



YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

2 Chronicles

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INTRODUCTION TO 1 AND 2 CHRONICLES

I. NAME OF THE BOOK

A. The name of the book in Hebrew is “the words (events) of the days (years).” This is used in the sense of “a chronicle of the years.” These same words occur in the title of several books mentioned as written sources in 1 Kings 14:19,29; 15:7,23,31; 16:5,14,20,27; 22:46. The phrase itself is used over thirty times in 1 and 2 Kings and is usually translated “chronicles.”

B. The LXX entitled it “the things omitted (concerning the Kings of Judah).” This implies that Chronicles is to Samuel and Kings what the Gospel of John is to the Synoptic Gospels. See *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, pp. 127-148.

As the Gospel writers under inspiration (see Special Topic: Inspiration) had the right to select, adapt, and arrange the life of Jesus (not invent actions or words), so too, the inspired authors of OT narratives (see *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction*, by Elliott E. Johnson, p. 169). This selection, adaptation, and chronological/thematic arrangement of words/events was to convey theological truth. History is used as a servant of theology.

Chronicles has suffered, much as the Gospel of Mark did. They were both seen as “Readers Digest” summaries and not “a full history.” This is unfortunate! Both have an inspired message. We, as readers committed to inspiration, must ask, “Why include this?” “Why choose not to record this?”

C. Jerome, in his “Prologus Galeatus,” entitled it “Chronicle of the whole sacred history” because its genealogy goes back to Adam and the companion books of Ezra/Nehemiah relate to the post-exilic Period (i.e., Cyrus II – Darius II). See Special Topic: Kings of Persia and Special Topic: Post-Exilic Chart)

The concluding nature of Chronicles can be illustrated by a quote from Jesus in Matt. 23:35 and Luke 11:51, where He mentions Abel (cf. Gen. 4:8) and Zechariah (cf. 2 Chr. 24:20-21). This clearly demonstrates the canonical MT position that Chronicles was written last.

D. 1 and 2 Chronicles were originally one book in Hebrew, which was divided by the LXX, as were the books of Samuel and Kings. This artificial division was contextually done poorly. It was only for the reason of length, not historical context.

II. CANONIZATION

A. 1 and 2 Chronicles are the last books of “the Writings” section of the Hebrew canon, which means 2 Chronicles is the last book of the Hebrew Bible.

B. Its position in the Hebrew canon implies:

1. its late composition
2. its summary nature
3. its having been seen as an appendix
4. its being accepted in the canon late, see Special Topic: Canon (Hebrew)

C. The LXX placed it after Kings and before Ezra. It is surprising that Ezra/Nehemiah are put before Chronicles, possibly because

1. of the summary nature of Chronicles
2. it ends on a positive note

III. GENRE

A. Chronicles is historical narrative but in a special selective theological sense. See several Special Topics at the beginning of the Table of Contents. Also see the valuable summary section on OT narrative in *How To Read the Bible for All Its Worth* by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, pp. 89-106.

B. It removes most of the negative aspects of the reigns of:

1. David (1 Chronicles)
2. Solomon
3. the “godly” Judean Kings
 - a. Asa
 - b. Jehoshaphat
 - c. Uzziah
 - d. Hezekiah
 - e. Josiah

C. It is attempting to affirm to the post-exilic community of Judah that YHWH is still their covenant God and can be trusted.

D. See Special Topics:

1. Special Topic: The Old Testament as History
2. Special Topic: Old Testament Historiography Compared with Near Eastern Cultures
3. Old Testament Historical Narrative

IV. AUTHORSHIP

A. The Bible is silent on authorship.

B. *Baba Bathra* 15a says Ezra wrote the genealogy of Chronicles unto himself. This has been interpreted in two ways.

1. Ezra wrote Chronicles
2. Ezra (or a later common editor) finished the history started in Chronicles up to his own

day

C. Ezra 1:1-4 and 2 Chr. 36:22-23 are similar in Hebrew. Both E. J. Young and R. K. Harrison say Chronicles was written first. This is partly confirmed by a scribal technique used by Babylonian scribes of linking two works together by means of a “catch-line” or colophon. The technique is not seen in the rabbinical writings. This would imply that Ezra (or a later editor) was using Chronicles as a historical introduction to his own work which continued the history of the Jewish people.

D. The author(s) of Chronicles and Ezra/Nehemiah have the same theological interest and perspective:

1. focus on the Temple (i.e., Mosaic Covenant) and priesthood (especially lists of Levites)
2. extensive use of statistical records and genealogies
3. the vocabulary and literary styles are similar
4. it must be said, they also differ:
 - a. spell names differently
 - b. Chronicles focuses on David’s royal line while Ezra/Nehemiah focuses on Mosaic

Covenant

E. William Albright attributes authorship to Ezra between 428 and 397 B.C. Ezra’s reform found in Ezra 7-10 occurred in 458-457 B.C. under Artaxerxes I (see Special Topic: Historical Allusions to

Persian Kings).

F. Because of the focus of Chronicles on the temple and its procedures and personnel, it is probable that the author/editor was a Levite or priest working at the restored second temple in Jerusalem after the edict of Cyrus II and the returns of Nehemiah and Ezra.

G. Chronicles uses many sources:

1. previously written Scriptural revelations (cf. 1 Chr. 16:40; 23:18; 2 Chr. 25:4; 31:3; 35:12,26)
 - a. Chronicles uses about half of Samuel and Kings or at least the same sources
 - b. I Chronicles seems to know of some OT texts specifically:
 - (1) Gen. 35:22 – 1 Chr. 5:1
 - (2) Gen. 38:7 – 1 Chr. 2:3
 - (3) Gen. 38:30 – 1 Chr. 2:4,6
 - (4) Gen. 46:10 – 1 Chr. 4:24
 - (5) Gen. 46:11 – 1 Chr. 6:16
 - (6) Gen. 46:13 – 1 Chr. 7:1
 - (7) Gen. 46:21 – 1 Chr. 7:6,12
 - (8) Gen. 46:24 – 1 Chr. 7:13
 - (9) Ruth 4:18-21 – 1 Chr. 2:11-13
 - (10) 1 Sam. 27:10 – 1 Chr. 2:9, 25-26
 - (11) 1 Sam. 31:1-6 – 1 Chr. 10:1-12
 - (12) Psalm 96; 105; 106 – 1 Chr. 16
 - c. NIV Study Bible's introduction to Chronicles includes as sources:
 - (1) Pentateuch
 - (2) Judges
 - (3) Ruth
 - (4) 1 Samuel
 - (5) Kings
 - (6) Psalms
 - (7) Isaiah
 - (8) Jeremiah
 - (9) Lamentations
 - (10) Zechariah
 - d. See *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible* by Robert H. Stein, p. 91
2. written historical documents from the divided kingdom
 - a. possibly official court documents:
 - (1) the chronicles of King David, 1 Chr. 27:24
 - (2) the book of the kings of Judah and Israel, 2 Chr. 16:11; 25:26; 28:26; 32:32
 - (3) the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, 2 Chr. 27:7; 35:27; 36:8
 - (4) the book of the kings of Israel, 1 Chr. 9:1; 2 Chr. 20:34
 - (5) the words of the kings of Israel, 2 Chr. 24:27; 33:18
 - b. prophets:
 - (1) acts of King David, 1 Chr. 29:29:
 - (a) Chronicles of Samuel, the seer
 - (b) Chronicles of Nathan, the prophet
 - (c) Chronicles of Gad, the seer
 - (2) acts of Solomon, 2 Chr. 9:29:
 - (a) records of Nathan the prophet
 - (b) prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite
 - (3) acts of Jeroboam I in the visions of Iddo the seer, 2 Chr. 9:29
 - (4) acts of Rehoboam in 2 Chr. 12:15:
 - (a) records of Shemaiah the prophet
 - (b) Iddo the seer
 - (5) acts of Abijah in 2 Chr. 13:22 by Iddo the prophet
 - (6) acts of Jehu in 2 Chr. 20:34 by the son of Hanani
 - (7) acts of Uzziah by Isaiah, son of Amoz in 2 Chr. 26:22
 - (8) acts of Manasseh in 2 Chr. 33:19 by Hozai (LXX “the seer”)
 - c. tribal genealogical records:
 - (1) Simeon, 1 Chr. 4:33
 - (2) Gad, 1 Chr. 5:17
 - (3) Benjamin, 1 Chr. 7:9

- (4) Asher, 1 Chr. 7:40
- (5) All Israel, 1 Chr. 9:1
- (6) Levitical gatekeepers, 1 Chr. 9:22 (implication being each Levitical division also had records [cf. 1 Chr. 23:1ff; 28:13; 2 Chr. 35:4]).
- d. foreign sources:
 - (1) Sennacherib's letters, 2 Chr. 32:17-70
 - (2) Cyrus' decree, 2 Chr. 36:22-23

H. Like Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles lists the genealogies of several people. Some of these extend into the future, after the traditional close of 2 Chronicles, to four to six generations. There have been two ways to deal with this:

- 1. these were editorial additions
- 2. these are contemporary families, not generations
- 3. see discussion below, V. A.

V. DATE

A. There are two texts in Chronicles that imply a period after the return of the Exile for the writing of Chronicles:

- 1. 1 Chronicles 3:19-21. This is a list of the descendants of Zerubbabel:
 - a. some say to the sixth generation
 - b. others say only to two generations, followed by a list of four Davidic families who were contemporaries of the two descendants of Zerubbabel – Pelatiah and Jeshaiiah (Young & Harrison)
 - c. the LXX extended the list of Zerubbabel's descendants to the eleventh generation (this shows editorial updating)
- 2. 1 Chronicles 3:22-24. This is a list of the descendants of Shecaniah mentioned in 2 Chr. 3:21:
 - a. some say the list is to four generations (NIV Study Bible)
 - b. if this is true then the date of the author (editor) is extended from Zerubbabel's genealogy in 1 Chr. 3:19-21
- 3. 2 Chronicles 36:22-23:
 - a. this mentions Cyrus II and his decree which allowed all the conquered people to return home, including the Jews
 - b. Cyrus II issued his decree in 538 B.C. The first return was undertaken immediately by a Judean prince who was appointed governor, Sheshbazzar. He started to rebuild the Temple but did not finish. Later, under the Persian King, Darius I, others began to return under Zerubbabel of the Davidic line and Joshua a descendant of the High Priest. They did finish rebuilding the Temple in 516 B.C. with the encouragement of Haggai and Zechariah.

B. From the genealogies of the book the date of the compiler seems to be between 500-423 B.C. This terminus date is possible because the post-exilic books mention the latest historical allusion in the Old Testament (i.e., Darius II was crowned about 428 B.C., he is mentioned in Neh. 12:22). Also, tradition says that the Old Testament canon was finalized about this time. A good general guess for the date would be before 400 B.C.

C. 1 Chronicles covered the same period as 1, 2 Samuel, however, its genealogies go back to Adam. 2 Chronicles covers the same period as 1 and 2 Kings but extends it, almost until the time of Cyrus II.

VI. CORROBORATING THE HISTORICAL SETTING

A. There are some real differences between the historical presentation of Samuel and Kings and

that of 1 Chronicles:

1. The numbers in Chronicles are usually larger (E. J. Young, p. 394-400)
 - a. this is generally true, compare 1 Chr. 21:5 with 2 Sam. 24:9
 - b. often Chronicles has smaller numbers, compare 1 Kgs. 4:26 with 2 Chr. 9:29
 - c. most of the number problems are also found in the LXX translation, which means

they predate 250 B.C.

2. Chronicles accentuates the positive aspects of the Judean kings of the line of David
3. Chronicles omits much of the negative material about David and Solomon. However, as E. J. Young points out (pp. 395-398), it also omits almost everything about their private lives, not only the negative but also some of the positive aspects.

4. Chronicles also omits all references to the northern kingdom. The reason is uncertain. Many assume it was because all the northern kings were condemned because of the golden calves set up at Dan and Bethel. The south was considered the only true, faithful Davidic (Messianic) line.

5. There are two books that help moderns understand the possible differences in the historical books.

3. E. R. Thiele, in his ground breaking book, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, 1954, 1965, explains the differences by:

(1) two dating systems for reigns:

- (a) accession year
- (b) non-accession year

(2) co-regencies

b. John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, which discusses how oral cultures passed on their historical traditions

B. The validity of Chronicles' history tends to be supported:

1. in the genealogical material that is paralleled by:
 - a. Samuel
 - b. the Dead Sea Scrolls
 - c. the LXX

2. when the genealogical material of Chronicles is paralleled in Genesis and Numbers in the Masoretic Text and the Samaritan Pentateuch, its historical validity is supported

VII. LITERARY UNITS (context)

A. Brief Outline:

1. Genealogical material from Adam to Saul, 1 Chr. 1:1-9:44
2. The reign of David, 1 Chr. 10:1-29:30
3. The reign of Solomon, 2 Chr. 1:1-9:31
4. The reign of other Judean Kings to the Exile and to Cyrus, 2 Chr. 10:1-36:23

B. For helpful outlines see:

1. E. J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 401-402
2. R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 1152-1153
3. NIV Study Bible, pp. 581-582

VIII. MAIN TRUTHS

A. This is a selective theological history of Judah, using but extending the parallel accounts in 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings.

It must be remembered that Samuel and Kings addressed an exilic community who were asking, "why?" while Chronicles is addressing a post-exilic community asking "what now?" "why have we been restored?"

Notice how 1 Chr. 17:12 and 2 Chr. 7:14 answer these questions. YHWH has a wider purpose for Judah. See Special Topic: YHWH's Eternal Redemptive Plan.

B. This was written for a post-exilic community who desperately needed to know that the Covenant God was still their God. Israel's past history shows YHWH's faithful love for His covenant people. The Temple (since there was no king) was the focus of God's renewed Covenant. The Covenant was still conditional on obedience to God's Mosaic Covenant (see Special Topic: Keep). The Chronicler focused on temple details and temple personnel.

C. It primarily focuses on God's promises to David and his son(s) found in 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17:

1. deals exclusively with David's sons and ultimately King Messiah (i.e., Jesus)
2. gives a positive account of the reigns of David, Solomon and the "godly" Kings of Judah
3. records the restorations of the Hebrew exiles to Jerusalem by Cyrus II, 1 Chr. 36:22-23
4. stresses a future Davidic King (Messiah). One way this was accomplished was through the recording of the "godly" reigns of David, Solomon, and the godly kings of Judah. This Messianic hope is also expressed in Zechariah and Malachi.

D. There is also an emphasis on all of God's people being united. This is seen by the use of the collective term "all Israel" (cf. 1 Chr. 9:1; 11:1-3,4; 12:38; 16:3; 18:14; 21:1-5; 28:1-8; 29:21, 23,25; 2 Chr. 1:2; 2:8; 9:30; 10:1,16; 12:1; 18:16; 28:23; 29:24; 30:1,6,25-26; 34:7,9,33).

E. Genealogies are used:

1. like those in Ezra and Nehemiah, to show that the restored Israel is legitimately the Israel of old
2. to summarize the history of the Hebrews back to Adam

IX. HISTORICAL METHODOLOGY

A. Should a modern interpreter try to harmonize the historical accounts of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles (see William Day Crockett, *A Harmony of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles*)? Try to fit them together in one unified historical account? I think this is not the best approach. Each of these inspired works has an authorial purpose. The interpretive key to find the original author's inspired purpose and the target hearer. This same approach should be used on how the four Gospels present the life of Christ. Each had a separate target group but all expressed one gospel message/history.

B. It is helpful to see a harmonious approach so that one can see quickly

1. what is unique
2. what is parallel
3. the differences in the parallel accounts

The interpretive questions must be asked:

1. "Why include this?"
2. "Why exclude this?"
3. "Why modify the presentations of earlier revelation?"

C. Ancient historical narrative is different from modern history. Please read the opening articles (see Table of Contents).

1. Special Topic: The Old Testament As History
2. Special Topic: Old Testament Historiography Compared with Near Eastern Cultures
3. Special Topic: Old Testament Historical Narratives

X. Chart of the Kings of the Divided Kingdom (next page)

KINGS OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

JUDAH'S KINGS (1 CHR. 3:1-16; MATT. 1:6-11)					ISRAEL'S KINGS				
NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS	NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS
Rehoboam	922-915	933-917	931/30-913	1 Kgs. 11:43-12:27; 14:21-31 2 Chr. 9:31-12:16	Jeroboam I	922-901	933-912	931/30-910/09	1 Kgs. 11:26-40; 12:12-14:20
Abijah (Abijam)	915-914	916-914	913-911/10	1 Kgs. 14:31-15:8 2 Chr. 11:20,22					
Asa	913-873	913-873	911/10-870/69	1 Kgs. 15:8-30; 16:8,10, 23,29; 22:41,43,46 Jer. 41:9	Nadab	901-900	912-911	910/09-909/08	1 Kgs. 14:20; 15:25-31
					Baasha	900-877	911-888	909/08-886/85	1 Kgs. 15:16-16:7; 2 Kgs. 9:9 2 Chr. 16:1-6 Jer. 41:9
Jehoshaphat	873-849	873-849	870/69-848	1 Kgs. 15:24; 22:1-51 2 Kgs. 3:1-12; 8:16-19 1 Chr. 3:10 2 Chr. 17:1-21:1	Elah	877-876	888-887	886/85-885/84	1 Kgs. 16:8-14
(Jehoram Co-regent)	-----	-----	853-848	1 Kgs. 22:50 2 Kgs. 1:17; 8:16; 12:18	Zimri (Army General)	876	887	885/84	1 Kgs. 16:9-20 2 Kgs. 9:31
					Omri (Army General)	876-869	887-877	885/84-874/73	1 Kgs. 16:15-28 2 Kgs. 8:26 Micah 6:16
Jehoram (Joram)	849-842	849-842	848-841	1 Chr. 22:1-20 Matthew 1:8					
Ahaziah	842	842	-----	2 Kgs. 8:24-9:29 2 Chr. 22:1-9	Ahab	869-850	876-854	874/73-853	1 Kgs. 16:29-22:40
					Ahaziah	850-849	854-853	853-852	1 Kgs. 22:40,41,49,51-53 2 Chr. 18:1-3,19
Athaliah (Queen)	842-337	842-836	841-835	2 Kgs. 8:26; 11:1-20 2 Chr. 22:2-23:21	Jehoram (Joram)	849-842	853-842	852-841	2 Kgs. 1:17; 3:1-27; 8:16-9:29
Joash (Jehoash)	837-800	836-797	835-796	2 Kgs. 11:2-3; 12:1-21 2 Chr. 22:11-12; 24:1-27	Jehu (Army General)	842-815	842-815	841-814/13	1 Kgs. 19:16-17 2 Kgs. 9:1-10:36; 15:12 2 Chr. 22:7-9 Hosea 1:4

JUDAH'S KINGS (1 CHR. 3:1-16; MATT. 1:6-11) [CON'T.]					ISRAEL'S KINGS (CON'T.)				
NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS	NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS
Amaziah	800-783	797-779	796-767	2 Kgs. 12:21; 14:1-22 2 Chr. 25:1-28					
(Uzziah Co-regent)	-----	-----	791/90-767	2 Kgs. 14:21; 15:1-7	Jehoahaz	815-801	814-798	814/13-798	2 Kgs. 10:35; 13:1-9
Uzziah (Azariah)	783-742	779-740	767-740/39	2 Chr. 26:1-23 Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1	Jehosah	801-786	798-783	798-782/81	2 Kgs. 13:9-13,25 2 Chr. 25:17-25

				Zechariah 14:5					Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1
(Jotham Co-regent)	750-742	-----	750-740/39	2 Kgs. 15:7,32-38	(Jer. II Co-regent)	-----	-----	793/92-782/81	2 Kgs. 13:13; 14:16,23-29 Hosea 1:1
Jotham	742-735	740-736	740/39-732/31	1 Chr. 5:17 2 Chr. 26:23-27:9 Isa. 1:1; 7:1 Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1	Jeroboam II	786-746	783-743	782/81-753	Amos 1:1; 7:9-11
(Ahaz Co-regent)	-----	-----	744/43-732/31	2 Kgs. 15:30-16:20 2 Chr. 27:9-28:27	Zechariah	746-745	743	753-752	2 Kgs. 15:8-12
Ahaz	735-715	736-728	732/31-716/15	Isa. 1:1; 7:1ff; 14:28; 38:8 Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1	Shallum	745	743	752	2 Kgs. 15:10,13-15
(Hezekiah Co-regent)	-----	-----	729-716/15	2 Kgs. 16:20; 18:1-20,21 2 Chr. 28:27-32:33 Pro. 25:1	Menahem	745-738	743-737	752-742/41	2 Kgs. 15:14,16-22
Hezekiah	715-687	727-699	716/15-687/86	Isa. 1:1; 36:1-39:8 Hosea 1:1; Micah 1:1 Matt. 1:9-10	Pekahiah	738-737	737-736	742/41-740/39	2 Kgs. 15:23-26
(Manasseh Co-regent)	-----	-----	696/95-687/86	2 Kgs. 20:21-21:18; 23:12,26; 24:2	Pekah	737-732	736-730	740/39-732/31	2 Kgs. 15:27-31; 16:5 2 Chr. 28:6; Isa. 7:1
Manasseh	687/86-642	698-643	687/86-642/41	2 Chr. 32:33-33:20 Jer. 15:4ff; 2 Kgs. 21:18-26	Hoshea	732-724	730-722	732/31-723/22	2 Kgs. 17:1-18
Amon	642-640	643-641	642/41-640/39	2 Chr. 33:20-25 Jer. 1:2; Zeph. 1:1 1 Kgs. 13:2-3	Fall of Samaria to Assyria	724 B.C.	722 B.C.	722 B.C.	

JUDAH'S KINGS (CON'T.)					ISRAEL'S KINGS (CON'T.)				
NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS	NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS
Josiah	610-609	640-609	640/39-609	2 Kgs. 21:24; 22:1-23:30 2 Chr. 33:25-35:27 Jer. 1:2; Zeph. 1:1 Matt. 1:10-11					
Jehoahaz	609 (3 months)	609	609	2 Kgs. 23:30-34 2 Chr. 36:1-4					
Jehoiakim	609-598	609-598	609-597	2 Kgs. 23:34-24:6,19 2 Chr. 36:4-8 Jer. 1:3; 22:18-23; 25:1ff; 26:1ff; 27:1ff; 35:1ff; 36:1ff Dan. 1:1-2					
Jehoiachin	598/97 (3 months)	598	597	2 Kgs. 24:6,8-17; 25:27-30 2 Chr. 36:8-9 Jer. 52:31; Ezek. 1:2					
Zedekiah	597-586	598-587	597-587	2 Kgs. 24:17-25:7 2 Chr. 36:10-11 Jer. 1:3; 21:1-7; 24:8-					

Fall of Jerusalem to Babylon	586 B.C.	587 B.C.	587 B.C.	10; 27:1ff; 32:4-5; 34:1-22; 37:1-39:7; 52:1-11 Lamentations					
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For a good discussion on the problems of dating see E. R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*.

