even mention the most striking political figure of his time, Alexander the Great. This doesn't mean that Alexander didn't exist, or Aristotle was ignorant of him - Aristotle had been Alexander's tutor! If we read the Scriptures as they stand we find Samuel and Kings describe the life of people for whom the Law had existed long enough for its principles to have been absorbed, and become the accepted basis for life in general, so the people felt no need to state the details, or go to a book to confirm them.

From Joshua to Samuel the Israelites were struggling to survive under primitive conditions, so the ability to Read and Write were irrelevant luxuries. God's Word belonged in the Tabernacle, but in turbulent times may have been stored for safety in a dry cave as the Dead Sea scrolls were. An illiterate High Priest would have no use for it. And a society where people handed down history and culture orally, would feel no need of it. The book of Judges isn't set out in strict time sequence - 17 and 18 seem to belong in the early stage. Songs are memorised and passed on unchanged - Deborah's song seems to be in more

who believed they ought to follow the general pattern of the Law of Moses, and felt some guilt when their natural inclinations moved them to sink to the level of their heathen neighbours. Boaz allowing Ruth to glean in his fields, and the ritual of taking her as his wife, makes no sense without Lev 19:9, Deu 24:19, and Deu 25:5-10. When the Philistine cities are excavated the bones of pigs, sheep and cattle are found. Although oak trees and their acorns - ideal pig food - were common in the nearby hills, Israelite villages excavated there have no pig bones, only those of sheep etc. Why - if they didn't already have the food laws given by Moses? In fact if we remove from these books everything based on the Law of Moses, WHAT IS LEFT MAKES NO SENSE.

Finally, any, so-called "Yahwist" sufficiently clever and unscrupulous to write this as a pious forgery would have made a better job of doing so. Of Solomon's listed Governors only ONE has a name associated with Jehovah/Yaweh, and half the names are Canaanite. The Temple is to replace the High Places, but it's at a High Place that God appears to Solomon! And why would any Pharisee-type zealot have written that the building of the Temple depended on the help of a Baal-worshipping King of Tyre? (See Jezebel, 16:31.) The book as it stands reads as an honest statement of the Good and the Bad, in the lives of individuals, and the nation.

## ATTITUDES towards THE BIBLE that AFFECT BIBLE STUDY

### The GREAT folly - Ignoring God's Sovereignty

God is SOVEREIGN, and the Bible is HIS SOVEREIGN MESSAGE to mankind, by which everyone will be judged, Mt 4:4; Lk 16:28-31; Jn 5:45; 12:48. Critics proudly claim to be "Scientific," by which they mean they ignore God and rely totally on godless human reason and experience. But such rationalism is irrational. Those who deny the existence of a Creator deny the existence of any purpose in life, and deny the validity of any human reasoning - If the universe is a product of random, irrational action, ALL thoughts and actions are equally random and irrational. And words such as True/False, Right/Wrong, Good/Bad, Ugly/Beautiful are meaningless. So scientists who are atheists have to pretend that Nature or Genes, or something, has the power to establish rational truth, morality, purpose, and destiny!

That scientific research should ignore the Creator is folly when origins and purposes are being considered. That Bible Commentators should ignore the existence of God and His purposes and try to write an exposition of Scripture that has no

our human right to live as we please, and still be pleased with ourselves, is further confirmation. While the Critics deny the "Fall" they display the way our rebel mind instinctively protects itself from any acknowledgment of the existence of God, our need to submit to Him, and to be drawn into fellowship with Him on His terms.