2 CHRONICLES 1

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS*

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Solomon Worships At Gibeon	Solomon Requests Wisdom	Solomon Receives Wisdom	King Solomon Prays for Wisdom	God Confers Wisdom on Solomon (MT versing)
1:1	1:1-12	1:1-6	1:1	1:1-6
1:2-6			1:2-6	
1:7		1:7-13	1:7	1:7-10
Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom				
1:8-13			1:8-10	
			1:11-12	1:11-12
	Solomon's Military and Economic Power		King Solomon's Power and Wealth	
Solomon's Wealth	1:13-17		1:13-17	1:13
1:14-17		1:14-17		1:14-17

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

*Although not inspired, paragraph divisions are the key to understanding and following the original author's intent. Each modern translation has divided and summarized the paragraph divisions as they understand them. Every paragraph has one central topic, truth or thought. Each version encapsulates that topic in its own way. As you read the text, which translation fits your understanding of the subject and verse divisions?

In every chapter you must read the Bible first and try to identify its subjects (paragraphs). Then compare your understanding with the modern versions. Only when we understand the original author's intent by following his logic and presentation at the paragraph level, can one truly understand the Bible. Only the original author was inspired—readers have no right to change or modify the message. Bible readers do have the responsibility to apply the inspired truth to their day and lives.

Note that all technical terms and abbreviations are explained fully in the Special Topics.

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:1

¹Now Solomon the son of David established himself securely over his kingdom, and the LORD his God *was* with him and exalted him greatly.

1:1 This verse clearly shows the compatible relationship between Solomon's actions (i.e., "established himself securely," BDB 304, KB 301, *Hithpael* IMPERFECT with *waw*, cf. 2 Sam. 3:6; 1 Kgs. 20:22; 2 Chr. 12:13; 13:21; 21:4; 23:1; 25:11; 27:6) and YHWH's sovereign control of history (i.e., "God was with him and exalted him greatly"). See Special Topics:

1. Election/Predestination and the Need for a Theological Balance
2. Predestination (Calvinism) vs. Human Free Will (Arminianism)

SPECIAL TOPIC: ELECTION/PREDESTINATION AND THE NEED FOR A THEOLOGICAL BALANCE

Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others' redemption! In the Old Testament the term was used primarily for service; in the New Testament it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God's sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind's necessary response (cf. Rom. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in Ephesians 1:4. Jesus is God's elect man and all

are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind's need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God's call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths:

1. Predestination vs. human free will
2. Security of the believer vs. the need for perseverance
3. Original sin vs. volitional sin
4. Sinlessness (perfectionism) vs. sinning less
5. Initial instantaneous justification and sanctification vs. progressive sanctification
6. Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility
7. God's transcendence vs. God's immanence
8. God as ultimately unknowable vs. God as knowable in Scripture
9. The Kingdom of God as present vs. future consummation
10. Repentance as a gift of God vs. repentance as a necessary human covenantal response
11. Jesus as divine vs. Jesus as human
12. Jesus is equal to the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father

The theological concept of "covenant" unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from humans. Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology!

SPECIAL TOPIC: PREDESTINATION (CALVINISM) VERSUS HUMAN FREE WILL (ARMINIANISM)

Titus 2:11 is a balance to other NT passages on election. I thought it might be theologically helpful to provide my commentary notes from Romans 8:29 and chapter 9, as well as Ephesians 1.

I. Romans 8:29 – Paul uses "foreknew" (*proginōskō*, "to know before") twice, here and Rom. 11:2. In 11:2 it refers to God's covenant love for Israel before time began. Remember that the term "know" in Hebrew related to intimate, personal relationship, not to facts about someone (cf. Gen. 4:1; Jer. 1:5). Here it was included in a chain of eternal events (cf. Rom. 8:29-30). This term was linked with predestination. However, it must be stated that God's foreknowledge is not the basis of election because if that were so, then election would be based on fallen humanity's future response, which would be human performance. This term is also found in Acts 26:5; 1 Pet. 1:2,20 and 2 Pet. 3:17.

1. "foreknew" (*proginōskō*, "to know before")

The terms "foreknow" and "predestine" are both compounds with the PREPOSITION "before" and, therefore, should be translated "to know before," "to set bounds before," or "mark off before." The definitive passages on predestination in the NT are Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:13-14; and Romans 9. These texts obviously stress that God is sovereign. He is in total control of all things. There is a preset divine plan being worked out in time. However, this plan is not arbitrary

or selective. It is based, not only on God's sovereignty and foreknowledge, but on His unchanging character of love, mercy, and undeserved grace. See Special Topic: YHWH's Eternal Redemptive Plan.

We must be careful of our western (American) individualism or our evangelical zeal coloring this wonderful truth. We must also guard against being polarized into the historical, theological conflicts between Augustine versus Pelagius or Calvinism versus Arminianism.

B. “predestined” (*proorizō*, “to set the bounds before”)

Predestination is not a doctrine meant to limit God’s love, grace, and mercy nor to exclude some from the gospel. It is meant to strengthen believers by molding their worldview. God is for all mankind (cf. John 1:112; 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 4:14). God is in control of all things. Who or what can separate us from Him (cf. Rom. 8:31-39)? God views all history as present; humans are time bound. Our perspective and mental abilities are limited. There is no contradiction between God’s sovereignty and mankind’s free will. It is a covenantal structure. This is another example of truth given in dialectical tension. Biblical doctrines are presented from different perspectives. They often appear paradoxical. The truth is a balance between the seemingly opposite pairs. We must not remove the tension by picking one of the truths. We must not isolate any biblical truth into a compartment by itself.

It is also important to add that the goal of election is not only heaven when we die, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29-30; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 2:10; 4:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:3; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:15). We were chosen to be “holy and blameless.” God chooses to change us so that others may see the change and respond by faith to God in Christ. Predestination is not a personal privilege, but a covenantal responsibility. This is the major truth of the passage. This is the goal of Christianity. Holiness is God’s will for every believer. God’s election is to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4), not a special standing. The image of God, which was given to man in creation (cf. Gen. 1:26; 5:1,3; 9:6), is to be restored.

C. “conformed to the image of His Son”—God’s ultimate goal is the restoration of the image lost in the Fall. Believers are foreordained to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4).

II. Romans 9

A. Romans 9 is one of the strongest NT passages on God’s sovereignty (the other being Eph. 1:3-14), while chapter 10 states humans’ free will clearly and repeatedly (cf. “everyone,” Rom. 10:4; “whosoever,” Rom. 10:11,13; “all,” Rom. 10:12 [twice]). Paul never tries to reconcile this theological tension. They are both true! Most Bible doctrines are presented in paradoxical or dialectical pairs. Most systems of theology are logical half-truths. Augustinianism and Calvinism versus semi-Pelegianism and Arminianism have elements of truth and error. Biblical tension between doctrines is preferable to a proof-texted, dogmatic, rational, theological system that forces the Bible onto a preconceived interpretive grid.

B. This same truth (found in Rom. 9:23) is stated in Rom. 8:29-30 and Eph. 1:4,11. This chapter is the strongest expression of God’s sovereignty in the NT. There can be no dispute that God is in total charge of creation and redemption. This great truth should never be softened or diminished. However, it must be balanced with God’s choice of covenant as a means of relating to human creation, made in His image. It is surely true that some OT covenants, like Genesis 15, are unconditional and do not relate at all to human response, but other covenants are conditioned on human response (e.g., Eden, Noah, Moses, David). God has a plan of redemption for His creation; no human can affect this plan. God has chosen to allow individuals to participate in His plans. This opportunity for participation is a theological tension between sovereignty (Romans 9) and human free will (Romans 10).

It is not appropriate to select one biblical emphasis and ignore another. There is tension between doctrines because eastern people present truth in dialectical or tension-filled pairs. Doctrines must be held in relationship to other doctrines. Truth is a mosaic of truths.

III. Ephesians 1

A. Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool, or means of others’ redemption! In the OT the term was used primarily for service; in the NT it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The

Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God's sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind's necessary response (cf. Rom. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in Eph. 1:4. Jesus is God's elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind's need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven only, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God's call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent; security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner, etc).

The theological concept of "covenant" unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant faith response from man. Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology.

- B. "He chose us" in Eph. 1:4 is an AORIST MIDDLE INDICATIVE which emphasizes the SUBJECT. This focuses on the Father's choice before time. God's choice must not be understood in the Islamic sense of determinism, nor in the ultra-Calvinistic sense as some versus others, but in the covenantal sense. God promised to redeem fallen mankind (cf. Gen. 3:15). God called and chose Abraham to choose all humans (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6). God Himself elected all persons who would exercise faith in Christ. God always takes the initiative in salvation (cf. John 6:44,65). This text and Romans 9 are the biblical basis for the doctrine of predestination emphasized by Augustine and Calvin.

God chose believers not only to salvation (justification), but also to sanctification (cf. Colossians 1: 10-12). This could relate to (1) our position in Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21) or (2) God's desire to reproduce His character in His children (cf. 2:10; Rom. 8:28-29; Gal. 4:19). God's will for His children is both heaven one day and Christlikeness now!

"In Him" is a key concept of Eph. 1:4. The Father's blessings, grace, and salvation flow through Christ (cf. John 14:6). Notice the repetition of this grammatical form (LOCATIVE of SPHERE) in Eph. 1:3, "in Christ"; Eph. 1:4, "in Him"; Eph. 1:7, "in Him"; Eph. 1:9, "in Him"; Eph. 1:10, "in Christ," "in Him"; Eph. 1:12, "in Christ" and Eph.1:13, "in Him" (twice). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind (Karl Barth). Jesus is the elect man and all are potentially elect in Him. All of God the Father's blessings flow through Christ.

The phrase "before the foundation of the world" is also used in Matt. 25:34; John 17:24; 1 Pet. 1:19-20 and Rev. 13:8. It shows the Triune God's redemptive activity even before Gen. 1:1. Humans are limited by their sense of time; everything to us is past, present, and future, but not to God.

The goal of predestination is holiness, not privilege. God's call is not to a selected few of Adam's children, but to all! It is a call to be what God intended mankind to be, like Himself (cf. 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13); in His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). To turn predestination into a theological tenet instead of a holy life is a tragedy. Often our theologies speak louder than the biblical text.

The term "blameless" (*amōmos*) or "free from blemish" is used of

1. Jesus (cf. Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19)
2. Zachariah and Elizabeth (cf. Luke 1:6)

3. Paul (cf. Phil. 3:6)
4. all true Christians (cf. Phil. 2:15; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23)

God's unalterable will for every Christian is not only heaven later, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29-30; Gal. 4:19; 1 Pet. 1:2). Believers are to reflect God's characteristics to a lost world for the purpose of evangelism.

Grammatically the phrase "in love" in this verse could go with either Eph. 1:4 or 1:5. However, when this phrase is used in other places in Ephesians it always refers to human love for God (cf. Eph. 3:17; 4:2,15,16).

- C. In Eph. 1:5 the phrase "He predestined us" is an AORIST ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. This Greek term is a compound of "before" and "mark off." It refers to God's predetermined redemptive plan (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 17:31; Rom. 8:29-30). Predestination is one of several truths related to mankind's salvation. It is part of a theological pattern or series of related truths. It was never meant to be emphasized in isolation! Biblical truth has been given in a series of tension-filled, paradoxical pairs. Denominationalism has tended to remove the biblical tension by emphasizing only one of the dialectical truths (predestination versus human free will; security of the believer versus perseverance of the saints; original sin versus volitional sin; sinlessness versus sinning less; instantaneously declared sanctification versus progressive sanctification; faith versus works; Christian freedom versus Christian responsibility; transcendence versus immanence).

God's choice is not based on foreknowledge of human performance, but on His gracious character (cf. Eph. 1:7,9,11). He wishes that all (not just some special ones like the Gnostics or modern-day ultra-Calvinists) would be saved (cf. Ezek. 18:21-23,32; John 3:16-17; 1 Tim. 2:4;

4:10; Titus 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:9; 2 John 2:2; 4:14). God's grace (God's character) is the theological key to this passage (cf. Eph. 1:6a, 7c, 9b), as God's mercy is the key to the other passage on predestination, Romans 9-11.

Fallen mankind's only hope is the grace and mercy of God (cf. Isa. 53:6 and several other OT texts quoted in Rom. 3:9-18). It is crucial in interpreting these first theological chapters to realize that Paul emphasizes those things which are totally unrelated to human performance: predestination (Ephesians 1), grace (Ephesians 2), and God's eternal plan of redemption (mystery, Eph. 2:11- 3:13). This was to counterbalance the emphasis of the false teachers on human merit and pride.

"the LORD his God" This combines the two most common names for Deity (cf. 2 Chr. 1:9).

1. YHWH (Gen. 2:4)
2. *Elohim* (Gen. 1:1)

See Special Topic: Names for Deity, C and D.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NAMES FOR DEITY

A. *El* (BDB 42, KB 48)

1. The original meaning of the generic ancient term for deity is uncertain, though many scholars believe it comes from the Akkadian root, "to be strong" or "to be powerful" (cf. Gen. 17:1; Num. 23:19; Deut. 7:21; Ps. 50:1).
2. In the Canaanite pantheon the high god is *El* (Ras Shamra texts), called "the Father of the gods" and "Lord of heaven."
3. In the Bible *El* is often compounded with other terms. These combinations became a way to characterize God.
 - a. *El-Elyon* ("God Most High," BDB 42 & 751 II), Gen. 14:18-22; Deut. 32:8; Isa. 14:14

- b. *El-Roi* (“God who sees” or “God who reveals Himself,” BDB 42 & 909), Gen.
- c. *El-Shaddai* (“God Almighty” or “God of all compassion” or “God of the mountain,” BDB 42 & 994), Gen. 17:1; 35:11; 43:14; 49:25; Exod. 6:3
- d. *El-Olam* (“the Everlasting God,” BDB 42 & 761), Gen. 21:33. This term is theologically linked to God’s promise to David, 2 Sam. 7:13,16
- e. *El-Berit* (“God of the Covenant,” BDB 42 & 136), Jdgs. 9:46
- 4. *El* is equated with
 - a. YHWH in Num. 23:8; Ps. 16:1-2; 85:8; Isa. 42:5
 - b. *Elohim* in Gen. 46:3; Job 5:8, “I am *El*, the *Elohim* of your father”
 - c. *Shaddai* in Gen. 49:25; Num. 24:4,16
 - d. “jealousy” in Exod. 34:14; Deut. 4:24; 5:9; 6:15
 - e. “mercy” in Deut. 4:31; Neh. 9:31
 - f. “great and awesome” in Deut. 7:21; 10:17; Neh. 1:5; 9:32; Dan. 9:4
 - g. “knowledge” in 1 Sam. 2:3
 - h. “my strong refuge” in 2 Sam. 22:33
 - i. “my avenger” in 2 Sam. 22:48
 - j. “holy one” in Isa. 5:16
 - k. “might” in Isa. 10:21
 - l. “my salvation” in Isa. 12:2
 - m. “great and powerful” in Jer. 32:18
 - n. “retribution” in Jer. 51:56
- 5. A combination of all the major OT names for God is found in Joshua 22:22 (*El, Elohim, YHWH*, series repeated).
- B. *Elyon* (BDB 751, KB 832)
 - 1. Its basic meaning is “high,” “exalted,” or “lifted up” (cf. Gen. 40:17; 1 Kgs. 9:8; 2 Kgs. 18:17; Neh. 3:25; Jer. 20:2; 36:10; Ps. 18:13).
 - 2. It is used in a parallel sense to several other names/titles of God.
 - a. *Elohim* – Ps. 47:1-2; 73:11; 107:11
 - b. *YHWH* – Gen. 14:22; 2 Sam. 22:14
 - c. *El-Shaddai* – Ps. 91:1,9
 - d. *El* – Num. 24:16
 - e. *Elah* – used often in Daniel 2-6 and Ezra 4-7, linked with *illair* (Aramaic for “High God”) in Dan. 3:26; 4:2; 5:18,21
 - 3. It is often used by non-Israelites.
 - a. Melchizedek, Gen. 14:18-22
 - b. Balaam, Num. 24:15
 - c. Moses, speaking of the nations in Deut. 32:8
 - d. Luke’s Gospel in the NT, writing to Gentiles, also uses the Greek equivalent *Hupsistos* (cf. 1:32,35,76; 6:35; 8:28; Acts 7:48; 16:17)
- C. *Elohim* (PLURAL), *Eloah* (SINGULAR), used primarily in poetry (BDB 43, KB 52)
 - 1. This term is not found outside the Old Testament.
 - 2. This word can designate the God of Israel or the gods of the nations (cf. Exod. 3:6; 20:3). Abraham’s family was polytheistic (cf. Jos. 24:2).
 - 3. It can refer to Israeli judges (cf. Exod. 21:6; Ps. 82:6).
 - 4. The term *elohim* is also used of other spiritual beings (angels, the demonic) as in Deut. 32:8 (LXX); Ps. 8:5; Job 1:6; 38:7.
 - 5. In the Bible it is the first title/name for Deity (cf. Gen. 1:1). It is used exclusively until Gen. 2:4, where it is combined with YHWH. It basically (theologically) refers to God as creator, sustainer, and provider of all life on this planet (cf. Psalm 104).

It is synonymous with *El* (cf. Deut. 32:15-19). It can also parallel YHWH as Psalm 14 (*Elohim*, vv. 1,2,5; YHWH, vv. 2,6; even *Adon*, v. 4).

6. Although PLURAL and used of other gods, this term often designates the God of Israel, but usually it has the SINGULAR VERB to denote the monotheistic usage (see Special Topic: Monotheism).

7. It is strange that a common name for the monotheistic God of Israel is PLURAL! Although there is no certainty, here are the theories.

a. Hebrew has many PLURALS, often used for emphasis. Closely related to this is the later

Hebrew grammatical feature called “the plural of majesty,” where the PLURAL is used to magnify a concept.

b. This may refer to the angelic council, with whom God meets in heaven and who does His bidding (cf. 1 Kgs. 22:19-23; Job 1:6; Ps. 82:1; 89:5,7).

c. It is even possible this reflects the NT revelation of the one God in three persons. In Gen. 1:1 God creates; Gen. 1:2 the Spirit broods, and from the NT Jesus is God the Father’s agent in creation (cf. John 1:3,10; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:2; 2:10).

D. *El Shaddai*

The title “God Almighty” is *El Shaddai*. The etymology of this term (BDB 994) is uncertain. The rabbis say that it means “self-sufficiency.” The LXX and the Vulgate follow this understanding by translating it “God (*El*) Almighty.” Apparently this was the patriarchal name for God (cf. Exod. 6:3). It is used six times in Genesis and thirty-one times in Job. Albright asserted that it is from an Akkadian root that can mean mountain or rock (cf. Ps. 18:1, 2). If the term implies, “God of the mountain” as the true meaning, then it must reflect Canaanite mythology (cf. Isa. 14:13; Ezek. 28:2) or Babylonian religion (i.e., ziggurats being raised on human-built mountains, cf. Genesis 10) on which to worship their gods. Whatever the original intent, as early as Exodus 19-20 the focus will change to the God of Mt. Sinai (cf. Jdgs. 5:5).

E. YHWH (BDB 217, KB 394)

1. This is the name which reflects deity as the covenant-making God; God as savior, redeemer! Humans break covenants, but God is loyal to His word, promise, covenant (cf. Psalm 103).

This name is first mentioned in combination with *Elohim* in Gen. 2:4. There are not two creation accounts in Genesis 1-2, but two emphases: (1) God as the creator of the universe (the physical) and (2) God as the special creator of humanity. Genesis 2:4-3:24

begins the special revelation about the privileged position and purpose of mankind, as well as the problem of sin and rebellion associated with the unique position.

2. In Gen. 4:26 it is said “*men* began to call upon the name of the LORD” (YHWH). However, Exod. 6:3 implies that early covenant people (the Patriarchs and their families) knew God only as *El-Shaddai*. The name YHWH is explained only one time in Exod. 3:13-16, esp. v. 14. However, the writings of Moses often interpret words by popular word plays, not etymologies (cf. Gen. 17:5; 27:36; 29:13-35). There have been several theories as to the meaning of this name (taken from IDB, vol. 2, pp. 409-11).

a. from an Arabic root, “to show fervent love”

b. from an Arabic root “to blow” (YHWH as storm God)

c. from a Ugaritic (Canaanite) root “to speak”

d. following a Phoenician inscription, a CAUSATIVE PARTICIPLE meaning “the One who sustains,” or “the One who establishes”

e. from the Hebrew *Qal* form “the One who is,” or “the One who is present” (in

FUTURE TENSE, “the One who will be”)

- f. from the Hebrew *Hiphil* form “the One who causes to be”
- g. from the Hebrew root “to live” (e.g., Gen. 3:21), meaning “the ever-living, only-living One”
- h. from the context of Exod. 3:13-16 a play on the IMPERFECT form used in a PERFECT TENSE, “I shall continue to be what I used to be” or “I shall continue to be what I have always been” (cf. J. Wash Watts, *A Survey of Syntax in the Old Testament*, p. 67). The full name YHWH is often expressed in abbreviation or possibly an original form.
 - (1) *Yah* (e.g., Hallelu - yah, BDB 219, cf. Exod. 15:2; 17:16; Ps. 89:8; 104:35)
 - (2) *Yahu* (“iah” ending of names, e.g., Isaiah)
 - (3) *Yo* (“Jo” beginning of names, e.g., Joshua or Joel)

3. In later Judaism this covenant name became so holy (the tetragrammaton) that Jews were afraid to say it lest they break the command of Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11; 6:13. So they substituted the Hebrew term for “owner,” “master,” “husband,” “lord”—*adon* or *adonai* (my lord). When they came to YHWH in their reading of OT texts they pronounced “lord.” This is why YHWH is written LORD in English translations.