Critics say that what Bible Believers find in the Bible is the result of the prejudices they bring to it. But this is just as true of the Bible Critics. The irreverent jingle "Wonderful things in the Bible I see, some put there by you, and some put there by me," warns against this danger. Conservatives may too readily say "Thus saith the Lord," when what they are seeing is etched on their glasses, rather than a message God gives in His Word. Liberals do the same, except they say "Thus saith the Wisdom of the Critics," treating the text as a mere ancient, patchwork religious document, using their skills to identify who wrote what, by what they imagine the imagined characters believed and would have said. They concentrate on sitting in judgment on the factuality, morality, and religious/spiritual value of what they read. They leave a strong impression that "God" is a creation of human thinking, designed to meet the needs felt by people. And now, they suggest, the concept of "God" is irrelevant, a mere cultural adornment for those who like such religious stuff. The fact that God is GOD Almighty, who must judge us by our response to His Word, means that such thinking is tragic folly.

Once one acknowledges the existence of God, there's no reason to assume He doesn't know the future, and wouldn't forewarn His people. That this wouldn't over-ride the human sovereignty involved in their choices is obvious from our unwillingness to hear what we don't want to hear. The Disciples didn't take in the Death & Resurrection of Christ. And in everyday life publicity about the consequences of smoking, drink-driving etc is ignored by many. The emphasis in 1 Kings, and all Scripture, is that INFORMATION IS NEVER SUFFICIENT. The information contained in the Law of Moses affected sinners and sinning, both negatively and positively, Rom 7:7-25, but it saved no one. We need God IN us enabling us to will and do what pleases Him, Phil 2:12-13.

The scepticism that prevents men from hearing God speak through His Word, is matched by the credulity with which they accept humanistic alternatives. Eg DeVries says the Ark placed in the Temple was made for carrying into battle. That Hophri and Phineas carried it into battle, 1 Sam 4:4, no more proves this than their action in 222 proves Tabernacle worship was intended to involve fornication.

(Ezra's court didn't really have the nations installed on him - he symbolised THE Son of Man.) Ecc 7:16 isn't a command from God to us, being mere human wisdom. Ex 22:18 was a command for their stage of spiritual development, not a command for us today, though it warns us that spiritism is hateful to God. We must not imagine that every page of God's word was written against the same background, and equally directly applicable to us. "The King's business REQUIRES HASTE/ is urgent," may SEEM a goodverse to use when teaching the urgency of evangelising - but the man who said it, was NOT on the King's business, and it ended in tragedy, 1 Sam 21:8, 22:6-23. A driving sense of urgency may come from our fallen nature which wishes to act before God has a chance to counsel us. Under our God-given sovereignty we're required to evaluate, interpret, and apply what we read in Scripture, always remembering that in doing so we are dealing with the Written Word of the Living God, which will in due course JUDGE US for our response to it.

The Bible is GOD'S WORD to men - This requires us to listen to Him and let Him reveal to us how it must be interpreted. So, if when we take up a Bible "What do I think of this?" "What use can I make of this?" is our main thought, our study will do more harm than good, whether we are Fundamentalists or Liberals. "What does God have to say ABOUT ME/ us? What does God have to say TO ME.. What does He want me to do, as my part in His eternal purposes?" are the questions which should dominate Bible Study.

We must read it submissively with a view to obeying it. If human information and rational judgment cast doubt on some item, we're to cast ourselves more earnestly on God for His wisdom, and walk more warily, BUT STILL WALK WITH GOD IN WHAT HIS WORD SAYS. That God is SOVEREIGN and must be allowed the right to speak as He has chosen should be 95% of our attitude. But the 5% SOVEREIGNTY delegated to us - the responsibility to read IN ITS OWN SETTING what has been written, to judge whether it's intended to be taken literally, or is irony, symbolism, or statement of fact which we're to evaluate in the light of further revelations of God's will, etc, IS IMPORTANT. And those of us who are privileged to meet God in due course will learn His verdict on the way we handled that 5% of stewardship responsibility - the eternal good and harm we have done as a result of the way we chose to read His Word.