4. As with *El*, YHWH is often combined with other terms to emphasize certain characteristics of the Covenant God of Israel. While there are many possible combination terms, here are some.

- a. YHWH – *Yireh* (YHWH will provide, BDB 217 & 906), Gen. 22:14
- b. YHWH – *Rophekha* (YHWH is your healer, BDB 217 & 950, *Qal* PARTICIPLE), Exod. 15:26
- c. YHWH – *Nissi* (YHWH is my banner, BDB 217 & 651), Exod. 17:15
- d. YHWH – *Meqaddishkem* (YHWH the One who sanctifies you, BDB 217 & 872, *Piel* PARTICIPLE), Exod. 31:13
- e. YHWH – *Shalom* (YHWH is Peace, BDB 217 & 1022), Jdgs. 6:24
- f. YHWH – *Sabbaoth* (YHWH of hosts, BDB 217 & 878), 1 Sam. 1:3,11; 4:4; 15:2; often in the Prophets
- g. YHWH – *Ro’I* (YHWH is my shepherd, BDB 217 & 944, *Qal* PARTICIPLE), Ps. 23:1
- h. YHWH – *Sidqenu* (YHWH is our righteousness, BDB 217 & 841), Jer. 23:6
- i. YHWH – *Shammah* (YHWH is there, BDB 217 & 1027), Ezek. 48:35

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:2-6

²Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of thousands and of hundreds and to the judges and to every leader in all Israel, the heads of the fathers’ *households*. ³Then Solomon and all the assembly with him went to the high place which was at Gibeon, for God’s tent of meeting was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. ⁴However, David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place he had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem. ⁵Now the bronze altar, which Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, was there before the tabernacle of the LORD, and Solomon and the assembly sought it out. ⁶Solomon went up there before the LORD to the bronze altar which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

1:2 “Solomon spoke to all Israel” This is either (1) hyperbole or (2) an idiom for Israel’s leaders.

“thousands” See Special Topic: Thousand (*eleph*).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THOUSAND (*eleph*)

The Hebrew word *eleph* means “thousand” (BDB 48, KB 59 II). It is used in several senses in the OT.

1. a family unit, Jos. 22:14; Jdgs. 6:15; 1 Sam. 23:23; Zech. 9:7; 12:6
2. a military unit, Exod. 18:21,25; Deut. 1:15
3. a literal thousand, Gen. 20:16; Exod. 32:28
4. a symbolic number, Gen. 24:60; Exod. 20:6; 34:7; Deut. 7:9; Jer. 32:18
5. the Ugaritic cognate *alluph* means “chieftain,” Gen. 36:15

These different connotations cause modern interpreters to question the literalness of the numbers

1. of the exodus
2. of Israeli tribal military units

“the judges” These were probably the same judges appointed by David in 1 Chr. 23:4; 26:29. They would have been Levites. This office is continued in 2 Chr. 19:5-6 under Jehoshaphat.

This office goes back to Moses’ appointing judge helpers during the wilderness wandering period (cf. Exod. 18:13-27).

1:3 “the high place which was at Gibeon” Later in Israel’s history these “high places” (BDB 119; cf. 1 Sam. 9:12-14; 10:5,13; 1 Kgs. 3:3a; 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kgs. 12:3) are condemned because of their connection to fertility worship (cf. Num. 33:52; Deut. 12:2; 1 Kgs. 11:7). See Special Topic: Fertility Worship in the ANE.

But here this was a gesture of faith (cf. 1 Kgs. 3:4; 1 Chr. 16:39) of the new king seeking YHWH’s help and blessing before the Tabernacle (cf. 1 Chr. 21:29; also called “the tent of meeting”). The ark of the covenant had been taken to Jerusalem by David and placed in a special tent (2 Chr. 1:4; 2 Sam. 6:17; 1 Chr. 16:1). Gibeon was about four miles NW of Jerusalem.

“Moses the servant of the Lord” See Special Topic: My Servant.

Apparently the Tabernacle was first set up in Canaan

1. at Gilgal, Josh. 4:15-5:12
2. then Shiloh, Josh. 18:1; 19:51

3. last at Gibeon, 1 Chr. 16:39-40; 2 Chr. 1:3-6

4. finally at Jerusalem Solomon copied all the items of the Tabernacle (and enlarged them), 2 Chronicles 2-5

SPECIAL TOPIC: MY SERVANT

This is a honorific title used of the Messiah in the “Servant Songs” of Isaiah (cf. Isa. 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12). Some have seen all of these as referring to Israel (cf. Isa. 41:8-9; 42:19; 43:10; 44:21), but Isa. 52:13-53:12 refers to an individual ideal Israelite (note Isa. 53:8). The servant cannot die for the sins of the servant! Notice how Isa. 53:9 is quoted in Matt. 27:38,59. God is in control of history, men, nations, and even Satan; all may be used to accomplish His redemptive purposes! He used Christ (cf. Isa. 53:10; see Special Topic: YHWH’s Eternal Redemptive Plan).

The footnote of the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 545, is very helpful as it outlines the different usages of the title “My Servant.”

1. a servant of God as a prophet, cf. Num. 12:7-8; Neh. 1:7; Dan. 9:11
 - a. Moses
 - b. Daniel, cf. Dan. 9:17
2. a servant of God as a military leader (i.e., Joshua), cf. Jos. 24:29; Jdgs. 2:8
3. a servant of God as King (i.e., David), cf. 2 Sam. 7:5,8; Psalm 18; 36; Ezek. 34:24; 37:24
4. a servant of God as administrator
 - a. Nehemiah, cf. Neh. 1:6
 - b. Zerubbabel, cf. Hag. 2:23
5. all Israel (or Jacob), cf. Isa. 41:8,9; 42:1,19; 43:10; 44:1,21; 49:3; Ezek. 28:25; 37:25

6. the remnant of Israel, cf. Isa. 41:8-10
7. a godly individual, cf. Job 1:8; 2:3; 42:8
8. unbelieving rulers who serve YHWH's purposes
 - a. Cyrus, Isa. 44:28; 45:1
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. 25:9; 27:6; 43:10

1:4 “the ark of God” See Special Topic: The Ark of the Covenant.

“Kiriath-jearim” This was the village where the ark of the covenant was kept after it was returned by the Philistines, who captured it from Eli's sons (cf. 1 Samuel 4-7). These events are the historical reason the Tabernacle and Ark had been separated.

1:5 “the bronze altar” See Special Topic: The Altar of Sacrifice.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ALTAR OF SACRIFICE

This was the place of sacrifice for the tabernacle. It was an acacia wood structure overlaid with bronze (cf. Exod. 27:1-2). It was a square, 5 cubits (about 18" x 5"; see Special Topic: Cubit) by 3 cubits tall. It had its own utensils (cf. Exod. 27:3) and was portable (cf. Exod. 27:6-7).

The special feature of this altar was its four horns, probably mimicking animal horns, which were a symbol of power for the Israelites. The blood of the animal was drawn out and part of it smeared on these horns, possibly a symbol of lifting the sacrifice to God.

Like all of the tabernacle furniture, this altar was expanded in Solomon's temple (cf. 1 Kings 6). For specific procedures see Special Topic: Sacrificial Systems of the ANE.

“which Bezalel. . .had made” See account in Exod. 31:9; 38:1-7.

“Solomon and the assembly sought it” This is a common VERB in Chronicles, occurring 41 times (BDB 205, KB 233), denoting

1. to inquire of YHWH
2. to seek YHWH

Here, it shows Solomon's first act as king was seeking YHWH at Gibeon.

The MT has “him,” but the LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate have “it,” referring to the bronze altar.

1:6 “offered a thousand burnt offerings” One wonders how long it would take for a literal thousand animal carcasses to be totally consumed by fire; how much wood; how many priests (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:15). The word “thousand” is always a question. See Special Topic: Thousand (*eleph*).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:7

⁷In that night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask what I shall give you.”

1:7 YHWH often spoke to people in dreams (i.e., Gen. 28:11-12; 31:11; 40:9; 41:1; Num. 12:6; 1 Sam. 3:3-4; 28:6; 1 Kgs. 3:5,15; 1 Chr. 17:3; 2 Chr. 7:12; Acts 10:10; 2 Corinthians 12).

“Ask” This is a *Qal* IMPERATIVE (BDB 981, KB 1371). Solomon's non-selfish request (cf. 2 Chr. 1:11) set the stage for YHWH's blessing (cf. vv. 14-17); see Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.2.1).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:8-13

⁸Solomon said to God, “You have dealt with my father David with great lovingkindness, and have made me king in his place. ⁹Now, O LORD God, Your promise to my father David is fulfilled, for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. ¹⁰Give me now

wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of Yours?” ¹¹God said to Solomon, “Because you had this in mind, and did not ask for riches, wealth or honor, or the life of those who hate you, nor have you even asked for long life, but you have asked for yourself wisdom and knowledge that you may rule My people over whom I have made you king, ¹²wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. And I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed nor those who will come after you.” ¹³So Solomon went from the high place which was at Gibeon, from the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem, and he reigned over Israel.

1:8 “great lovingkindness” See Special Topic: Lovingkindness (*hesed*).

SPECIAL TOPIC: LOVINGKINDNESS (*hesed*)

This term (BDB 338, KB 336 II) has a wide semantic field.

A. Used in connection to human beings

1. kindness to fellow men (e.g., 1 Sam. 20:14; 2 Sam. 16:17; 2 Chr. 24:22; Job 6:14; Ps. 141:5; Pro. 19:22; 20:6)
2. kindness toward the poor and needy (e.g., Micah 6:8)
3. affection of Israel toward YHWH (cf. Jer. 2:2; Hos. 6:4,6)
4. the temporary beauty of a wild flower (cf. Isa. 40:6)

B. Used in connection to God

1. covenant loyalty and love
 - a. “in redemption from enemies and troubles” (e.g., Gen. 19:19; 39:21; Exod. 15:13; Ps. 31:16; 32:10; 33:18,22; 36:7,10; 42:8; 44:26; 66:20; 85:7; 90:14; 94:18; 107:8,15,21,31; 109:21,22; 143:8,12; Jer. 31:3; Ezra 7:28; 9:9)
 - b. “in preservation of life from death” (e.g., Job 10:12; Ps. 6:4-5; 86:13)
 - c. “in quickening of spiritual life” (e.g., Ps. 119:41,76,88,124,149,159)
 - d. “in redemption from sin” (cf. Ps. 25:7; 51:1; 130:7-8)
 - e. “in keeping the covenants” (e.g., Deut. 7:9,12; 2 Chr. 6:14; Neh. 1:5; 9:32; Dan. 9:4; Mic. 7:20)
2. describes a divine attribute (e.g., Exod. 34:6; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; Neh. 9:17; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Micah 7:20)
3. kindness of God
 - a. “abundant” (e.g., Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:5; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2)
 - b. “great in extent” (e.g., Exod. 20:6; Deut. 5:10; 7:9)
 - c. “everlasting” (e.g., 1 Chr. 16:34,41; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3,6; 20:21; Ezra 3:11)
 - d. “like a stronghold” (e.g., Ps. 59:17)
 - e. related to god’s power (e.g., Ps. 62:11c-12a)
4. deeds of kindness (e.g., 2 Chr. 6:42; Ps. 89:2; Isa. 55:3; 63:7; Lam. 3:22)

This word is translated many ways in English translations. I think the best summary definition would be “God’s no strings-attached covenant loyalty.” It is parallel to the NT term “love (*agapaō*). God is faithful and loving because of who He is!

1:9 “O LORD God” This is the common linking of YHWH and *Elohim* (i.e., Gen. 2:4), Israel’s Deity designated as Savior and Creator. See Special Topic: Names for Deity, C and D.

“Your promise to my father David” See 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17.

“is fulfilled” This VERB (BDB 52, KB 63, *Niphal* IMPERFECT, is used in a JUSSIVE sense.

“the dust of the earth” This is one of three metaphors used to describe Abraham’s many descendants.

1. dust – Gen. 13:16; 28:14; here
2. stars – Gen. 15:5; 22:17; 26:4
3. sand – Gen. 22:17; 32:12; Exod. 32:13

It is this explosive growth of Israel’s population that terrified

1. Pharaoh (Exodus)
2. Balak (Numbers)
3. the native tribes of Canaan (Joshua)

See Special Topic: Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs.

SPECIAL TOPIC: COVENANT PROMISES TO PATRIARCHS

This initial promise of a special covenant relationship was made to

1. Abraham, Gen. 12:1-3
 - a. land, Gen. 12:7; 13:4-15; 15:18-21
 - b. people, Gen. 13:16; 15:4-5; 17:2-6; 22:18
 - c. blessing to the world, Gen. 18:18; 22:18
2. Isaac, Gen. 26:2-4
 - a. land
 - b. people
 - c. blessing to the world
3. Jacob, Gen. 28:2-4,13; 35:9-12; 48:3-4
 - a. land
 - b. people
4. the nation of Israel (a land), Exod. 3:8,17; 6:8; 13:5; 33:1-3; Deut. 1:7-8,35; 4:31; 9:3; 11:25; 31:7; Jos. 1:6

1:10 “go out and come in” This is an idiom for effective rule (i.e., 1 Sam. 18:13,16; 2 Sam. 5:2).

1:12 “wisdom and knowledge” These two words (BDB 315 and BDB 396) represent

1. practical wisdom (i.e., “how to”)
2. cognitive, collective knowledge (i.e., “facts”)

They are both crucial for an effective reign (i.e., what to do and how to do it).

1:13 The Tabernacle and altar were at Gibeon (cf. 1 Chr. 21:29).

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV “from the high place”

TEV “left”

NJB “came away from”

JPSOA “from the shrine”

LXX “came from Bama”

Peshitta “from his journey”

The UBS Text Project, p. 440, offers two options.

1. to the high place
2. from the high place

It gives option #1 a “B” rating (i.e., some doubt). The MT has option #1 but the LXX and Vulgate have option #2.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:14-17

¹⁴Solomon amassed chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem. ¹⁵The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the lowland. ¹⁶Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue; the king's traders procured them from Kue for a price. ¹⁷They imported chariots from Egypt for 600 *shekels* of silver apiece and horses for 150 apiece, and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

1:14-17 For the Josephus parallel, see *Antiq.* 8.2.4.

1:14 “chariots” See Special Topic: Chariots.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHARIOTS

Two Hebrew forms are used (*merkabah*, BDB 939; *rekeb*, KB 36).

1. Royal or governmental transportation
 - a. Egypt – Gen. 41:43; 46:29; 50:9
 - b. Israel – 1 Sam. 8:11; 2 Sam. 15:1; 1 Kgs. 1:5; Song of Songs 3:9; Isa. 22:18; Jer. 17:25
 - c. Syria – 2 Kgs. 5:21-26
 - d. Ethiopia – Acts 8:28,29,38
2. Often associated with YHWH's transportation
 - a. YHWH, Himself's, “chariot” is linked to *Cherubim* in 1 Chr. 28:18 – Ps. 104:3 (also note Ps. 18:10)
 - b. YHWH's angels – 2 Kgs. 2:11; 6:17; Ps. 68:17; Hab. 3:8; Zech. 6:1-3
3. Military weapon (selected examples)
 - a. Egypt – Exod. 14:6,7,9,17,18,23,25,26,28; 15:4,9; Deut. 11:4; Jos. 24:6; Isa. 31:1
 - b. Canaanite – Deut. 20:1; Jos. 11:4,6-9; 17:16,18; Jdgs. 1:19; 4-5
 - c. Philistine – Jdgs. 1:19; 1 Sam. 13:5; 2 Sam. 1:6
 - d. Israelite – 2 Sam. 15:1; 1 Kgs. 10:26-29
4. Hunting vehicle for the rich and powerful
5. They seem to be connected to Israeli “Sun” worship (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:5,11; Ezek. 8:16)

“chariot cities” Archaeology has shown that Megiddo in the plain of Jezreel was one such city.

1:15 Chronicles is interested in Solomon's wealth and wisdom in connection with the building of the temple (cf. 1 Chr. 22:14).

1:16

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, REB “Egypt and Kue”

TEV “Musri and Cilicia”

JB “Cilicia (Musur)”

NJB “Muzur and Cilicia”

JPSOA “Egypt and Que”

LXX “Egypt”

Peshitta “Egypt and the city of Apolites”

The MT has “Egypt” and “Kue” (cf. 1 Kgs. 10:28-29). The TEV footnote says “Musri and Cilicia: two ancient countries in what is now southeast Turkey, which were centers of horse breeding in Solomon's time.”

The word for chariots (and/or the chariots themselves) would have come from Egypt and many of

the horses from Kue and Cilicia (i.e., southeast Turkey). *The IVP Bible Background Commentary (OT)*, p. 422, mentions that large horses, called Nubian horses, came from Egypt but smaller horses came from southeast Anatolia (from both Assyrian and Hittite sources).

For “Kue” see note below.

“**Kue**” This (NKJV, “Keveh”) was a region in southeast Asia Minor (Turkey) above the Orontes River on a line parallel to the city of Carchemish, which was farther east. See a good brief discussion in ABD, vol. 4, pp. 102-103.

Solomon not only purchased these military weapons but was an arms dealer to other nations of the ANE (cf. 1 Chr. 1:17). Israel was the only easy land route from Africa to Anatolia.

The *IVP Bible Background Commentary (OT)*, p. 422, suggests the price of a chariot listed here is too high which may

1. continue the hyperbolic use of numbers
2. indicate that Solomon was selling royal, decorated chariots, not common war chariots

1:17 “shekels” See Special Topic: ANE Weights and Volumes.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN WEIGHTS AND VOLUMES (METROLOGY)

The weights and measurements used in commerce were crucial in ancient agricultural economy. The Bible urges the Jews to be fair in their dealings with one another (cf. Lev. 19:35-36; Deut. 25:13-16; Pro. 11:1; 16:11; 20:10). The real problems were not only honesty, but the non-standardized terms and systems used in Palestine. It seems that there were two sets of weights; a “light” and a “heavy” of each amount (see *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 4, p. 831). Also the decimal system (base of 10) of Egypt had been combined with the sexagesimal (base of 6) of Mesopotamia.

Many of the “sizes” and “amounts” used were based on human body parts, animal loads, and farmer’s containers, none of which were standardized. Therefore, the charts are only estimations and are tentative. The easiest way to show weights and measures is on a relational chart.

I. Volume terms used most often

A. Dry measures

1. Homer (BDB 330, possibly a “donkey-load,” BDB 331), e.g., Lev. 27:16; Hosea 3:2
2. Letekh (or letech, BDB 547, possibly alluded to in Hosea 3:2)
3. Ephah (BDB 35), e.g., Exod. 16:36; Lev. 19:36; Ezek. 45:10-11,13,24
4. Se’ah (BDB 684), e.g., Gen. 18:6; 1 Sam. 25:18; 1 Kgs. 18:32; 2 Kgs. 7:1,16,18
5. Omer (BDB 771 II, possibly “a sheaf” [a row of fallen grain], BDB 771 I), e.g., Exod. 16:16,22,36; Lev. 23:10-15
6. ‘Issaron (BDB 798, “a tenth part” of ephah), e.g., Exod. 29:40; Lev. 14:21; Num. 15:4; 28:5,13
7. Qav (or Kab, BDB 866), cf. 2 Kgs. 6:25

B. Liquid Measures

1. Kor (BDB 499), e.g., Ezek. 45:14 (can be dry measure, cf. 2 Chr. 2:10; 27:5)
2. Bath (BDB 144 II), e.g., 1 Kgs. 7:26,38; 2 Chr. 2:10; 4:5; Isa. 5:10; Ezek. 45:10-11,14
3. Hin (BDB 228), e.g., Exod. 29:40; Lev. 19:36; Ezek. 45:24
4. Log (BDB 528), cf. Lev. 14:10,12,15,21,24

C. Chart (taken from Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, vol. 1, p. 201 and *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 16, p. 379)

homer (dry) = kor (liquid or dry)	1				
ephah (dry) = bath (liquid)	10	1			
se’ah (dry)	30	3	1		
hin (liquid)	60	6	2	1	
omer/issaron (dry)	100	10	-	-	1

qav/kab (dry)	180	18	6	3	-	1
log (liquid)	720	72	24	12	-	41

II. Weight terms used most often

A. The three most common weights are the talent, the shekel, and the gerah.

1. The largest weight in the OT is the talent. From Exod. 38:25-26 we learn that one talent equals 3,000 shekels (i.e., “round weight,” BDB 503).

2. The term shekel (BDB 1053, “weight”) is used so often that it is assumed, but not stated in the text. There are several values of shekel mentioned in the OT.

a. “commercial standard” (NASB of Gen. 23:16)

b. “the shekel of the sanctuary” (NASB of Exod. 30:13)

c. “by the king’s weight” (NASB of 2 Sam. 14:26), also called “royal weight” in the Elephantine papyri.

3. The gerah (BDB 176 II) is valued at 20 per shekel (cf. Exod. 30:13; Lev. 27:25; Num. 3:47; 18:16; Ezek. 45:12). These ratios vary from Mesopotamia to Egypt. Israel followed the evaluation most common in Canaan (Ugarit)

4. The mina (BDB 584) is valued at either 50 or 60 shekels. This term is found mostly in later OT books (i.e., Ezek. 45:12; Ezra 2:69; Neh. 7:71-72). Ezekiel used the 60 to 1 ratio, while Canaan used the 50 to 1 ratio.

5. The beka (BDB 132, “half a shekel,” cf. Gen. 24:22) is used only twice in the OT (cf. Gen. 24:22; Exod. 38:26) and is valued at one-half a shekel. Its name means “to divide.”

B. Chart

1. Based on Pentateuch

talent	1					
mina	60	1				
shekel	3,000	50	1			
beka	6,000	100	2	1		
gerah	60,000	1,000	20	10	1	

2. Based on Ezekiel

talent	1					
mina	60	1				
shekel	3,600	60	1			
beka	7,200	120	2	1		
gerah	72,000	1,200	20	10	1	

2:1 In the MT this is 1:18. The “name of the LORD” was a way of referring to YHWH’s personhood. Special Topic: “The Name” of YHWH (OT).

SPECIAL TOPIC: “THE NAME” OF YHWH (OT)

The use of “the name” as a substitute for YHWH Himself is parallel to the Exod. 23:20-33 use of “angel,” who is said to have “My name is in him.” This same substitution can be seen in the use of “His glory” (e.g., John 1:14; 17:22; see Special Topic: God Described As Human). All are attempts to soften the personal anthropomorphic presence of YHWH (cf. Exod. 3:13-16; 6:3). YHWH is surely spoken of in human terms, but it was also known that He was spiritually present throughout creation (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 139:7-16; Jer. 23:24; Acts 7:49 quotes Isa. 66:1).

There are several examples of “the name” representing YHWH’s divine essence and personal presence.

1. Deut. 12:5; 2 Sam. 7:13; 1 Kgs. 9:3; 11:36
2. Deut. 28:58
3. Ps. 5:11; 7:17; 9:10; 33:21; 68:4; 91:14; 103:1; 105:3; 145:21
4. Isa. 48:9; 56:6
5. Ezek. 20:44; 36:21; 39:7

6. Amos 2:7
7. John 17:6,11,26

The concept of “calling on” (i.e., worshiping) the name of YHWH is seen early in Genesis.

1. Gen. 4:26, the line of Seth
2. Gen. 12:8, Abraham
3. Gen. 13:4, Abraham
4. Gen. 16:13, Hagar
5. Gen. 21:33, Abraham
6. Gen. 26:25, Isaac

and in Exodus:

1. Exod. 5:22-23, speak in Your name
2. Exod. 9:16, proclaim My name through all the earth (cf. Rom. 9:17)
3. Exod. 20:7, do not take the name of the LORD your God in vain (cf. Lev. 19:12; Deut. 5:11; 6:13; 10:20)
4. Exod. 20:24, where I cause my name to be remembered (cf. Deut. 12:5; 26:2)
5. Exod. 23:20-21, an angel (“since My name is in him”)
6. Exod. 34:5-7, Moses calls on (or “called out”) the name of the Lord. This is one of a handful of texts that describe YHWH’s character (cf. Neh. 9:17; Ps. 103:8; Joel 2:13)

Knowing someone by name implies an intimacy (cf. Exod. 33:12); Moses knows YHWH’s name and in 33:17, YHWH knows Moses’ name. This is the context where Moses wants to see God’s glory (cf. Exod. 33:18), but God allows him to see “His goodness” (33:19), which is parallel to “the name” (33:19).

The Israelites are to destroy “the names” of Canaan’s gods (cf. Deut. 12:3) and call on Him (cf. Deut. 6:13; 10:20; 26:2) at the special place He causes His name to dwell (cf. Exod. 20:24; Deut. 12:5,11,21; 14:23,24; 16:2,6,11; 26:2).

YHWH has a universal purpose involving His name.

1. Gen. 12:3
2. Exod. 9:16
3. Exod. 19:5-6
4. Deut. 28:10,58
5. Micah 4:1-5

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How is this chapter different from 1 Kings 2? Why?
2. Was Solomon's sacrifice at Gibeon a violation of YHWH's will? (cf. 1 Kgs. 3:3a)
3. Was the ark at Gibeon?
4. What was YHWH's promise to David (1 Chr. 1:9)?
5. How was Solomon's kingship different from David's?

2 CHRONICLES 2

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Solomon Will Build a Temple and Palace	Solomon Prepares to Build the Temple	Solomon's Prepares to Build the Temple	Preparations for Building the Temple	The Final Preparations. Hiram of Tyre (MT version) 1:18-2:9
2:1-2	2:1-10	2:1-2	2:1-2	
2:3-10		2:3-10	2:3-10	
Hiram to Assist				2:10-13
2:11-16	2:11-16	2:11-12 2:13-16	2:11-16	2:14-15 2:16-17
2:17-18	2:17-18	2:17-18	2:17-18	

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:1-2

¹Now Solomon decided to build a house for the name of the LORD and a royal palace for himself. ²So Solomon assigned 70,000 men to carry loads and 80,000 men to quarry *stone* in the mountains and 3,600 to supervise them.

2:1 Solomon desired to build two royal houses.

- one for the true King, YHWH (i.e., 1 Sam. 8:7)
- one for His representative (i.e., Solomon, cf. 2 Chr. 7:11; 8:1; 9:11)

Chronicles wants to emphasize the priority of the temple.

“**the name of the LORD**” This is repeated in 2 Chr. 2:4. See Special Topic: “The Name” of YHWH (OT).

2:2 These laborers are said to be resident aliens in v. 17 (this was started by David in 1 Chr. 22:2). At this point, Solomon did not use forced laborers from the tribes of Israel (cf. 2 Chr. 8:8-9). However, the parallel

in 1 Kgs. 5:13-18 does not mention “alien” workers. For a good brief discussion of “forced labor” see Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, pp. 141-142.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:3-10

³Then Solomon sent *word* to Hiram the king of Tyre, saying, “As you dealt with David my father and sent him cedars to build him a house to dwell in, so do for me. ⁴Behold, I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, dedicating it to Him, to burn fragrant incense before Him and *to set out* the showbread continually, and to offer burnt offerings morning and evening, on sabbaths and on new moons and on the appointed feasts of the LORD our God, *this being required* forever in Israel. ⁵The house which I am about to build *will be* great, for greater is our God than all the gods. ⁶But who is able to build a house for Him, for the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain Him? So who am I, that I should build a house for Him, except to

burn incense before Him? ⁷Now send me a skilled man to work in gold, silver, brass and iron, and in purple, crimson and violet *fabrics*, and who knows how to make engravings, to *work* with the skilled men whom I have in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided. ⁸Send me also cedar, cypress and algum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants know how to cut timber of Lebanon; and indeed my servants *will work* with your servants, ⁹to prepare timber in abundance for me, for the house which I am about to build *will be* great and wonderful. ¹⁰Now behold, I will give to your servants, the woodsmen who cut the timber, 20,000 kors of crushed wheat and 20,000 kors of barley, and 20,000 baths of wine and 20,000 baths of oil.”

2:3 “Hiram” In 1 Kgs. 5:18 and 1 Chr. 14:1 he is called “Hiram” (the LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate have “Hiram” here). He was friendly to David and now to David’s son. We are never told that he was a worshiper of YHWH but this is implied.

There are many differences in the details of Solomon’s agreement with the king of Tyre between 1 Kings 5; 7 and 2 Chronicles 2.

2:4 “the LORD my God” This is the covenant title for Deity, YHWH, plus the SINGULAR form of *Elohim*, *Eloah* (cf. 2 Chr. 2:12). See Special Topic: Names for Deity, C and D.

This verse lists many of the aspects of tabernacle worship.

1. incense – Exod. 30:1-7
2. showbread – Exod. 25:30; 40:23; Lev. 24:5-9
3. burnt offerings each morning and evening (the continual) – Exod. 29:38-42; Num. 28:3-31; 29:6-30
4. offerings on the sabbaths – Num. 28:9,10; 1 Chr. 23:31
5. offerings on the new moon – Num. 28:11-15; 1 Chr. 23:3
6. the appointed feasts – Exod. 23:14-17; 34:22-24; Leviticus 23; Deut. 16:16; 1 Chr. 23:31

All of these were meant to be permanent.

2:5 “for greater is our God than all the gods” The title *Elohim* (BDB 43) is used twice.

1. once for YHWH, Gen. 2:4
2. once for
 - a. pagan gods, Exod. 15:11; 1 Chr. 16:25
 - b. angels of the heavenly council, Ps. 89:7

See Special Topic: Monotheism.

YHWH is “greater” than all gods (cf. Exod. 12:12; 15:11; 18:11; 1 Chr. 16:25-26; Ps. 95:3; 96:4; 97:9; 135:5; 136:2). There are some texts that assert

1. YHWH is greater than. . . (henotheism)
2. YHWH is the only God. . . (monotheism)

SPECIAL TOPIC: MONOTHEISM

The concept of “monotheism” (one and only one, personal, ethical God with no female consort), not just the “high god” of polytheism or the good god of Iranian dualism (Zoroastrianism), is unique to Israel (Abraham and Job, 2000 B.C.). There is one rare exception briefly in Egypt (Amenhotep IV, also known as Akhenaten, 1367-1350 or 1386-1361 B.C., who worshiped *Aten*, the sun god as the only god). See J. Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt*, pp. 215-217.

This concept is expressed in several phrases in the OT.

1. “no one like YHWH our *Elohim*,” Exod. 8:10; 9:14; Deut. 33:26; 1 Kgs. 8:23
2. “no other besides Him,” Deut. 4:35,39; 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:2; 2 Sam. 22:32; Isa. 45:21; 44:6,8; 45:6,21
3. “YHWH is one,” Deut. 6:4; Rom. 3:30; 1 Cor. 8:4,6; 1 Tim. 2:5; James 2:19
4. “none like You,” 2 Sam. 7:22; Jer. 10:6

5. “You alone are God,” Ps. 86:10; Isa. 37:16
6. “Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me,” Isa. 43:10
7. “there is no other; besides Me. . .there is no other,” Isa. 45:5,6,22
8. He is the cause of all things, Isa. 45:7 (cf. Amos 3:6)
9. “there is none else, no other God,” Isa. 45:14,18
10. “there is none except Me,” Isa. 45:21
11. “there is no other;. . .there is no one like Me,” Isa. 46:9

It must be admitted that this crucial doctrine has been revealed in progressive ways. The early statements could be understood as “henotheism” or practical monotheism (there are other gods, i.e., Jos. 24:15; 1 Kgs. 18:21, but only one God for us, cf. Exod. 15:11; 20:2-5; Deut. 5:7; 6:4,14; 10:17; 32:12; 1 Kgs. 8:23; Ps. 83:18; 86:8; 136:1-9).

The first texts that begin to denote a singularity (philosophical monotheism) are early (cf. Exod. 8:10; 9:14; 20:2-3; Deut. 4:35,39; 33:26). The full and complete claims are found in Isaiah 43-46 (cf. 43:10-11; 44:6,8; 45:7,14,18,22; 46:5,9).

The OT depreciates the gods of the nations as

1. human creations – Deut. 4:28; 2 Kgs. 19:18; Ps. 115:4-8; 135:15-18; Isa. 2:8; 17:8; 37:19; 40:19; 41:7,24,29; 44:10,12; 46:6-7; Jer. 10:3-5; Rev. 9:10
2. demons – Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37; Isa. 8:19; 19:3c; 1 Cor. 10:20; Rev. 9:20
3. vanity, empty – Deut. 32:21; 2 Kgs. 17:15; Ps. 31:6; Isa. 2:18; 41:29; Jer. 2:5; 10:8; 14:22; Jer. 2:5; 8:19
4. no gods – Deut. 32:21; 2 Chr. 13:9; Isa. 37:19; Jer. 2:11; 5:7; 1 Cor. 8:4-5; 10:20; Rev. 9:20

The NT alludes to Deut. 6:4 in Rom. 3:30; 1 Cor. 8:4,6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; and James 2:19. Jesus quotes it as the first commandment in Matt. 22:36-37; Mark 12:29-30; Luke 10:27. The OT, as well as the NT, asserts the reality of other spiritual beings (demons, angels), but only one creator/redeemer God (YHWH, Gen. 1:1).

Biblical monotheism is characterized by

1. God is one and unique (ontology is assumed, not specified)
2. God is personal (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 3:8)
3. God is ethical (cf. Exod. 34:6; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 103:8-10)
4. God created humans in His image (Gen. 1:26-27) for fellowship (i.e., #2). He is a jealous God (cf. Exod. 20:5-6)

From the NT

1. God has three eternal, personal manifestations (see Special Topic: The Trinity)
2. God is perfectly and completely revealed in Jesus (cf. John 1:1-14; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 1:2-3)
3. God’s eternal plan for fallen humanity’s redemption is the sacrificial offering of His only Son (Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 2:6-11; Hebrews)

2:6 “the heavens and the highest heavens” See Special Topics:

1. Heaven (OT)
2. The Heavens and the Third Heavens

SPECIAL TOPIC: HEAVEN (OT)

The Hebrew term (BDB 1029, KB 1559, translated “heaven,” “sky,” “firmament,” “air”) can refer to several things (i.e., a series of domes or spheres of initial creation):

1. In Gen. 1:8-20 it refers to the atmosphere above the earth where clouds move and birds fly.
2. This dome (cf. Gen. 1:6,20; Isa. 40:22; 42:5) above the earth is where God sends the rain (i.e., “windows of heaven,” cf. Ps. 78:23-29; Mal. 3:10 or “the water jars of heaven,” cf. Job 38:37).
3. This dome is where the stars dwell and planets move. It could refer to all the created cosmos (billions and billions of galaxies).

4. Above this dome is the abode of God (i.e., the third or seventh heaven; see Special Topic: The Heavens and the Third Heaven). It is the highest heaven (e.g., Deut. 10:14; 1 Kgs. 8:27,30,32; Ps. 2:4; 148:4; Isa. 66:1).
5. The theological emphases
 - a. God is the creator of everything.
 - b. He controls creation (i.e., light and dark, rain and drought).
 - c. He creates and places the heavenly lights (sun, moon, stars, planets, comets).
 - d. There are spheres or realms of reality:
 - 1) earth
 - 2) above the earth
 - 3) invisible/angelic (cf. Col. 1:16)
 - 4) God's presence and abode
 - e. they are all connected and controlled by His will

SPECIAL TOPIC: HEAVEN AND THE THIRD HEAVEN

In the OT the term “heaven” is usually PLURAL (i.e., *shamayim*, BDB 1029, KB 1559). The Hebrew term means “height.” God dwells on high. This concept reflects the holiness and transcendence of God.

In Gen. 1:1 the PLURAL, “heavens and earth ” has been viewed as God creating (1) the atmosphere above this planet or (2) a way of referring to all of reality (i.e., spiritual and physical). From this basic understanding other texts were cited as referring to levels of heaven: “heaven of heavens” (cf. Ps. 68:33) or “heaven and the heaven of heavens” (cf. Deut. 10:14; 1 Kgs. 8:27; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 148:4). The rabbis surmised that there might be

1. two heavens (i.e., R. Judah, Hagigah 12b)
2. three heavens (Test. Levi 2-3; Ascen. of Isaiah 6-7; Midrash Tehillim on Ps. 114:1)
3. five heavens (III Baruch)
4. seven heavens (R. Simonb. Lakish; Ascen. of Isa. 9:7)
5. ten heavens (II Enoch 20:3b; 22:1)

All of these were meant to show God's separation from physical creation and/or His transcendence. The most common number of heavens in rabbinical Judaism was seven. A. Cohen, *Everyman's Talmud* (p. 30), says this was connected to the astronomical spheres, but I think it refers to seven being the perfect number (i.e., days of creation with seven representing God's rest in Gen. 2:2).

Paul, in 2 Cor. 12:2, mentions the “third” heaven (Greek *ouranos*) as a way of identifying God's personal, majestic presence. Paul had a personal encounter with God!

“cannot contain Him” YHWH is “spirit” and is present throughout the created order, cf. 1 Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:24.

Special Topic: Characteristics of Israel's God (NT).

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAEL'S GOD (NT)

(Taken from Dr. Utley's notes on 1 Timothy 1:17)

A. “the King” – This doxology is similar to 1 Tim. 6:15-16, which may reflect Deut. 10:17. It reflects the language of the later synagogue (“the King of the Universe,” cf. Rev. 15:3) and the Jews of the diaspora.

It is quite possible that Paul is quoting a creed or hymn of the early church as he does in 1 Tim. 3:16; 6:15-16 and 2 Tim. 2:11-13.

B. “Eternal” – This is the first of four powerful ADJECTIVES which are the same ones used in the phrase “eternal life” in I Tim. 1:16, but here to describe God. It is literally “of the ages” (*aiōnion*), which may be a metaphor of eternity or a reference to the Jewish concept of two ages:

1. a current evil age characterized by independence and rebellion (angel and human)

2. a coming promised age of righteousness brought by the Spirit and implemented by the Messiah (see Special Topic: This Age and the Age to Come).

C. “immortal” – This is literally “incorruptible.” It refers metaphorically of the ever-living, only-living One (YHWH from the Hebrew VERB “to be,” cf. Exod. 3:14, see Special Topic: Names for Deity). Only God has life in Himself (cf. Rom. 1:23; 1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16). All other life is a derived gift and a stewardship. It comes only through the grace of the Father, the work of Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 1:10), and the ministry of the Spirit.

D. “invisible” – This is used in the sense of the spiritual realm (cf. Col. 1:15) or possibly YHWH as the unseen God (i.e., no images, cf. Exod. 33:20; Deut. 4:15; 1 Tim. 6:16). God is the eternal Spirit present in all of creation!

E. “the only God” – This refers to Jewish monotheism (see Special Topic: Monotheism). This context reflects Israel’s unique worldview. The Bible presents mankind with a faith perspective beyond the five senses.

1. There is one and only one God (cf. Gen. 1:1; Exod. 8:10; 9:14; Deut. 4:35-39; 1 Sam. 2:2; 2 Sam. 7:22; 22:32; 1 Kgs. 8:23; Ps. 86:8,10; Isa. 43:11; 44:6,8; 45:6-7,14,18,21-22; 46:5,9; Jer. 2:11; 5:7; 10:6; 16:20).
2. He is a personal, creator, redeemer God (cf. Genesis 1-2; 3:15; Psalm 103-104).
3. He gives promises of hope and restoration by means of Messiah (cf. Isaiah 53).
4. Faith in Messiah repairs the breach of rebellion (the gospel).
5. Whosoever believes in Messiah may have eternal life (the gospel).

The Textus Receptus, following the Greek uncial manuscripts \aleph^c , D^c , K, L, and P, adds “wise” (NKJV, “to God who alone is wise”). This addition is absent in the Greek manuscripts \aleph^* , A, D^* , F, G, and H^* . It may be a scribal addition from Rom. 16:27. The UBS⁴ gives the shorter text an “A” rating (certain).

F. “*be* honor and glory” – This is basically the meaning of the OT term *kabod* (cf. 1 Tim. 1:11). It is used several times in the book of Revelation along with other praises (cf. Rev. 4:9,11; 5:12,13; 7:12). In the OT the most common Hebrew word for “glory” (*kabod*, see Special Topic: Glory [OT]) was originally a commercial term referring to a pair of scales which meant “to be heavy.” That which was heavy was valuable or had intrinsic worth. Often the concept of brightness was added to the word to express God’s majesty (cf. Exod. 15:16; 24:17; Isa. 60:1-2). He alone is worthy and honorable. He is too brilliant for fallen mankind to behold (cf. Exod. 33:17-23; Isa. 6:5). God can only be truly known through Christ (cf. Jer. 1:14; Matt. 17:2; Heb. 1:3; James 2:1).

The term “glory” is somewhat ambiguous.

1. it may be parallel to “the righteousness of God”
2. it may refer to the “holiness” or “perfection” of God
3. it could refer to the image of God in which mankind was created (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6), but which was later marred through rebellion (cf. Gen. 3:1-22; Rom. 3:9-18)

It is first used of YHWH’s presence with His people (cf. Exod. 16:7,10; Lev. 9:23; Num. 14:10).

G. “forever and ever” – This is literally “ages of the ages,” an idiom for eternity (cf. Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20;

2 Tim. 4:18). This same term is used in 1 Tim. 4:16 for “eternal life” and in 2 Tim. 4:18 for “King eternal.” See Special Topic: Forever (Greek idiom).

2:7 “send me” This VERB (BDB 1018, KB 1511, *Qal* IMPERATIVE) is used in verses 7 and 8 (i.e., an IMPERATIVE OF REQUEST). It is also found in 2 Chronicles as a *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense.

Hiram/Hiram had sent skilled workers (i.e., “wise,” BDB 314, cf. 2 Chr. 2:7,12,13; 1 Chr. 22:15) to help David (cf. 1 Chr. 14:1), so now, Solomon. In many ways the author of Chronicles sets up a parallel between David and Solomon.

“purple, crimson and violet” Exodus 25:4; 26:1,31; 28:5,6,8,15; 35:6,35; 36:8,25,37 list several colored, woven materials (possibly a canopy over the ark, cf. Exod. 26:31-35; 2 Chr. 3:10-14).

1. purple (BDB 71; NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p.498) – 2 Chr. 2:7,14; 3:14
2. scarlet (BDB 502) – 2 Chr. 2:7,13; 3:14
3. blue or violet (BDB 1067) – 2 Chr. 2:7,14

However, these colors are not found in the description of Solomon’s temple in 1 Kings.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ANE SACRED COLORS

It is difficult to be precise about the exact shades of colors in the ANE. Terminology changed from language to language and period to period. In Exod. 25:4, several special colors are mentioned to decorate the tabernacle and High Priest’s clothing.

1. “blue” – BDB 1067, KB 1732-3, denotes a blue, violet, or purple color. This color comes from mollusks and was developed by the Phoenicians.
2. “purple” – BDB 71, KB 84, denotes a reddish purple. It is possibly from an Akkadian root.
3. “scarlet” – BDB 1040, KB 1603, the etymology and color are uncertain, possibly crimson. The root seems to mean “dyed,” “plunged” from a certain insect (IDB, p. 233), possibly also from Phoenicia

2:8 There are several trees mentioned as prized lumber found in Lebanon.

1. cedar (BDB 72) – 1 Kgs. 5:8,10; 6:9,10,15,16,18,20,36; 7:2,3,7,11,12; 9:11; 1 Chr. 14:1; 17:1,6; 22:4; see USB, *Fauna and Flora of the Bible*, p. 108
2. cypress (BDB 141) – see UBS, *Fauna and Flora of the Bible*, pp. 115-116
3. algum (BDB 38) – 2 Chr. 2:8; 9:10-11; 1 Kgs. 10:11; see UBS, *Fauna and Flora of the Bible*, p. 164; some call it “sandal-wood”; it was used for temple furniture and musical instruments

The UBS says, “There is great confusion in all versions, ancient and modern, over the identity of evergreens in the Bible” p. 116. All of these woods were

1. beautiful to the sight
2. easy to work with
3. long lasting
4. the timber of choice for temples and palaces

From 1 Chr. 22:4, it becomes apparent that much of the material for the temple was stockpiled during David’s reign.

“how to cut” This VERB (BDB 310, KB 306, *Qal* ACTIVE PARTICIPLE) is used in two senses.

1. here, of master craftsmen who harvested, transported, and formed lumber, cf. Ps. 144:12
2. of slave laborers who prepared and hauled firewood for Israel, cf. Deut. 29:11; Josh. 9:21,23,27

2:10 This would be Hiram/Hiram’s compensation (cf. 2 Chr. 2:15).