Those who take Scripture to be ALL equally factual and literal ignore the fact that in it God is revealing Himself and His will against a complex human situation. Israel in the Wilderness is spoken of idyllically as a Bride motivated by first

The Bible is God's Word THROUGH men- What we hold in our hands came to us through men in a wide variety of human situations, recording the actions of men within their culture, as rational beings responding to their God, under His influence, limited by the knowledge of His progressively revealed will available at that time. And it came down to us through men copying, and recopying, needing to change some words to keep the message intelligible, etc. Ps 40:6-8 and Heb 10:5-7 bear the same message from God, but in different words. It has reached us through a variety of MSS and translations - So, it's foolish to cut a verse out of the Bible and paste it onto a modern situation as if it would always, automatically be God's verdict. IN THAT SENSE WE MUST USE OUR EDUCATED JUDGMENT, or we cannot handle the meat of God's Word, Heb 5:11-14.

It's impossible that anyone will automatically hear God/ Fellowship with God as he reads. Only GOD HIMSELF knows Himself and His purposes, 1 Cor 2. It is eternal life for us to know Him, Jn 17:3, and if we have received Christ, been born again of the Spirit of God, indwelt by Him, the MIND of God has become accessible to us. Only such people can possibly help us to know God, or His Saving purposes. What value could there be in accepting guidance from the spiritually blind, Mt 15:14. Even the brightest ideas of a cultural, theological genius are unsafe to follow. And yet some reading of them may be needed to make us aware of the thinking of modern minds. We need this so that (without naming them or advertising their ideas) we can speak/write in ways that are helpful to those influenced by current thinking.

We need to confess frequently to God that we need His help to rightly understand what we read. This weakens our natural conceit by reminding us that God is GOD and it's neither wise, nor safe for us to be doing all the thinking and talking! As Naaman found, there are things God can teach us only by arousing in us the willingness to come humbly as a child, and say "I can't understand. Please teach me." The God of Glory has chosen to reveal the glory of His Being and His Will, clouded by the human frailty of the Scriptures, FOR OUR PROTECTION, much as He has placed the PHYSICAL Glory of the Sun at a safe distance from us. The proud conceit of the critic who uses the feeble candle of any human wisdom to evaluate and comment on the Rationality, Morality, and Method of Revelation found in the Bible is ridiculous. God is the Sun of wisdom/ knowledge blazing in the heavens, at such a distance for our safety as to be largely inaccessible to our observation/analysis. The advance

While God's servants SHOULD, as far as possible, remove all unnecessary obstacles to human understanding and belief, the "offence of the Cross" Gal 5:11, (that condemns ALL and provides new life for ALL, Gal 2:20) can't be avoided.

## Appendix II DAVID & SOLOMON

David's name occurs in Scripture 1085 times, Solomon 281 times. By my count, in the books of Samuel and Kings 768 verses deal with David alone, 426 verses with David and Saul, and 50 verses deal with David and Solomon. 300 verses deal with Solomon alone.

As examples to Israel- it's David who sets the pattern of living and ruling in fellowship with God, to fulfil His eternal purposes. In Judah Kings were kings on the basis of God's dealings with David, rather than His dealings with Abraham, Moses, or Solomon. This sets the standard by which kings were evaluated in these Scriptures.

As Types of Christ- Like Moses before them, both David and Solomon acted as PROPHETS, speaking for God, KINGS, ruling for God, and PRIESTS mediating between God and Men. As such they typify the role of Christ. The record of David's life as the rejected and suffering Deliverer, gives us a vivid picture of the role of Christ Jesus our Saviour and Lord. When Solomon took up His role of ruling in wisdom, power, peace and Glory he rewarded men according to their treatment of David. When our Lord Comes in Glory to reign in Righteousness He will righteously reward all according to their response to His First Coming.

But while David and Solomon in some ways picture Christ, they are in no sense God-Kings (embodying "god") such as in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria etc. David and Solomon are portrayed realistically as real men, HUMAN servants of God, fulfilling something of His purposes, yet in themselves sinners dependent on the Saving mercy of God. God's word through His prophets rebukes, encourages and directs them. Solomon speaks to us in I Kings, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and his reign gives us a foretaste/appetiser for

Other booklets:

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