“kors. . .bath” See Special Topic: ANE Weights and Volumes.

NASB, NRSV,

JPSOA “crushed”

NKJV “ground”

TEV, NJB,

REB “wheat (with no ADJECTIVE)”

LXX “grain as food”

Peshitta “will give provisions”

The problem is the rare use of a NOUN (BDB 646), which usually means “blow,” “wound,” or

“slaughter.” This is the only time it is used of grain. The Syriac and Latin versions follow the LXX.

2:10-12 Hiram/Hiram seems to be a follower of YHWH.

1. He cooperated with David and Solomon. He was not threatened by their power, wealth, and proximity.
2. He acknowledges YHWH’s character and plan for Israel. See Special Topics:
3. He blesses the God of creation.
4. He sends his choice materials and workmen (i.e., Israel’s temple has much in common with Tyrian temples of the day).
5. See Josephus’ comments in *Antiq.* 8.2.6-9.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:11-16

¹¹Then Hiram, king of Tyre, answered in a letter sent to Solomon: “Because the LORD loves His people, He has made you king over them.” ¹²Then Hiram continued, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has made heaven and earth, who has given King David a wise son, endowed with discretion and understanding, who will build a house for the LORD and a royal palace for himself. ¹³Now I am sending Hiram-abi, a skilled man, endowed with understanding, ¹⁴the son of a Danite woman and a Tyrian father, who knows how to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone and wood, *and* in purple, violet, linen and crimson fabrics, and *who knows how* to make all kinds of engravings and to execute any design which may be assigned to him, *to work* with your skilled men and with those of my lord David your father. ¹⁵Now then, let my lord send to his servants wheat and barley, oil and wine, of which he has spoken. ¹⁶We will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon and bring it to you on rafts by sea to Joppa, so that you may carry it up to Jerusalem.”

2:13-14 “Hiram-abi” In the parallel of 1 Kgs. 7:13-14, he is called “Hiram” and his mother is from the tribe of Naphtali, not Dan. His father was from Tyre.

Why the difference is uncertain. Possibly two different traditions or records. Unbelievers often point to differences like this to assert errors in the Bible. This kind of historical detail does not affect the theological issue of inspiration. See John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, which describes how oral cultures passed on their traditions.

2:14 “fabrics” This word (BDB 101) does not appear in 2 Chr. 2:7, but is assumed. It refers to a fine, white Egyptian linen cloth (cf. 2 Chr. 3:14; Ezek. 27:16). It was a fabric used for royalty (cf. 1 Chr. 15:27; Esther 1:6; 8:15) and priests (cf. 2 Chr. 5:12). Here, it refers to decorations of Solomon’s temple.

2:16 “Joppa” It is the only natural harbor on the Mediterranean coast of Canaan.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:17-18

¹⁷Solomon numbered all the aliens who *were* in the land of Israel, following the census which his father David had taken; and 153,600 were found. ¹⁸He appointed 70,000 of them to carry loads and 80,000 to quarry stones in the mountains and 3,600 supervisors to make the people work.

2:17 See note at 2 Chr. 2:2.

2:18 The number of “supervisors” in 1 Kgs. 5:16 is 3,300, but the LXX supports the MT’s “3,600.” The LXX used a different Hebrew textual tradition than the MT. However, it must be added that the LXX usually agrees with Samuel and Kings against Chronicles; not so here.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How does 2 Chr. 2:2 relate to vv. 17-18? Does this forced labor include men from the tribes of Israel?
2. Is 2 Chr. 2:5 an affirmation of monotheism or henotheism?
3. Was Hiram/Hiram a believer in YHWH?
4. Does the colored fabric of 2 Chr. 2:7,14 function as a veil or canopy?
5. Why is Hiram-abi said to have a Danite mother here but a Naphtalite mother in 1 Kgs. 7:14?

2 CHRONICLES 3

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
The Temple Construction in Jerusalem	Solomon Builds the Temple	Details of the Building	Construction of the Temple Begins (2:17-3:14)	Solomon Builds the Temple (MT versing)
3:1-2	3:1-7	3:1-7	3:1-9	3:1-7
Dimensions and Materials of the Temple				
3:3-7				
3:8-9	3:8-14	3:8-9		3:8-13
3:10-14		3:10-14	3:10-14	
			The Two Bronze Columns	3:14
3:15-17	3:15-17	3:15-17	3:15-17	3:15-17

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:1-2

¹Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where *the LORD* had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ²He began to build on the second *day* in the second month of the fourth year of his reign.

3:1 Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.3.1-3 tells of this building project.

“Mount Moriah” This was one of the seven hills of Jerusalem. It was the site of the offering of Isaac (cf. Gen. 32:2,14). Special Topic: Moriah, Salem, Jebus, Jerusalem, Zion.

SPECIAL TOPIC: MORIAH, SALEM, JEBUS, JERUSALEM, ZION (taken from Dr. Utley’s notes on Gen 22:2)

This term (Moriah, BDB 599, KB 635) has been translated many ways.

1. the Vulgate and the Samaritan Pentateuch have “visions”
2. the Targums translate it as “worship”
3. the Septuagint has “high”
4. the Peshitta has “of the Amonites”
5. some scholars translate it as “shown of YHWH”
6. others “the chosen”
7. still others “the place of appearing”

It seems that “the place of appearing” might be the best possible translation based on the other use of this term in 2 Chr. 3:1, which mentions that the temple was built on Mt. Moriah, the place where God appeared to David. This can either refer to 2 Sam. 24:16 or more probably, 1 Chr. 21:18-30. The mention of Abraham offering Isaac in that context is either omitted because it was so well known or it was unknown to the author of 1 Chronicles. Also, Moriah seems to relate to the city of Melchizedek, Salem (Gen. 14:18), later called Jebus, which became Jerusalem.

1. “Moriah” is linked to Abraham's offering of Isaac in Gen. 22:2, which later became the site of the temple (cf. 2 Chr. 3:1).

2. “Salem” (BDB 1024 II, KB 1539, cf. Gen. 14:18; Ps. 76:2; Heb. 7:1,2), the site of a Canaanite city of Melchizedek.

3. Later it became the Canaanite city of “Jebus” (BDB 101, KB 382, from “Jebusites,” cf. Gen. 10:16; 15:21; Exod. 3:8,17; Jos. 18:16,18; Jdgs. 19:10-11), which was captured by David (cf. 1 Chr. 11:4-5).

4. The name was changed to “Jerusalem” (BDB 436, KB 437), probably after David’s capture. It is difficult to be certain because the name is used in Joshua 10; 12; 15. The name “Jerusalem” has an uncertain etymology, possibly “possession of peace” or “foundation of peace.”

5. Often the capital is designated “Zion” (BDB 851, KB 816), which was the name of one of the seven hills on which Jerusalem was built. The title is used often in Psalms and Isaiah. It became a way of referring to the Jewish people.

The term’s meaning is uncertain but the suggestions are (AB, vol. 6, p. 1096):

- a. Hebrew root “to erect”
- b. Hebrew root “to be dry”
- c. Hurrian root “brook,” “stream,” “wadi”
- d. Arabic root “hill crest,” “ridge”
- e. hypothetical root from Hebrew “shield,” “fortress”

“where the LORD appeared to his father David” This event is recorded in 1 Chronicles 18.

David is connected to the temple in several ways.

1. He wanted to build the temple – 2 Samuel 7.
2. He designed the overall plan.
3. He gathered the materials (using Hiram)
4. He was directed by YHWH where to build it.

“Ornan the Jebusite” In 2 Sam. 24:16 he is called “Araunah the Jebusite.” However, in 1 Chr. 21:15,18-27,28, he goes by “Ornan” (BDB 75).

3:2 The proposed date would be the spring of 966 B.C. (cf. 1 Kgs. 6:1).

Special Topic: ANE Calendars

SPECIAL TOPIC: ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN CALENDARS

Canaanite (1 Kgs. 6:1,37-38; 8:2)	Sumerian-Babylonian (Nippur Calendar)	Hebrew (Geezer Calendar)	Modern Equivalents
Abib (“greenheads” of barley)	Nisanu	Nisan	March-April
Zin (spring brilliance)	Ayaru	Iyyar	April-May
	Simanu	Sivan	May-June
	Du-uzu	Tammuz	June-July
	Abu	Ab	July-August
	Ululu	Elul	August-September
Ethanim (permanent water source)	Teshritu	Tishri	September-October
Bul (rains on produce)	Arah-samna	Marcheshvan	October-November
	Kislimu	Chislev	November-December
	Tebitu	Tebeth	December-January
	Shabatu	Shebat	January-February
	Adaru	Adar	February-March

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:3-7

³Now these are the foundations which Solomon laid for building the house of God. The length in cubits, according to the old standard was sixty cubits, and the width twenty cubits. ⁴The porch which was in front of the house was as long as the width of the house, twenty cubits, and the height

120; and inside he overlaid it with pure gold. ⁵He overlaid the main room with cypress wood and overlaid it with fine gold, and ornamented it with palm trees and chains. ⁶Further, he adorned the house with precious stones; and the gold was gold from Parvaim. ⁷He also overlaid the house with gold—the beams, the thresholds and its walls and its doors; and he carved cherubim on the walls.

3:3 “cubits” The description of the temple here is a summary of 1 Kings 6-7. Much needed information

1. has been left out
2. is in “technical” terms
3. purposeful hyperbole that the ancient versions did not understand.

For a good brief discussion see Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, pp. 313-321.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CUBIT

There are two cubits (BDB 52, KB 61) in the Bible. The regular cubit is the distance between an average man’s longest finger and his elbow, usually around 18 inches (e.g., Gen. 6:15; Exod. 25:10,17,23; 26:2,8,13,16; 27:1,9,12,13,14,16,18; Num. 35:4,5; Deut. 3:11). There is also a longer cubit (royal cubit) used in construction (i.e., Solomon’s temple), which was common in Egypt (i.e., 21 fingers), Palestine (i.e., 24 fingers), and sometimes Babylon (i.e., 30 fingers). It was 21 inches long (cf. 2 Chr. 3:3; Ezek. 40:5; 43:13).

The ancients used parts of the human body for measurement. The people of the Ancient Near East used:

1. out stretched arms
2. length from elbow to middle finger (cubit)
3. width from outstretched thumb to little finger (span, cf. Exod. 28:16; 39:9; 1 Sam. 17:4)
4. length between all four fingers of a closed hand (handbreadth, cf. Exod. 25:25; 37:12; 1 Kgs. 7:26; 2 Chr. 4:5)
5. length of middle joint of finger (fingerbreadth, Jer. 52:21)

3:4

NASB, JPSOA,

Peshitta “the porch”

NKJV, NRSV,

REB “the vestibule”

TEV “entrance room”

NJB “the portico”

LXX “an ailam”

The “porch” (BDB 17) was an added feature of Solomon’s temple (cf. 1 Kg. 6:3; 7:6,12,19,21; Ezek. 8:16). It was part of David’s plan (cf. 1 Chr. 28:11). It was also part of Ezekiel’s new temple (cf. Ezek. 40:7,8,48,49; 41:25,26).

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, NJB,

JPSOA, LXX “the height 120”

TEV “180 feet high”

REB, Peshitta,

NIV “20”

The UBS Text Project gives “120” a “B” rating (i.e., some doubt). However, it seems a more realistic measurement is found in 1 Kgs. 6:3, where the porch is measured as 20 cubits by 10 cubits, but the height is not mentioned. The JPSOA diagram, p. 1769, says it was “three stories” tall. However, the “bronze pillars” are only 27’ (i.e., 18 cubits) tall (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:15; 2 Kgs. 25:17; Jer. 52:21).

The MT has the pillars as “thirty five cubits” high (cf. 2 Chr. 3:15), which is 52.5 feet. The NET

Bible, p. 671, #9, suggests that a scribe misread “cubit” as “hundred.”

“he overlaid it with pure gold” The NASB Study Bible, p. 592, suggests that the VERB “overlaid” (BDB 860, KB 1045, *Piel* IMPERFECT with *waw*, cf. 2 Chr. 3:6,10) may denote “inlaid,” referring to the items of 3:5. A different VERB (BDB 341, KB 339, *Piel* IMPERFECT with *waw*) is used in 2 Chr. 3:5,7,8,9.

In the tabernacle, gold was limited to the “holy of holies,” while silver was used for the “holy place” and bronze for the laver and altar of sacrifice. But in Solomon’s temple gold was used in more places.

3:5 “palm trees and chains” The decorations of the temple employed

1. palm trees (cf. 1 Kgs. 6:29,32; 7:36; Ezek. 40:16)
2. chains, 2 Chr. 3:5,16 (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:17)
3. pomegranates, 2 Chr. 3:16 (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:42)
4. cherubim
 - a. in the wall hangings (1 Kgs. 7:27-39)
 - b. carved into wood, 2 Chr. 3:7; 1 Kgs. 6:29,35
 - c. two large ones in the holy of holies covering the ark, 2 Chr. 3:10-14; 1 Kgs. 6:23-28
 - d. on the lid of the ark, facing each other, Exod. 25:18-20; Num. 7:89
5. although not mentioned in this context, 1 Kgs. 6:29,32 also mentions “open flowers,” which may refer to the menorah’s seven flower-shaped tops

SPECIAL TOPIC: *CHERUBIM* (BDB 500, KB 497)

A. One of several types of angelic beings mentioned in the OT (i.e., *Cherubim*, *Seraphim*, Archangels, messenger angels). This particular type guarded sacred areas (cf. Gen. 3:24; Exod. 25:18-22; 1 Kgs. 8:6-7).

B. Etymology is uncertain.

1. from Akkadian “intercessor” or “mediator” between God and mankind
2. from Hebrew there is a possible word play between “chariot” and “cherub” (cf. Ezekiel 1; 10)
3. some scholars say it means “brilliant appearance”

C. Physical form – This has been difficult to ascertain because of varying descriptions within the Bible and varying animal-human forms found in the Ancient Near East. Some link them to

D. winged bull of Mesopotamia

E. winged eagle – lions of Egypt called “griffins”

3. winged creatures on Hiram’s (King of Tyre) throne

4. sphinx of Egypt and similar forms found in King Ahab’s ivory palace in Samaria

D. Physical Description

1. The form of the *Cherubim* is linked with the form of the *Seraphim* of Isaiah 6.

2. Examples of different forms

a. Number of faces

(1) two – Ezek. 41:18

(2) four – Ezek. 1:6,10; 10:14,21

(3) one – Rev. 4:7

b. Number of wings

(1) two – 1 Kgs. 6:24

(2) four – Ezek. 1:6,11; 10:7,8-21

(3) six (like *Seraphim* of Isa. 6:2) – Rev. 4:8

3. Other features (also called “The Living Creatures”)
 - a. Human hands – Ezek. 1:8; 10:8,21
 - b. Legs
 - (1) Straight, no knee – Ezek. 1:7
 - (2) Calf feet – Ezek. 1:7
 4. Flavius Josephus admits that no one knew what a cherub looked like (cf. *Antiquities of the Jews*, VIII.3.3).
- E. Places and purpose found in the Bible
5. Guardian of the tree of life, Gen. 3:24 (possibly used metaphorically in Ezek. 28:14,16)
 2. Guardian of the Tabernacle
 6. Over the Ark of the Covenant; Exod. 25:18-20; Num. 7:89; 1 Sam. 4:4; Heb. 9:5
 7. Depicted on veil and curtains of the tabernacle; Exod. 26:1,31; 36:8,35
 3. Guardian of Solomon’s Temple
 8. Two large carved cherubs in Holy of Holies; 1 Kgs. 6:23-28; 8:6-7; 2 Chr. 3:10-14; 5:7-9
 9. On walls of inner shrine; 1 Kgs. 6:29,35; 2 Chr. 3:7
 10. On panels that were associated with the several lavers; 1 Kgs. 7:27-39
 4. Guardian of Ezekiel’s Temple – Carved on walls and doors; Ezek. 41:18-20, 25
 5. Connected with transportation of deity
 - a. possibly a metaphor for wind; 2 Sam. 22:11; Ps. 18:10; 104:3-4; Isa. 19:1
 - b. guardian of God’s throne; Ps.80:1; 99:1; Isa. 37:16
 - c. guardian of God’s portable throne chariot; Ezek. 1:4-28; 10:3-22; 1 Chr. 28:18
 6. Herod’s Temple – Painted on walls (i.e., guardian cf. Talmud “Yoma” 54a)
 7. Revelation throne scene (i.e., guardian cf. Rev. 4-5)

3:6 “he adorned the house with precious stones” There are texts that tell us

1. what kind of stones (1 Chr. 29:2)
2. where they were placed (1 Kgs. 5:17; 7:9,10,11)

Some have suggested “inlaid floors.” Like the gold, these gems were a way to show the value, worth, and glory of YHWH’s temple.

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, TEV,

NJB, JPSOA,

REB, Targums

“Parvaim”

LXX

“Pharouaim”

Peshitta, Vulgate

“fine gold”

Obviously modern translations and the LXX think it is a place name.

1. northeastern Arabia (JPSOA)
2. southeast Arabia (NASB Study Bible)
3. Yemen
4. mythological (i.e., Gaden of Righteousness, Enoch 60:23)
5. rabbinical Midrash, home of Enoch (Gen. 5:21-23)
6. another name for Ophir (2 Chr. 8:18)

The suggestion of the Peshitta and Vulgate of “fine” gold seems unusual, since the ADJECTIVE “pure” gold is mentioned in 2 Chr. 3:4 (BDB 373) and “fine” gold (BDB 373 II) in 3:5,8. The exact distinction between these types of gold is unstated.

3:7 “cherubim” See note at 2 Chr. 3:5.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:8-9

⁸Now he made the room of the holy of holies: its length across the width of the house *was* twenty cubits, and its width *was* twenty cubits; and he overlaid it with fine gold, *amounting* to 600 talents. ⁹The weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. He also overlaid the upper rooms with gold.

3:8 “holy of holies” This was the innermost part of the tabernacle/temple. It was shaped as a perfect cube (i.e., 20x20x20 cubits; this would make the dimensions of 2 Chr. 3:4, “120 cubits high” a scribal error). This is where the ark of the covenant rested. Only the High Priest, on the Day of Atonement” (cf. Leviticus 16), could enter this sacred place where YHWH dwelt above the *cherubim*.

Special Topic: The Tabernacle (chart).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:10-14

¹⁰Then he made two sculptured cherubim in the room of the holy of holies and overlaid them with gold. ¹¹The wingspan of the cherubim *was* twenty cubits; the wing of one, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and *its* other wing, of five cubits, touched the wing of the other cherub. ¹²The wing of the other cherub, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house; and *its* other wing of five cubits was attached to the wing of the first cherub. ¹³The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits, and they stood on their feet facing the *main* room. ¹⁴He made the veil of violet, purple, crimson and fine linen, and he worked cherubim on it.

3:9 The NASB Study Bible, p. 592, has a good note:

“The fact that gold is such a soft metal would make it unlikely that nails were made of this substance. It is probable that this small amount (only 1 1/4 pounds) represents gold leaf or sheeting used to gild the nail heads.”

“the upper rooms” One wonders if the perfect cube (20x20x20 cubits) caused a space above the Holy of Holies. This is all speculation based on an assumed height of the building (i.e., “thirty cubits,” 1 Kgs. 6:2).

These “upper rooms” are mentioned as being planned by David (cf. 1 Chr. 28:11).

3:10

NASB, JPSOA “sculptured”
NKJV “fashioned by carving”
NRSV, REB “carved”
TEV “made out of metal”
NJB “modeled. . .of wrought metal work”
LXX “fashioned. . .out of wood”

This is a NOUN CONSTRUCT (BDB 795 plus BDB 847). The NOUN (BDB 795) is a common word for “deed” or “work.” Here, of “a work of art.”

The other NOUN (BDB 847) occurs only here. It is from an Arabic root, “things formed.” The MT is not specific whether the *cherubim* are fashioned from

1. metal (TEV, NJB; AB, p. 15)
2. wood (LXX, NKJV, NRSV, REB)

Whichever, it was overlaid with gold.

3:13 “they stood on their feet” This clearly shows that there was a second pair of *cherubim*. The ones on the lid of the ark were kneeling.

“facing the main room” This would refer to the larger room, the Holy Place (i.e., twice as long). These angels stood as guardians (i.e., Gen. 3:24). The two *cherubim* on the ark faced each other, watching the “mercy seat” (i.e., the place of atonement, cf. Leviticus 16).

3:14 “the veil” This could refer to

1. a room-dividing curtain; this one between the “holy of holies” and the Holy Place (cf. Exod. 36:35-38)
2. a canopy suspended above the ark of the covenant; see Special Topic: the Ark of the Covenant For the colors, see note at 2 Chr. 2:7.

In Solomon’s temple the inner shrine (i.e., Holy of Holies and Holy Place) was divided by a door of olive wood (cf. 1 Kgs. 6:31).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:15-17

¹⁵He also made two pillars for the front of the house, thirty-five cubits high, and the capital on the top of each was five cubits. ¹⁶He made chains in the inner sanctuary and placed them on the tops of the pillars; and he made one hundred pomegranates and placed them on the chains. ¹⁷He erected the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right and the other on the left, and named the one on the right Jachin and the one on the left Boaz.

3:15-17 These are the two bronze pillars that stood at the entrance of the Holy Place (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:15-22).

3:15 “thirty-five cubits high” The NET Bible suggests this was the length of both of them lying on the ground, p. 671, #24,26. 1 Kings 7:15 and 2 Kgs. 25:17 say their height was 18 cubits.

3:16 “chains” These are also mentioned in 1 Kgs. 7:17.

NASB, NKJV,
JPSOA “the inner sanctuary”
NRSV, TEV,
REB --- omitted ---
NJB “in the Debir”

A NOUN (BDB 184 I, KB 208 I), which is defined as “hindmost chamber” or “innermost room,” from an Arabic root, “back” or “behind” (KB 209 I).

However, the Hebrew word “debar” (BDB 182, KB 210 II) is the common root for “speech” or “word.” This may be a designation of the room from which YHWH speaks (cf. Num. 7:89), from above the wings of the *cherubim* on the lid of the ark.

It must be noted that “inner sanctuary” (i.e., second suggestion) does not fit this context, which is talking about the twin bronze pillars before the porch of the Holy Place.

3:17 “Jachin” This proper name (BDB 467, KB 410) for the right bronze pillar may mean “he will establish.”

“Boaz” This proper name (BDB 126, KB 142 II) for the left bronze pillar may mean “quickness” or “strength.” Some scholars assume that the writing on the two pillars are one phrase, “he establishes in strength.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Where else in the OT is Mt. Moriah mentioned? Why was it chosen as the site of the temple?
2. Were there two kinds of cubit? How long was a cubit?
3. Describe a cherub. What was their purpose in temple art?
4. Do 1 Kings 6-7 and this chapter give us a complete picture of Solomon’s temple? Could we reproduce it by these measurements?
5. Was there a veil or a door between the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place?
6. What was the purpose of the bronze pillars?

2 CHRONICLES 4

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Furnishings of the Temple	Furnishings of the Temple	The Temple Equipment	Equipment for the Temple	(MT versing)
4:1-6	4:1-5 4:6-8	4:1-6	4:1-6	4:1-5 4:6-8
4:7-10	4:9-10	4:7-10	4:7-8 4:9-10	4:9-10
4:11-18	4:11-18	4:11-18	4:11-16 4:17-18	4:11-15a 4:15b-18
4:19-22	4:19-5:1	4:19-22	4:19-5:1	4:19-5:1

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:1-6

¹Then he made a bronze altar, twenty cubits in length and twenty cubits in width and ten cubits in height. ²Also he made the cast metal sea, ten cubits from brim to brim, circular in form, and its height *was* five cubits and its circumference thirty cubits. ³Now figures like oxen *were* under it *and* all around it, ten cubits, entirely encircling the sea. The oxen *were* in two rows, cast in one piece. ⁴It stood on twelve oxen, three facing the north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east; and the sea *was set* on top of them and all their hindquarters turned inwards. ⁵It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made *like* the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom; it could hold 3,000 baths. ⁶He also made ten basins in which to wash, and he set five on the right side and five on the left to rinse things for the burnt offering; but the sea *was* for the priests to wash in.

4:1 “a bronze altar” Surprisingly, this altar is not mentioned in 1 Kings 6-7. See Special Topic: Altar of Sacrifice.

“cubit” See Special Topic: Cubit.

4:2 “the cast metal sea” See Special Topic: The Laver of Bronze.

SPECIAL TOPIC: LAVER

This was a large, bronze bowl set in the court of the tabernacle for priests to do ceremonial washings (cf. Exod. 30:20-21; Num. 8:7). It is described in Exod. 30:17-21; 38:8. Its placement was between the tabernacle’s tent/shrine and the altar of sacrifice (cf. Exod. 40:7,30).

The Laver of the Tabernacle was made more elaborate by the builders of Solomon’s temple. It is called “the sea of cast metal” in 1 Kgs. 7:39. It is described in 1 Kgs. 7:44. One wonders if 1 Kgs. 7:38 is also referring to the Laver.

4:3 The description in 1 Kgs. 7:24 mentions “gourds” (BDB 825) surrounding the brim (cf. REB; so too Ginsburg). The NRSV leaves out the word “oxen” (BDB 133) in 2 Chr. 4:3.

4:4 “twelve” See Special Topic: Twelve.

The oxen are the sturdy stand for the laver/bronze sea. It was very heavy (cf. 2 Chr. 4:5).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NUMBER TWELVE

Twelve has always been a symbolic number (see Special Topic: Symbolic Numbers in Scripture) of organization.

- A. outside the Bible
 - 1. twelve signs of the Zodiac
 - 2. twelve months of the year
- B. in the OT
 - 1. the sons of Jacob (the Jewish tribes)
 - 2. reflected in
 - a. twelve pillars of the altar in Exod. 24:4
 - b. twelve jewels on the high priest's breastplate (which stand for the tribes) in Exod.

28:21

- c. twelve loaves of bread in the holy place of the tabernacle in Lev. 24:5
- d. twelve spies sent into Canaan in Num. 13 (one from each tribe)
- e. twelve rods (tribal standards) at Korah's rebellion in Num. 17:2
- f. twelve stones of Joshua in Jos. 4:3,9,20
- g. twelve administrative districts in Solomon's administration in 1 Kgs. 4:7
- h. twelve stones of Elijah's altar to YHWH in 1 Kgs. 18:31

- C. in the NT

- 1. twelve apostles chosen
- 2. twelve baskets of bread (one for each Apostle) in Matt. 14:20
- 3. twelve thrones on which NT disciples sit (referring to the 12 tribes of Israel) in Matt.

19:28

- 4. twelve legions of angels to rescue Jesus in Matt. 26:53
- 5. the symbolism of Revelation
 - a. 24 elders on 24 thrones in Rev. 4:4
 - b. 144,000 (12x12,000) in Rev. 7:4; 14:1,3
 - c. twelve stars on the woman's crown in Rev. 12:1
 - d. twelve gates, twelve angels reflecting the twelve tribes in Rev. 21:12
 - e. twelve foundation stones of the new Jerusalem and on them the names of the

twelve Apostles in Rev. 21:14

- f. twelve thousand stadia in Rev. 21:16 (size of new city, New Jerusalem)
- g. wall is 144 cubits in Rev. 21:17
- h. twelve gates of pearl in Rev. 21:21
- i. trees in new Jerusalem with twelve kinds of fruit (one for each month) in Rev. 22:2

4:5 "handbreadth thick" This was the length of all four fingers of a closed hand (cf. Exod. 25:25; 37:12; 1 Kgs. 7:26).

"baths" The parallel account in 1 Kgs. 7:26 has 2,000 baths instead of the 3,000 here. See Special Topic: ANE Weights and Volumes.

4:6 There was a large water container called "the laver of bronze" in Exod. 30:18-21. It was for the priests to wash their hands and feet. This was important (i.e., ceremonial cleansing). If it was ignored, death would occur (cf. 2 Chr. 4:21).

The smaller basins were for washing the sacrifices before they were placed on the altar (cf. Ezek. 40:38).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:7-10

⁷Then he made the ten golden lampstands in the way prescribed for them and he set them in

the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. ⁸He also made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. And he made one hundred golden bowls. ⁹Then he made the court of the priests and the great court and doors for the court, and overlaid their doors with bronze. ¹⁰He set the sea on the right side of the house toward the southeast.

4:7 “lampstands” The tabernacle had only one but Solomon increased the number and size of everything. The tabernacle had to be light to be carried but the temple was stationary.

See Special Topic: The Lampstand (menorah).

SPECIAL TOPIC: LAMPSTAND (menorah)

This (“menorah,” BDB 633, KB 600) is a sacred object for providing light in the Holy Place (cf. Exod. 25:37; 27:20-21). It is described in Exod. 25:31-40; 37:17-24.

1. made of gold
2. six branches on a central shaft, three on each side
3. at the top of each branch three cups, shaped like almond blossoms with a bulb and flower
4. at the top of the central shaft are four cups, like #3
5. all parts were made of one piece of hammered gold (one talent, cf. Exod. 25:39)
6. the exact pattern was revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai (cf. Exod. 25:40)
7. the pattern in Exodus is part of the vision of Zechariah in Zech. 4:1-6; this seems to reflect the

post-exilic, second temple

Solomon changed it into ten separate lampstands (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:49; 2 Chr. 4:7) in his temple.

One wonders if the menorah is somehow connected to the concept of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” from Gen. 2:17, which was supposed to give light/knowledge (cf. Gen. 3:5).

It is possible that John’s presentation of Jesus as “the light of the world” in John 8:12 is related to this concept. I have included my notes from John.

John 8:12 “I am the Light” John 6, 7, and 8 seem to be related to the “wilderness wanderings” period of Israel’s history, the source of the metaphors that Jesus uses of Himself.

- A. John 6 uses “manna” and “the bread of life.”
- B. John 7 uses “water” and “living water.”
- C. John 8 uses “light” and “shekinah glory.”

This metaphor of light is repeated throughout John (cf. John 1:4-5, 8-9; 3:19-21; 9:5; 12:46).

There has been some debate as to exactly what this refers.

1. the ancient fear of darkness
2. a title for God in the OT (cf. Ps. 27:1; Isa. 62:20; 1 John 1:5)

3. the background of the Feast of the Tabernacles, lighting of the candelabra in the Court of the Women

4. an allusion to the shekinah cloud of glory in the wilderness wandering period that symbolized the presence of God

5. the Messianic titles in the OT (cf. Isa. 42:6, 49:6; Luke 2:32)

The rabbis also used “light” as a title for the Messiah. The lighting of the huge lamps in the Court of the Women during the Feast of Tabernacle is the obvious setting for Jesus’ statement. The Messianic implications of light and the special references in John 1:4,8 coincide with the ceremony in the Temple for Jesus to continue to reveal His true origin.

This is one of the seven “I am” statements in John (followed by a PREDICATE)

1. I am the Bread of life (John 6:35,41,46,51)
2. I am the Light of the world (John 8:12; 9: 5; cf. 1:4,9; 12:46)
3. I am the door of the sheepfold (John 10:7,9)
4. I am the good shepherd (John 10:11,14)
5. I am the resurrection, and the life (John 11:25)

6. I am the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6)

7. I am the true vine (John 15:1,5)

These unique statements, found only in John, point toward the person of Jesus. John focuses on these personal aspects of salvation. We must trust Him!

“in the way prescribed for them” The first mention of the details of YHWH’s special worship tent is found in Exod. 25:9; 26:30 (cf. Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5). These plans for the tabernacle were extended and expanded in Solomon’s temple (cf. 1 Kgs. 6:38; 1 Chr. 28:11-19).

This same phrase is repeated in 2 Chr. 4:20.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:11-18

¹¹Huram also made the pails, the shovels and the bowls. So Huram finished doing the work which he performed for King Solomon in the house of God: ¹²the two pillars, the bowls and the two capitals on top of the pillars, and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals which were on top of the pillars, ¹³and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network to cover the two bowls of the capitals which were on the pillars. ¹⁴He also made the stands and he made the basins on the stands, ¹⁵and the one sea with the twelve oxen under it. ¹⁶The pails, the shovels, the forks and all its utensils, Huram-abi made of polished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the LORD. ¹⁷On the plain of the Jordan the king cast them in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah. ¹⁸Thus Solomon made all these utensils in great quantities, for the weight of the bronze could not be found out.

4:12-13 “the two pillars” These are described in 2 Chr. 3:15-17.

“the two networks” This term (BDB 959) is used in three senses in the OT.

1. window, lattice – 2 Kgs. 1:2
2. animal trap made of interwoven branches – Job 18:8
3. interwoven chains on the tops of the two bronze pillars in front of the inner shrine of Solomon’s temple – 1 Kgs. 7:17-18,41-42; 2 Kgs. 25:17; Jer. 52:22-23

4:17 The metal utensils for the temple were made in clay molds (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:46).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:19-22

¹⁹Solomon also made all the things that *were* in the house of God: even the golden altar, the tables with the bread of the Presence on them, ²⁰the lampstands with their lamps of pure gold, to burn in front of the inner sanctuary in the way prescribed; ²¹the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs of gold, of purest gold; ²²and the snuffers, the bowls, the spoons and the firepans of pure gold; and the entrance of the house, its inner doors for the holy of holies and the doors of the house, *that is*, of the nave, of gold.

4:19 “the golden altar” See Special Topic: Altar of Incense.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ALTAR OF INCENSE

This was an altar-shaped piece of furniture where incense was placed in large quantities on the Day of Atonement to produce thick smoke which concealed YHWH’s presence over the ark. Our author seems to place it inside the Holy of Holies. This has caused commentators to take this phrase to refer to a “censer” because this is how the Septuagint translates this term (cf. Lev. 16:12; 2 Chr. 26:19; Ezek. 8:11; IV Mac. 7:11). However, Philo and Josephus use the same Greek word for the incense altar. In the OT the altar is closely identified with the Holy of Holies (cf. Exod.30:1-10, 37; but especially 1 Kgs. 6:22).

Coals were taken from the great sacrificial altar at the door of the tabernacle and placed on this

small stand. Incense was then placed on the coals to produce a large amount of smoke. This wonderful smelling smoke obscured the high priest's eyes from seeing YHWH, who dwelt over the ark of the covenant between the wings of the cherubim, in the Holy of Holies.

“the tables with the bread of the Presence on them” See Special Topic: The Showbread of the Presence.

SPECIAL TOPIC: “Showbread” or “The Bread of the Presence”

The “consecrated bread,” “bread of the promise,” or “the bread offered to God” referred to “the Showbread” or “the Bread of the Presence,” which was placed on the table in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle and later the Temple (each weighing over 12 pounds). This seems to have symbolized YHWH’s provision and care for His people, not food for YHWH! It was unleavened, which linked back to the Exodus (cf. Gen. 15:12-21). They became weekly nourishment exclusively for the priests (cf. Lev. 24:5-9; Exod. 25:30). These twelve loaves were replaced every week. However, under the special conditions of I Samuel 21, David was allowed to eat them.

4:20-22 Like 2 Chr. 3:4-9, there are several kinds of gold mentioned.

1. pure gold – 2 Chr. 4:20,22
2. purest gold – 2 Chr. 4:21
3. gold – 2 Chr. 4:22

How these are distinguished is uncertain.

4:20 “the lampstands” See note at 2 Chr. 4:7.

4:22 “the snuffers” These were used to trim or extinguish the olive oil wicks (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:50; 2 Kgs. 12:14; 25:14; Jer. 52:18).

“the inner doors for the holy of holies” See note at 2 Chr. 3:14 (cf. 1 Kgs. 6:31-32; 2 Chr. 3:7).

2 CHRONICLES 5

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
The Ark is Brought Into the Temple		Bring the Ark of the Covenant Into the Temple		
5:1	The Ark Brought Into the Temple	5:1	The Covenant Box Is Brought to the Temple	The Ark Is Brought to the Temple (MT versing)
5:2-10	5:2-10	5:2-10	5:2-10	5:2-5 5:6-10
The Glory Of God Fills the Temple			The Glory of the Lord	The Lord Takes Possession of His Temple
5:11-14	5:11-6:2 (13c) (6:1-2)	5:11-6:2 (13c)	5:11-14 (13c)	5:11-6:2

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:1

¹Thus all the work that Solomon performed for the house of the LORD was finished. And

Solomon brought in the things that David his father had dedicated, even the silver and the gold and all the utensils, and put them in the treasuries of the house of God.

5:1 David was very involved in the preparations related to the Temple.

1. helped design the plans
2. gathered much of the materials; David dedicated much of the precious metals of his military victories to the future temple (cf. 1 Chr. 18:8,10-11; 22:14; 26:26; 29:2-5)
3. put up a new tent in Jerusalem to temporarily house the ark (cf. 1 Chr. 15:1-16:6)
4. David may have already made some temple utensils (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:51)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:2-10

²Then Solomon assembled to Jerusalem the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' households of the sons of Israel, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. ³All the men of Israel assembled themselves to the king at the feast, that is in the seventh month. ⁴Then all the elders of Israel came, and the Levites took up the ark. ⁵They brought up the ark and the tent of meeting and all the holy utensils which were in the tent; the Levitical priests brought them up. ⁶And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him before the ark, were sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. ⁷Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the house, to the holy of holies, under the wings of the cherubim. ⁸For the cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim made a covering over the ark and its poles. ⁹The poles were so long that the ends of the poles of the ark could be seen in front of the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen outside; and they are there to this day. ¹⁰There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets which Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the sons of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

5:2 Notice the different levels of leadership.

1. the elders of Israel (see Special Topic: Elders)
2. the heads of the tribes
3. the leaders of the fathers' households

One wonders if these designations refer to one, two, or three distinct groups.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ELDER

I. OT Usage

A. used of the angels of God who made up the angelic council (BDB 278, KB 278, cf. Isa. 24:23). This same terminology is used of the angelic creatures of Revelation (cf. Rev. 4:4,10; 5:5,6,8,11,14; 7:11,13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4).

B. used of tribal leaders in the OT (cf. Exod. 3:16; Num. 11:16). Later in the NT this term is applied to a group of leaders from Jerusalem who made up the high court of the Jews, the Sanhedrin (cf. Matt. 21:23; 26:57). In Jesus' day this seventy-member body was controlled by a corrupt priesthood (i.e. not Aaron's line, but purchased from the Roman overlords).

II. NT Usage

A. used of the local leaders of a NT church. It was one of three synonymous terms (pastor, overseer, and elder, cf. Titus 1:5,7; Acts 20:17,28). Peter and John use it to include themselves in the leadership group (cf. 1 Peter 5:1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1).

B. there is a play on the term elder (*presbuteros*) in 1 Pet. 1:1, 5. The term is apparently used as a title of leadership (cf. 1 Pet. 1:1) and a designation of age (cf. 1 Pet. 1:5). The use of this term is surprising considering that it is basically the Jewish tribal designation of leadership, while "bishop" or "overseer" (*episcopos*) was the Greek city-state designation for leadership. 1 Peter uses Jewish terms to address Gentile believers.

Peter calls himself a “fellow elder,” the term *presbuteros* plus the PREPOSITION *syn*, which implies “joint participation with.” Peter does not assert his Apostolic authority (cf. 2 John 1, where another Apostle calls himself “elder”), but admonishes (i.e., “I exhort,” a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE) the local leaders to act and live appropriately in the light of

1. Christ’s example
2. nearness of His return

The early churches did not have paid positions of leadership, but recognized the God-given gifts of ministry and leadership within each local church. This affirmation of giftedness had to be balanced with the cultural reverence for “aged-wisdom,” especially among the Jewish believing community. Therefore, Peter addresses both types of leadership.

Also notice that “elders” is PLURAL. This may refer to (1) a number of house church leaders (cf. Acts 20:17) or (2) the different spiritual gifts among a body of leaders (cf. Eph. 4:11), which clearly states that ministry belongs to all believers. This is parallel to the concept of “a kingdom of priests” (cf. 1 Pet. 2:5,9).

- C. used of older men in the church, not necessarily the leadership (cf. 1 Tim. 5:1; Titus 2:2).

“the ark of the covenant” See Special Topic: The Ark of the Covenant.

“the city of David, which is Zion” See Special Topic: Moriah, Salem, Jebus, Jerusalem, Zion.

Sometimes this phrase refers to the village of David’s birth, but here to the captured fortress of Jebus, which David made his headquarters (i.e., 2 Sam. 5:7; 6:12,16; 1 Kgs. 2:10).

5:3 “in the seventh month” The parallel in 1 Kgs. 8:2 specifically names the Canaanite month “Ethanim,” which was September – October. In Hebrew this month was called *Tishri*.

See

1. Special Topic: Feasts of Israel
2. Special Topic: ANE Calendars

SPECIAL TOPIC: FEASTS OF ISRAEL

A. Leviticus 23 is divided into several different special days.

1. the Sabbath, Lev. 23:2-3
2. Feast of Unleavened Bread/Passover, Lev. 23:4-8
3. Feast of First Fruits, Lev. 23:9-14
4. Feasts of Weeks or Pentecost, Lev. 23:15-22
5. Feast of Trumpets (i.e., New Year), Lev. 23:23-25
6. Fast Day of Atonement, Lev. 23:26-32
7. Feast of Booths, Tabernacles, Lev. 23:33-44

Does this imply that there were five annual feast days (three were required for all males to appear at the central sanctuary) and one fast day? The problem is in Lev. 23:9-14! Is it an annual feast or a one-time feast as Israel entered Canaan?

B. Mosaic Annual Feasts (cf. Exodus 23:14-17; 34:18-26; Leviticus 23; Numbers 28:16-29; Deuteronomy 16; Ezek. 45:18-25)

1. All male Jews were required to attend three annual feasts (cf. Exod. 23:14,17; 34:23) if possible.
2. These feasts had agricultural, as well as national significance.
3. Each was a day of rest, worship, and community fellowship.
4. The three required annual feasts (Exod. 23:14,17; 34:23; Deut. 16:16)
 - a. the first feast called
 - (1) Unleavened Bread – Exod. 23:15; 34:18-20; Lev. 23:5-8
 - (2) Passover – Exodus 12; 34:25; Lev. 23:5; Num. 28:16-25; Deut. 16:1-8; Ezek.

45:21-25

- (3) see Special Topic: Passover

- (4) significance
 - (a) thanksgiving and dedication of the barley harvest
 - (b) commemorating the exodus
 - (c) it was followed by a seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread (cf. Exod.

12:15-20; 34:18-20)

- b. the second feast called (beginning of harvest)
 - (1) Feast of Harvest – Exod. 23:16; Num. 28:26
 - (2) Feast of Weeks – Exod. 34:22; Num. 28:26; Deut. 16:9-12
 - (3) “Fifty Days” (Pentecost) – Lev. 23:15-21; Acts 2:1; 20:16; 1 Cor. 16:8
 - (4) First Fruits – Lev. 23:9-14; Num. 28:26
 - (5) see Special Topic: Pentecost
 - (6) significance
 - (a) thanksgiving and dedication of the grain harvest
 - (b) commemorating the giving of the torah to Moses on Mt. Sinai by

rabbinical reckoning

- c. the third feast called (end of harvest)
 - (1) Feast of Ingathering – Exod. 23:16
 - (2) Feast of Tabernacles/Booths (*Succoth*) – Lev. 23:34-44; Num. 29:12-40; Deut.

16:13-17

- (3) significance
 - (a) thanksgiving for the general harvest
 - (b) commemorating the beginning of the wilderness wandering period
 - (c) it was followed by an eight-day feast (cf. Lev. 23:36; Num. 29:35-38)

C. Other annual feasts

1. New Year Celebration (*Rosh Hashanah*)
 - a. see Lev. 23:23-25; Num. 10:9-10; 29:1-6
 - b. this day of rest and sacrifice was held on the first day of *Tishri*
 - c. the feast aspect of this day, so common in the NT era, is unspecified in the Torah
2. Day of Atonement – “day of covering” or *Yom Kippur* (the only corporate fast day)
 - (a) a day of rest, fasting, and repentance for the whole community
 - (b) a ritual for the removal of unintentional corporate uncleanness (Tabernacle, priests,

and people)

- (c) see Exod. 30:10; Leviticus 16; 23:26-32; 25:9; Num. 29:7-11
- (d) it is difficult to pin down when this feast was re-instituted after the exile

D. Other Mosaic Feast Days

1. The Sabbath (see Special Topic: Sabbath)
 - a. weekly day of rest and worship
 - b. see Gen. 2:1-3; Exod. 16:22-30; 20:8-11; 23:12; 31:12-16; 34:21; Lev. 23:1-3;
2. Sabbath Year
 - a. every seventh year the land rested (no sowing)
 - b. see Exod. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:1-7; Deut. 15:1
 - c. it signified that YHWH owned the land and gave it to Israel
 - d. all slaves were set free (cf. Exod. 21:2-6) and all debts were forgiven (cf. Deut.

Num. 28:9-10

15:1-6)

3. Jubilee Year
 - a. every seventh Sabbath year (i.e., 50th year)
 - b. see Lev. 25:8-18; 27:17-24
 - c. release of debt and returning of land, freeing of slaves (cf. Lev. 25:10,13, very

similar to Sabbath Year)

- d. its inauguration is never recorded
- 4. New Moon (NIDOTTE, vol. 3, pp. 1020-1021)
 - a. special offerings and a day of rest
 - b. see Num. 10:10; 28:11-15; 29:6; Ps. 81:3
 - c. possibly commemorated the setting up of the Tabernacle (cf. Exod. 40:2,17)
 - d. Jewish calendar is based on lunar cycles
- E. These rituals and regulations show a development over time. These feasts and one fast may have had a beginning in pagan calendars (see Special Topic: Moon Worship), but developed into uniquely Jewish praise and devotion to YHWH. Nature (seasonal), agricultural (planting, rain,

and harvest), and national events (Exodus, giving of the Law, etc.) combined to highlight certain times of the year for worship.

It has proved to be difficult to discuss these special annual feasts because

- 1. the historical development
- 2. the different names the Bible and later Judaism used for the same feast
- 3. the different kinds of “fruits”
 - a. early ripening barley could be eaten if roasted
 - b. later barley harvest
 - c. later wheat harvest
- 4. it is possible Lev. 23:9-14 could be an initial requirement which later became included in #3, a. or b.
- 5. the possible use of two calendars, one sacred and one civil, by the ancient Israelites

5:4-5 “the Levites took up the ark” This is the proper way to move the ark, as David found out (cf. 2 Samuel 6; 1 Chr. 15:2). In 1 Kgs. 8:2 it is the priests who carried the ark. In post-exilic Judah, no distinction is made between priests and Levites.

5:5 “the tent of meeting” This could refer to

- 1. what was left of the tabernacle of Moses, which was at Gibeon (cf. 1 Chr. 16:37-43; 2 Chr. 1:3)
 - 2. the new tent that David made for the ark when he brought it to Jerusalem (cf. 1 Chr. 16:1)
- Somewhere in the new temple, the old tent of the wilderness (i.e., the tabernacle) was
- 1. stored
 - 2. set up

“the Levitical priests” Some ancient versions (i.e., LXX, Peshitta, Vulgate) have “the priests and the Levites.” The Chronicler may have been a Levite. They are often mentioned. In 2 Chr. 5:12 they wear the same outfit as the priests (i.e., linen). See Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, “The Levites in the Work of the Chronicler,” pp. 390-394.

See Special Topic: Levitical Priests.

SPECIAL TOPIC: LEVITICAL PRIESTS

- I. The Name (taken from Dr. Utley’s notes on Deut. 18:1)

According to Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, vol. 2, p. 358, the name “Levi” can have three possible etymological sources:

 - A. “to whirl around,” assuming a ritual dance or procedure (similar to the dance of the prophets of *Ba’al* in 1 Kgs. 18:26)
 - B. “to accompany someone” or “to be attached to someone,” possibly the popular etymology given in Gen. 29:34, also note Num. 18:2,4
 - C. “to lend,” “to give as a pledge,” possibly referring to and parallel to “given,” referring to the firstborn to YHWH (Num. 3:12; 8:16) or to Samuel being given to YHWH in 1 Sam. 1:28

There are several developmental stages involved:

- A. at the Exodus it was the firstborn from every family that was given to YHWH, to serve Him (cf. Exodus 13)
- B. this was changed (Mosaic Covenant) to one particular tribe (i.e., Levi) who functioned as YHWH's special servants (cf. Num. 3:12; 8:16)

C. this was modified in Israel's history:

- 1. some Levitical families served at the central sanctuary
- 2. others ministered locally
- 3. later rabbinical Judaism expanded the concept of local Levitical teachers into local rabbis or scribes, but not necessarily from the tribe of Levi

D. for a good discussion of another theory see

- 1. *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, by G. B. Caird, p. 70
- 2. *Ancient Israel* by Roland de Vaux, vol. 2, pp. 360-371

II. Set Apart For (taken from Dr. Utley's notes at Deut. 10:8)

The VERB "set apart" (BDB 95, KB 110, *Hiphil* PERFECT, cf. Num. 8:14; 16:9; 1 Chr. 23:13) means "to divide." Here the separation is for (1) special cultic service related to the tabernacle and later temple; (2) blessings of the people (cf. Deut. 10:8; Lev.9:22-23; Num. 6:22-27); (3) judging the people's disputes (cf. Deut. 21:5); and (4) judging between clean and unclean (cf. Lev. 10:10). This VERB is parallel to "choose" (BDB 103, KB 119, cf. Deut. 18:5; 21:5).

Israel was to be separate from the other nations (cf. Lev. 20:24-26; 1 Kgs. 8:53; i.e., "a holy nation," cf. Exod. 19:6), so the tribe of Levi was to be separated from the other tribes as YHWH's special cultic servants.

They were chosen because (1) Levi was from the tribe of Moses and Aaron; (2) the Levites took the place of the "first born" for the Hebrews (cf. Exod.13; Num. 3:12; 8:14-19); or (3) the Levites faithfully responded to Moses' call to punish Israel (cf. Exod. 32:25-29). In Gen. 29:34, Leah called her first son Levi because her husband did not love her, but the child's name meant, "Jacob was attached (or joined) to me" (BDB 532). As the priestly tribe, they will:

A. carry the ark of the covenant

B. stand before the Lord to serve Him (i.e., all the duties at the tabernacle and later, the temple, in Jerusalem, cf. Deut. 18:5; Num. 18:1-7)

C. bless in His name (e.g., Num. 6:24-27)

Later there will develop specific tasks given to some families of Levi to be priests and others will function as Levites. However, in Deuteronomy all Levites can act as priests (compare Deut. 31:9 and 25). See Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, vol. 2, pp. 358-371.

5:6 This huge number of sacrifices (cf. 2 Chr. 7:4-7) was matched by the participation of all the priests (cf. 2 Chr. 5:11; 1 Kgs. 8:5) regardless of which family or division (i.e., 1 Chronicles 24). These divisions were done under David's leadership and direction.

5:7 "the inner sanctuary" This is the Hebrew word that meant (#2 possibly from Arabic root, "back")

- 1. to speak (BDB 180, VERB)
- 2. innermost room (BDB 184 I, NOUN)

It was from between the wings of the *cherubim* on the lid of the ark that YHWH dwelt and spoke from (Exod. 25:22). Number 2 is the best option. See full note at 2 Chr. 3:16.

"the holy of holies" This was the most inner room, a perfect cube, in which the ark dwelt. Special Topic: Tabernacle (chart).

"the wings of the cherubim" See Special Topic: *Cherubim*.

5:8 Apparently in Solomon's temple there were two sets of these angel guardians.

1. two large pairs that faced toward the altar of sacrifice; they filled the entire inner room
2. two smaller ones on the lid of the ark, facing inward

5:9 This is eyewitness detail. The author was a priest and had seen this or had interviewed a priest (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:8).

The AB, p. 27, asserts that the ark (i.e., the poles) was gone at the time the author/editor/compiler wrote.

“they are there to this day” This is a literary marker of a later author/editor/compiler (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:8; 1 Chr. 4:41,43; 5:26; 13:11; 17:5; 2 Chr. 8:8; 10:19; 20:26; 21:10; 35:25).

5:10 At this point in time the ark (a small box; see Special Topic: The Ark of the Covenant) contained only the Ten Commandments (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:9). Deuteronomy 10:2-5 lists two items which were originally kept in the box, or next to the box (i.e., Exod. 16:32-34 says some items were placed before the ark, not in it).

1. earlier form of the two stone tablets, broken by Moses
2. the second two stone tablets (cf. Exod. 31:18; 32:15; Deut. 9:9,11,15; Josephus, *Antiq.* 3.6.5)

Hebrews 9:4 lists several more items.

1. jar of manna (i.e., Exod. 16:31-34)
2. Aaron's rod that budded (i.e., Num. 17:10)
3. stone tablets of the Ten Commandments

It is possible these items were lost or destroyed when the Philistines captured the ark (i.e., 1 Samuel 4).

“Horeb” Horeb is a Hebrew name. See full note online at Exod. 3:1. See Special Topic: The Location of Mount Sinai.

SPECIAL TOPIC: LOCATION OF MT. SINAI

A. If Moses was speaking literally and not figuratively of the three day journey he requested of Pharaoh (Exod. 3:18; 5:3; 8:27), that was not a long enough time to get to the traditional site in the southern Sinai peninsula. Therefore, some scholars place the mountain near the oasis of Kadesh-Barnea (see video on History Channel, “The Exodus Decoded”).

B. The traditional site called “Jebel Musa,” in the Wilderness of Sin, has several things in its favor:

1. A large plain before the mountain
2. Deut. 1:2 says it was an eleven day journey from Mt. Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea
3. The term “Sinai” (BDB 696, KB 751) is a non-Hebrew term. It may be linked to the

Wilderness of *Sin*, which refers to a small desert bush. The Hebrew name for the mountain is Horeb (wilderness, BDB 352, cf. Exod. 3:1; 17:6; 33:6).

4. Mt. Sinai has been the traditional site since the 4th century A.D. It is in the “land of Midian” which included a large area of the Sinai peninsula and Arabia.

5. It seems that archaeology has confirmed the location of some of the cities mentioned in the Exodus account (*Elim, Dophkah, Rephidim*) as being on the western side of the Sinai Peninsula.

C. The Jews were never interested in the geographical location of Mt. Sinai. They believed that God gave them the Law and fulfilled His promise from Gen. 15:12-21. “Where” was not the issue and they did not intend to return to this site (i.e., no annual pilgrimage).

D. The traditional site of Mt. Sinai was not established until *Pilgrimage of Silvia*, written about A.D. 385-8 (cf. F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of the Acts*, p. 151).

E. There is much speculation today on a new possible location across the Gulf of Aqaba in Arabia. It

is claimed

1. that the land of Midian was always exclusively in Arabia
2. that in Gal. 4:25 Paul states it was in Arabia
3. that satellite mapping has revealed an ancient road leading from Egypt across the Sinai peninsula with a raised, rocky ledge, which crosses the Gulf of Aqaba
4. that the top of the highest peak in this area is blackened (cf. Exod. 19:16,18)

It must be restated that we simply do not know the location!

The other name used in the OT for the place YHWH gave His “Ten Words” was “Horeb” (BDB 352, KB 350, cf. Exod. 3:1; 17:6; 33:6; Deut. 1:2,6,19; 4:10,15; 5:2; 9:8; 18:16; 29:1; 1 Kgs. 8:9; 19:8; 2 Chr. 5:10; Ps. 106:19; Mal. 4:4). This root may be related to the same three Hebrew consonants that mean “waste,” “desolation,” or “ruin” (BDB 352, KB 349). It seems that “Horeb” referred to a range of mountains and “Sinai” to one of its peaks.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:11-14

¹¹When the priests came forth from the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to divisions), ¹²and all the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and their sons and kinsmen, clothed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps and lyres, standing east of the altar, and with them one hundred and twenty priests blowing trumpets ¹³in unison when the trumpeters and the singers were to make themselves heard with one voice to praise and to glorify the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice accompanied by trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and when they praised the LORD saying, “He indeed is good for His lovingkindness is everlasting,” then the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, ¹⁴so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

5:11 “the holy place” This is the outer room of the shrine. It was twice as big as the holy of holies and contained

1. the golden altar of incense; see Special Topic: Altar of Incense
2. the lampstand; see Special Topic: Lampstand
3. the table of showbread; see Special Topic: The Showbread of the Presence

“divisions” See note at 2 Chr. 5:6 and 1 Chronicles 24.

5:12 “all the Levitical singers” See notes at 1 Chronicles 25.

“linen” See Special Topic: Linen.

SPECIAL TOPIC: LINEN

- used to show purity (tabernacle)
- used by High Priest
- used by angels
 - a. Ezek. 9:2,3,11; 10:2,6,7; Rev. 15:6
 - b. Dan. 10:5,6; 12:6,7
- used of risen Jesus, Rev. 1:13-15

- used figuratively of the Church, Rev. 19:8
- used for armies of heaven, Rev. 19:14

“trumpets” See Special Topic: Horns Used by Israel.

SPECIAL TOPIC: HORNS USED BY ISRAEL

There are four words in Hebrew associated with horns/trumpets:

1. “the ram’s horn” (BDB 901, KB 1144)) – used as a wind instrument, cf. Jos. 6:5. This same word is used for the ram caught by his horns which Abraham substituted for Isaac in Gen. 22:13.
2. “trumpet” (BDB 1051) – from Assyrian term for wild sheep (ibex). This is the horn that was used in Exod 19:16,19 at Mt. Sinai/Horeb. #1 and #2 are parallel in Jos. 6:5. It was used to communicate a.
 a. times to worship (cf. Lev. 25:9)
 b. times to fight (i.e., Jericho was both, cf. Jos. 6:4; Jdgs. 3:27; 6:34; 1 Sam. 13:3; Jer. 4:5; Hos. 5:8).
 c. anointing a new king, 1 Kgs. 1:34,39
 d. blown by God, Zech. 9:14
3. “ram’s horn” (BDB 385, KB 398) – from Phoenician word for Ram (cf. Jos. 6:4,6,8,13). It also stands for the Year of Jubilee (cf. Lev. 25:13,28,40,50,52,54; 27:17,18,23,24).

These first three seem interchangeable with no distinction intended. The Mishnah (RH 3.2) allowed animal horns from sheep, goats, or antelope, but not from a cow.

4. “trumpets” (BDB 348, KB 344) – possibly from the VERB “stretch out,” implying a straight bone (not curved as the animal horns). These were made of silver (after the shape and form of Egypt). These are used:

- a. with worship rites (cf. Num. 10:2,8,10; Ezra 3:10; Neh. 12:35,41)
- b. for military purposes (cf. Num. 10:9; 31:6; Hosea 5:8)
- c. for royal purposes (cf. 2 Kgs. 11:14)

One of these metal horns is depicted on the Arch of Titus in Rome; also Josephus describes them in *Antiq.* 3.12.6.

5:13 “He indeed is good” This is Israel’s faith affirmation (cf. 1 Chr. 16:34; 2 Chr. 7:3; Ezra 3:11; Ps. 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 136:1; Jer. 33:11).

Special Topic: Characteristics of Israel’s God (OT)

“His lovingkindness is everlasting” See Special Topics: Lovingkindness (*hesed*) and Special Topic: Forever (*‘olam*).

SPECIAL TOPIC: FOREVER (*‘olam*)

The etymology of the Hebrew term *‘olam*, עולם (BDB 761, KB 798) is uncertain (NIDOTTE, vol. 3, p. 345). It is used in several senses (usually determined by context). The following are only selected examples.

1. ancient things
 - a. peoples, Gen. 6:4; 1 Sam. 27:8; Jer. 5:15; 28:8
 - b. places, Isa. 58:12; 61:4
 - c. God, Ps. 93:2; Pro. 8:23; Isa. 63:16
 - d. things, Gen. 49:26; Job 22:15; Ps. 24:7,9; Isa. 46:9
 - e. time, Deut. 32:7; Isa. 51:9; 63:9,11
2. future time
 - a. one’s life, Exod. 21:6; Deut. 15:17; 1 Sam. 1:22; 27:12
 - b. hyperbole respect for a king, 1 Kgs. 1:31; Ps. 61:7; Neh. 2:3
 - c. continuous existence
 - (1) earth, Ps. 78:69; 104:5; Eccl. 1:4
 - (2) heavens, Ps. 148:5
 - d. existence of God

- (1) Gen. 21:33
- (2) Exod. 15:18
- (3) Deut. 32:40
- (4) Ps. 93:2
- (5) Isa. 40:28
- (6) Jer. 10:10
- (7) Dan. 12:7
- e. the covenant
 - (1) Gen. 9:12,16; 17:7,13,19
 - (2) Exod. 31:16
 - (3) Lev. 24:8
 - (4) Num. 18:19
 - (5) 2 Sam. 23:5
 - (6) Ps. 105:10
 - (7) Isa. 24:5; 55:3; 61:8
 - (8) Jer. 32:40; 50:5
- f. special covenant with David
 - (1) 2 Sam. 7:13,16,25,29; 22:51; 23:5
 - (2) 1 Kgs. 2:33,45; 9:5
 - (3) 2 Chr. 13:5
 - (4) Ps. 18:50; 89:4,28,36,37
 - (5) Isa. 9:7; 55:3
- g. God's Messiah
 - (1) Ps. 45:2; 72:17; 89:35-36; 110:4
 - (2) Isa. 9:6
- h. God's laws
 - (1) Exod. 29:28; 30:21
 - (2) Lev. 6:18,22; 7:34; 10:15; 24:9
 - (3) Num. 18:8,11,19
 - (4) Ps. 119:89,160
- i. God's promises
 - (1) 2 Sam. 7:13,16,25; 22:51
 - (2) 1 Kgs. 9:5
 - (3) Ps. 18:50
 - (4) Isa. 40:8
- j. Abraham's descendants and the Promised Land
 - (1) Gen. 13:15; 17:19; 48:4
 - (2) Exod. 32:13
 - (3) 1 Chr. 16:17
- k. covenantal feasts
 - (1) Exod. 12:14,17,24
 - (2) Lev. 23:14,21,41
 - (3) Num. 10:8
- l. eternity, everlasting
 - (1) 1 Kgs. 8:13
 - (2) Ps. 61:7-8; 77:8; 90:2; 103:17; 145:13
 - (3) Isa. 26:4; 45:17
 - (4) Dan. 9:24
- m. what the Psalms say believers will do forever
 - (1) give thanks, Ps. 30:12; 79:13

- (2) abide in His presence, Ps. 41:12; 61:4,7
- (3) trust in His mercy, Ps. 52:8
- (4) praise the LORD, Ps. 52:9
- (5) sing praises, Ps. 61:8; 89:1
- (6) declare His justice, Ps. 75:7-9
- (7) glorify His name, Ps. 86:12; 145:2
- (8) bless His name, Ps. 145:1
- n. used in Isaiah to describe the new age
 - (1) everlasting covenant, Isa. 24:5; 55:3; 61:8
 - (2) YHWH an everlasting Rock, Isa. 26:4
 - (3) everlasting joy, Isa. 35:10; 51:11; 61:7
 - (4) the Everlasting God, Isa. 40:28
 - (5) an everlasting salvation, Isa. 45:17
 - (6) everlasting lovingkindness (*Hesed*), Isa. 54:8
 - (7) everlasting sign, Isa. 55:13
 - (8) an everlasting name, Isa. 56:5; 63:12,16
 - (9) an everlasting light, Isa. 60:19,20 – A negative-oriented use related to the eternal punishment of the wicked is found in Isa. 33:14, “an everlasting burning.” Isaiah often uses “fire” to describe God’s wrath (cf. Isa. 9:18,19; 10:16; 47:14), but only in Isa. 33:14 is it described as “everlasting.”
- 3. both backward and forward in time (“from everlasting to everlasting”)
 - a. Ps. 41:13 (praise to God)
 - b. Ps. 90:2 (God Himself)
 - c. Ps. 103:17 (the lovingkindness of the LORD)

Remember, context determines the extent of the term’s meaning. The everlasting covenants and promises are conditional (i.e., Jeremiah 7; see Special Topic: Covenant). Be careful of reading your modern view of time or your NT systematic theology into every OT usage of this very fluid word. Remember, the NT universalized OT promises (see Special Topic: OT Predictions of the Future vs. NT Predictions).

“a cloud” This was the special cloud that physically showed YHWH’s presence (i.e., Lev. 16:2). It is often called “the *Shekinah* glory.”

- 1. first present during the flight from Egypt (i.e., Exod. 13:21; 14:19,24)
- 2. there at the giving of the Law (Exod. 19:2-3)
- 3. appeared when YHWH talked to Moses (i.e., Exod. 19:9; 33:9-10)
- 4. guided and protected Israel in the wilderness (Exod. 40:34-38; Num. 19:17-23)
- 5. ceased when Israel crossed Jordan into Canaan (Josh. 5:12)
- 6. filled Solomon’s temple, 1 Kgs. 8:11 (i.e., showing YHWH’s acceptance)
- 7. the cloud as a symbol of YHWH’s presence leaves the temple in Ezek. 10:3-4

See full note at Exod. 13:21.

Special Topic: Coming on the Clouds. There is a good brief discussion in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 157.

SPECIAL TOPIC: COMING ON THE CLOUDS

(Several Hebrew words but mostly “*anan*,” BDB 777, KB 857)

This coming on the clouds was a very significant eschatological sign. It was used in three distinct ways in the OT.

- 1. to show God’s physical presence, the *Shekinah* cloud of Glory (cf. Exod. 13:21; 14:19,20,24; 16:10; 19:9; Num. 11:25; Neh. 9:19)
- 2. to cover His Holiness so that man would not see Him and die (cf. Exod. 33:20; Isa. 6:5)

3. to transport deity (cf. Ps. 18:9; 104:3; Isa. 19:1; Nah. 1:3; Acts 1:9; 1 Thess. 4:17)

In Daniel 7:13 clouds were used as the transportation of the divine, human Messiah (see Special Topic: Messiah). This prophecy in Daniel is alluded to over 30 times in the NT. This same connection of the Messiah with the clouds of heaven can be seen in Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:9,11; 1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 1:7.

5:14 “the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud” This is an allusion to Exod. 40:35. This new temple was accepted by YHWH the same way as the tabernacle (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:10-11; 2 Chr. 7:2).

The INFINITIVE “minister” (BDB 1058, KB 1661, *Piel* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT) refers to the music and liturgy of 2 Chr. 5:13.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. In what ways did David prepare for the temple he wanted to build (cf. 2 Samuel 7)?
2. To which city does “the city of David” refer in 2 Chr. 5:2?
3. To what “tent” does 2 Chr. 5:5 refer?
4. Why does the last phrase of 2 Chr. 5:9 imply a post-exilic author?
5. Why are 2 Chr. 5:10 and Hebrews 9:4 different?
6. What is the “glory of the LORD”?

2 CHRONICLES 6

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Solomon's Dedication		Solomon's Address to the People and His Prayer of Dedication	Solomon's Address to the People	
6:1-2 (1-2)	Solomon's Speech Upon Completion of the Work	6:1-2	6:1-2 (1-2)	Solomon Addresses the People (MT versing)
6:3-11	6:3-11	6:3-11	6:3-6 6:10-11	6:3-11
Solomon's Prayer of Dedication	Solomon's Prayer of Dedication		Solomon's Prayer	Solomon's Prayer for Himself
6:12-17	6:12-17	6:12-17	6:12-17	6:12-20
6:18-21	6:18-21	6:18-21	6:18-21	6:21 Solomon's Prayer for the People
6:22-23	6:22-23	6:22-23	6:22-23	6:22-23
6:24-25	6:24-25	6:24-25	6:24-25	6:24-25
6:26-27	6:26-27	6:26-27	6:26-27	6:26-27
6:28-31	6:28-31	6:28-31	6:28-31	6:28-31
6:32-33	6:32-33	6:32-33	6:32-33	6:32-33
6:34-35	6:34-35	6:34-35	6:34-35	6:34-35
6:36-39	6:36-40	6:36-42	6:36-39	6:36-39 Conclusion of the Prayer
6:40			6:40-42	6:40-42
6:41	6:41 (41)	(41)		(41)
6:42	6:42 (42)	(42)		(42)

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

- A. This is Solomon's great prayer of dedication, also recorded in 1 Kgs. 8:12-50.
 1. 2 Chr. 6:1-11, Solomon addresses Israel
 2. 2 Chr. 6:12-42, Solomon addresses Israel's God
- B. Solomon records YHWH's great acts and promises.
 1. promises to David – 2 Chr. 6:4,15 (i.e., 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17)
 2. promises to Abraham – 2 Chr. 6:5 (i.e., Gen. 15:12-21)
 3. the choice of Jerusalem for the temple, 2 Chr. 6:6 (i.e., 1 Chr. 21:18-30; 2 Chr. 3:1)
 4. YHWH will "build a house for David," i.e., a dynasty, 2 Chr. 6:9-10,16 (i.e., 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17)
- C. There are several kinds of sins mentioned that YHWH is asked to forgive.
 1. 2 Chr. 6:22-23, sin against a covenant partner (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:31, i.e., taking an oath of innocence which involved a curse if false, cf. Exod. 22:10-11; Lev. 6:3-5)
 2. 2 Chr. 6:24-25, a military defeat because of Israel's sin (i.e., Lev. 26:17,23; Deut. 28:25,36-37,48-54,64)
 3. 2 Chr. 6:26-27, loss of agricultural abundance because of sin (i.e., Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:18,22-24)

4. 2 Chr. 6:28-31, several judgments (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:37)
 - a. famine (BDB 944)
 - b. pestilence (BDB 184)
 - c. blight (BDB 995)
 - d. mildew (BDB 439)
 - e. locusts, grasshoppers (BDB 916; BDB 340)
 - f. besieged cities (BDB 33, KB 38, *Qal* ACTIVE PARTICIPLE)
 - g. plague (BDB 619)
 - h. sickness (BDB 318)

All of these are part of “the curses” (cf. Lev. 26:16,20,25-26; Deut. 28:20-22,27-28,35,42)

5. 2 Chr. 6:32-33, aliens who seek YHWH (cf. Isa. 55:1-5; 56:3-5,6-8)
6. 2 Chr. 6:34-35, warfare with Israel’s enemies at YHWH’s word (i.e., Lev. 26:7-8; Deut. 28:6-7)

7. 2 Chr. 6:36-39, exile (i.e., Lev. 26:33,44-45; Deut. 28:49-52)

D. Here is what Israel should do in light of YHWH’s judgment on sin.

1. repent/return to, 2 Chr. 6:24,26,37,38
2. confess, 2 Chr. 6:24,26,37
3. pray, 2 Chr. 6:24,26,32,34,38
4. make supplication at YHWH’s temple, 2 Chr. 6:24,29,37

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:1-2

¹Then Solomon said,

“The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud.

²“I have built You a lofty house,
And a place for Your dwelling forever.”

6:1 “He would dwell in the thick cloud” This refers to the cloud that symbolized YHWH’s presence (cf. Exod. 13:21; 14:19-20,24; 19:9,16; 20:21; 24:15-16; Deut. 5:22; 1 Kgs. 8:12).

6:2 “Your dwelling forever” YHWH symbolically dwelt above the wings of the *cherubim* above the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant (i.e., Exod. 25:22). YHWH’s personal presence with His people was the goal and blessing of creation! This is Garden of Eden imagery.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:3-11

³Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. ⁴He said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled it with His hands, saying, ⁵“Since the day that I brought My people from the land of Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel *in which* to build a house that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man for a leader over My people Israel; ⁶but I have chosen Jerusalem that My name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.’ ⁷Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ⁸But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. ⁹Nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who will be born to you, he shall build the house for My name.’ ¹⁰Now the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in the place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹¹There I have set the ark in which is the covenant of the LORD, which He made with the sons of Israel.”

6:3 “the king faced about” This is an eyewitness detail. This was to “bless” the assembled crowd (2 Chr. 6:4). This is usually reserved for priests.

6:4 “His mouth” There are several anthropomorphic phrases in this chapter.

1. His mouth, 2 Chr. 6:4,15
2. Your eyes, 2 Chr. 6:20,40
3. Your mighty hand, 2 Chr. 6:32
4. Your outstretched arm, 2 Chr. 6:32
5. Your ears, 2 Chr. 6:40
6. Your resting place, 2 Chr. 6:41

Special Topic: Anthropomorphic Language to Describe Deity.

SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD DESCRIBED AS HUMAN (anthropomorphism)

I. This type of language (i.e., deity described in human terms) is very common in the OT (some examples)

A. Physical body parts

1. eyes – Gen. 1:4,31; 6:8; Exod. 33:17; Num. 14:14; Deut. 11:12; Zech. 4:10
2. hands – Exod. 15:17; Num. 11:23; Deut. 2:15
3. arm – Exod. 6:6; 15:16; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 26:8
4. ears – Num. 11:18; 1 Sam. 8:21; 2 Kgs. 19:16; Ps. 5:1; 10:17; 18:6
5. face – Exod. 33:11; Lev. 20:3,5,6; Num. 6:25; 12:8; Deut. 31:17; 32:20; 34:10
6. finger – Exod. 8:19; 31:18; Deut. 9:10; Ps. 8:3
7. voice – Gen. 3:9,11,13; Exod. 15:26; 19:19; Deut. 26:17; 27:10
8. feet – Exod. 24:10; Ezek. 43:7
9. human form – Exod. 24:9-11; Ps. 47; Isa. 6:1; Ezek. 1:26
10. the angel of the Lord – Gen. 16:7-13; 22:11-15; 31:11,13; 48:15-16; Exod. 3:4,13-21;

14:19; Jdgs. 2:1; 6:22-23; 13:3-22

B. Physical actions (some examples)

1. speaking as the mechanism of creation – Gen. 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26
2. walking – Gen. 3:8 (i.e., sound of); Lev. 26:12; Deut. 23:14
3. closing the door of Noah’s ark – Gen. 7:16
4. smelling sacrifices – Gen. 8:21; Exod. 29:18,25; Lev. 26:31
5. coming down – Gen. 11:5; 18:21; Exod. 3:8; 19:11,18,20
6. burying Moses – Deut. 34:6

C. Human emotions (some examples)

1. regret/repent – Gen. 6:6,7; Exod. 32:14; Jdgs. 2:18; 1 Sam. 15:29,35; Amos 7:3,6

2. anger – Exod. 4:14; 15:7; Num. 11:10; 12:9; 22:22; 25:3,4; 32:10,13,14; Deut. 6:15; 7:4;

29:20

3. jealousy – Exod. 20:5; 34:14; Deut. 4:24; 5:9; 6:15; 32:16,21; Jos. 24:19
4. loathe/abhor – Lev. 20:23; 26:30; Deut. 32:19

D. Family terms (some examples)

1. father
 - a. of Israel – Exod. 4:22; Deut. 14:1; Isa. 1:2; 63:16; 64:8; Jer. 31:9; Hos. 11:1
 - b. of the king – 2 Sam. 7:11-16; Ps. 2:7
 - c. metaphors of fatherly action – Deut. 1:31; 8:5; 32:6-14; Ps. 27:10; Pro. 3:12; Jer.

3:4,22; 31:20; Hosea 11:1-4; Mal. 3:17

2. parent – Hosea 11:1-4
3. mother – Isa. 49:15; 66:9-13 (analogy to nursing mother)
4. young faithful lover – Hosea 1-3

II. Reasons for the use of this type of language

A. It is a necessity for God to reveal Himself to human beings. There is no other vocabulary than fallen, worldly words. The very pervasive concept of God as male is one example of an anthropomorphism, because God is spirit!

B. God takes the most meaningful aspects of human life and uses them to reveal Himself to fallen humanity (father, mother, parent, lover).

C. Though necessary at times (i.e., Gen. 3:8), God does not want to be limited to any physical form (cf. Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5).

D. The ultimate anthropomorphism is the incarnation of Jesus! God became physical, touchable (cf. 1 John 1:1-3). The message of God became the Word of God (cf. John 1:1-18).

III. For a good brief discussion, see G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the bible*, chapter 10, "Anthropomorphism" (pp. 172-182); or see the article, "Anthropomorphism" in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, pp. 152-154.

"to my father" This refers to YHWH's special promises to David in 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17.

6:5 The exodus was YHWH's

1. fulfilled promise – Gen. 15:12-21
2. great act of deliverance

"choose" YHWH did not choose a particular city (cf. Deut. 12:5,11,14,18,21,26; many other places). But in 2 Chronicles He does (cf. 2 Chr. 6:6,34,38; 12:13; 33:7).

This VERB (BDB 103, KB 119, *QAL* PERFECT) is often used of YHWH's choice

1. of Israel – Deut. 4:37; 7:6,7,8; 10:15; 14:2; 33:3
2. of a king – Deut. 17:15
3. of the tribe of Levi as priests – Deut. 18:5; 21:5; 2 Chr. 29:11
4. of Jerusalem as the place for His temple – 2 Chr. 6:6,34,38; 17:12; 33:7

He is the sovereign One!

6:6 "Jerusalem" See Special Topic: Moriah, Salem, Jebus, Jerusalem, Zion.

"My name" See Special Topic: "The Name" of YHWH.

"I have chosen David to be over My people Israel" YHWH chose David as King through Samuel (i.e., found in 1 Samuel 16).

6:7-11 This refers to 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17; 2 Chr. 28:1-3. It is often called "the Davidic covenant." It confirms the tribe and family the Messiah will come from.

6:7 "house" There is a word play on "house" (BDB 108) meaning

1. temple
2. dynasty

6:11 "the ark" See Special Topic: The Ark of the Covenant.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:12-17

¹²Then he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. ¹³Now Solomon had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. ¹⁴He said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart; ¹⁵who has

kept with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him; indeed You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day. ¹⁶Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David, my father, that which You have promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way, to walk in My law as you have walked before Me.’ ¹⁷Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, let Your word be confirmed which You have spoken to Your servant David.”

6:12 “the altar” See Special Topic: Altar of Sacrifice.

“spread out his hands” The Israelites prayed with

1. their eyes open
2. their heads lifted
3. their hands spread upward

This symbolized prayer as a conversation with God (cf. Ps. 134:2; 141:2; 143:6; Lam. 2:19).

6:13 Solomon had made a raised platform (BDB 468, probably round) so that he could be seen and heard. This platform is not mentioned in 1 Kings.

“cubit” See Special Topic: Cubit.

“knelt on his knees” Kneeling was an unusual, but not unheard of, position of prayer (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:54; Ps. 95:6; Ezra 9:5; Dan. 6:10). It apparently was a symbol of intensity or humility (cf. Isa. 45:23).

6:14-17 “there is no god like You” This is an idiom of uniqueness and monotheism (cf. 1 Chr. 17:20; 2 Chr. 2:5). See Special Topic: Monotheism.

Notice how YHWH is characterized.

1. keeping covenant (cf. Deut. 7:9)
2. showing lovingkindness
3. to those who
 - a. walk before You (i.e., lifestyle obedience)
 - b. with all their hearts (i.e., total commitment)
4. had kept what He promises to David, 2 Chr. 6:15
 - a. v. 15 – *QAL* PERFECT, BDB 1036, KB 1581
 - b. v. 16 – *Qal* IMPERATIVE, BDB 1036, KB 1581 (prayer request)
5. let Your word be confirmed – BDB 52, KB 63, *Niphal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
Special Topic: Lovingkindness.

6:14 “Your servants” This terminology is used regularly of national Israel (cf. Lev. 25:42,55; 1 Kgs. 8:23, 32,36; 2 Chr. 6:14,23,27; Neh. 1:6,10,11; Ps. 136:22). Often in the “Servant Songs” of Isaiah, Israel is referred to as “My servant” (cf. Isa. 41:8,9; 42:1,19; 43:10; 44:1,2,21,26; 45:4; 49:3,5,6,7). Israel was chosen as YHWH’s special people in order for them to reveal YHWH’s reality and character to an estranged, fallen, rebellious world.

Special Topic: YHWH’s Eternal Redemptive Plan.

6:15 “Your servant David” See Special Topic: My Servant.

“as it is this day” See note at 2 Chr. 5:9.

6:16 This “promise” refers to the Davidic Covenant of 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17.

“if only your sons take heed to their way” Notice the conditional elements (cf. 2 Chr. 7:19-20; Lev. 26:14; Deut. 28:15).

Special Topic: Covenant.

YHWH had an overarching plan for David and his seed but each of David’s descendants had to choose to follow YHWH’s laws (i.e., 2 Chr. 7:17). If not, the terrible curses of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 came into force. Remember, David’s descendants went into Assyrian and Babylonian exile!

SPECIAL TOPIC: COVENANT

The OT term *berith* (BDB 136, BDB 157), “covenant,” is not easy to define. There is no matching VERB in Hebrew. All attempts to derive an etymological or cognate definition have proved unconvincing. Possibly the best guess is “to cut” (BDB 144), denoting the animal sacrifice that accompanied covenants (cf. Gen. 15:10,17). However, the obvious centrality of the concept has forced scholars to examine the word’s usage in an attempt to determine its functional meaning.

Covenant is the means by which the one true God (see Special Topic: Monotheism) deals with His human creation. The concept of covenant, treaty, or agreement is crucial in understanding the biblical revelation. The tension between God’s sovereignty and human free-will is clearly seen in the concept of covenant. Some covenants are based exclusively on God’s character and actions.

1. creation itself (cf. Genesis 1-2)
2. the preservation and promise to Noah (cf. Genesis 6-9)
3. the call of Abraham (cf. Genesis 12)
4. the covenant with Abraham (cf. Genesis 15)

However, the very nature of covenant demands a response.

1. by faith Adam must obey God and not eat of the tree in the midst of Eden
2. by faith Noah must build a huge boat far from water and gather the animals
3. by faith Abraham must leave his family, follow God, and believe in future descendants

4. by faith Moses brought the Israelites out of Egypt to Mt. Sinai and received specific guidelines for religious and social life with promises of blessings and cursings (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 27-28)

This same tension involving God’s relationship to humanity is addressed in the “new covenant” (cf. Jer 31:31-34; Heb. 7:22; 8:6,8,13; 9:15; 12:24). The tension can be clearly seen in comparing Ezek. 18:31 with Ezek. 36:27-38 (YHWH’s action). Is the covenant based on God’s gracious actions or a mandated human response? This is the burning issue between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. The goals of both are the same: (1) the restoration of fellowship with YHWH lost in Genesis 3 and (2) the establishment of a righteous people who reflect God’s character.

The new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34 solves the tension by removing human performance as the means of attaining acceptance. God’s law becomes an internal desire instead of an external legal code. The goal of a godly, righteous people remains the same, but the methodology changes. Fallen mankind proved themselves inadequate to be God’s reflected image. The problem was not God’s covenant, but human sinfulness and weakness (cf. Genesis 3; Romans 7; Galatians 3).

The same tension between OT unconditional and conditional covenants remains in the NT. Salvation is absolutely free in the finished work of Jesus Christ, but it requires repentance and faith (both initially and continually; see Special Topic: Believe in the NT). Jesus calls His new relationship with believers “a new covenant” (cf. Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). It is both a legal pronouncement (forensic) and a call to Christlikeness (cf. Matt. 5:48; Rom. 8:29-30; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 4:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:3,7; 5:23; 1 Pet. 1:15), an indicative statement of acceptance (Romans 4) and an imperative call to holiness (Matt. 5:48)! Believers are not saved by their performance, but unto obedience (cf. Eph. 2:8-10; 2 Cor.3:5-6). Godly living becomes the evidence of salvation, not the means of salvation (i.e., James and 1 John). However, eternal life has observable

characteristics! This tension is clearly seen in warnings in the NT (see Special Topic: Apostasy).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:18-21

¹⁸“**But will God indeed dwell with mankind on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You; how much less this house which I have built.** ¹⁹**Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You; ²⁰that Your eye may be open toward this house day and night, toward the place of which You have said that *You would* put Your name there, to listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place. ²¹Listen to the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel when they pray toward this place; hear from Your dwelling place, from heaven; hear and forgive.”**

6:18 This truth was mentioned earlier in 2 Chr. 2:6 and reflects the parallel of this account in 1 Kgs. 8:27. A similar phrase occurs in Isa. 66:1 and is quoted by Stephen in Acts 7:49.

“**heaven and the highest heaven**” See Special Topics: Heaven (OT) and Heaven and the Third Heaven.

6:19 Notice all the words used for talking to YHWH.

1. have regard to the prayer (BDB 815, KB 937, *Qal* PERFECT)
2. supplication (BDB 337)
3. listen to the cry – (BDB 1033, KB 1570, *QAL* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT)
4. prayer (BDB 813)
5. prays (BDB 813, KB 933, *Hithpael* PARTICIPLE)

6:20 “toward this house day and night” This is a prayer for YHWH’s constant attention to the prayers offered in His temple.

6:21 The purpose of the temple was

1. to acknowledge YHWH’s presence and choice of Israel
2. to worship and praise YHWH
3. to seek forgiveness (i.e., Exod. 34:6-7,9; Micah 7:18)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:22-23

²²“**If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes *and* takes an oath before Your altar in this house, ²³then hear from heaven and act and judge Your servants, punishing the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.”**

6:23 Notice Solomon’s prayer for YHWH to hear and act.

1. hear – BDB 1033, KB 1570, *Qal* IMPERFECT, cf. 2 Chr. 6:21,23,25,27,30,33,35,39
2. act – BDB 793, KB 889, *Qal* PERFECT with *waw*
3. judge – BDB 1047, KB 1622, *Qal* PERFECT with *waw*
4. punishing (lit. “returning”) the wicked – BDB 996, KB 1427, *Hiphil* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT
5. bringing his way on his own head – BDB 678, KB 733, *Qal* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT
6. justifying the righteous – BDB 842, KB 1003, *Hiphil* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT
7. by giving him according to his righteousness – BDB 678, KB 733, *Qal* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT

CONSTRUCT

YHWH directs His actions both to the wicked and the righteous!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:24-25

²⁴“**If Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You,**

and they return *to You* and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this house, ²⁵then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You have given to them and to their fathers.”

6:25 This goes back to YHWH’s promise of a land to the Patriarchs. See Special Topic: Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:26-27

²⁶“When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin when You afflict them; ²⁷then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people for an inheritance.”

6:27 “the good way in which they should walk” YHWH’s law was a clear path (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:36; Ps. 119:105). This same imagery is used in Ps. 16:11; 139:24. This path is

1. straight
2. level
3. clear, unobstructed
4. dry

It is easily known and easily traveled. The choice is the covenant partners’!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:28-31

²⁸“If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight or mildew, if there is locust or grasshopper, if their enemies besiege them in the land of their cities, whatever plague or whatever sickness *there is*, ²⁹whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing his own affliction and his own pain, and spreading his hands toward this house, ³⁰then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know for You alone know the hearts of the sons of men, ³¹that they may fear You, to walk in Your ways as long as they live in the land which You have given to our fathers.”

6:30 “render to each according to all his ways” This is a recurrent theme (cf. Job 34:11 Ps. 28:4; 62:12; Pro. 24:12; Eccl. 12:14; Jer. 17:10; 32:19; Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46; Rom. 2:6; 14:12; 1 Cor. 3:8; 2 Cor. 5:10; Gal. 6:7-10; 2 Tim. 4:14; 1 Per. 4:17; Rev. 2:23; 20:12; 22:12). Choices have consequences in time and eternity.

“You alone know the hearts of the sons of men” This is why YHWH is the only One who can judge. He knows the motives (cf. 1 Sam. 2:3; 16:7; 1 Kgs. 8:29; 1 Chr. 28:9; Pro. 16:2; 21:2; 24:12; Jer. 11:20; 17:10; 20:12; Luke 16:15; Acts 1:24; 15:8; Rom. 8:27; Rev. 2:23).

It is amazing that YHWH fully knows us and still wants humans to be part of His family. The fall damaged “the image and likeness,” but did not remove it. New Testament salvation restores the image of God and allows fellowship again!

6:31 “fear” See Special Topic: Fear.

SPECIAL TOPIC: FEAR (OT)

I. Notes from Genesis 22:12

This term (BDB 431, KB 432) occurs often in the OT in two senses. It can mean “fear” (cf. Gen. 3:10; 18:15; 20:8; 28:17; 32:8; 42:35; 43:18), but in certain contexts it transitions to “awe,” “respect,” or “honor” when describing a human’s attitude toward Deity. Note the following texts: Gen. 42:18; Exod. 1:17; 9:30; 18:21; Lev. 19:14,32; 25:17,36,43; Deut. 6:2,24; 10:12,20; 14:23;

17:19; 25:18; 28:58; 31:12-13; Ps. 33:8. This “fear” should issue in worship and obedience (cf. Exod. 20:20; Deut. 6:13,24; see Special Topic: Keep). It is a lifestyle relationship, not a set of isolated events, places, creeds, or rules. Obedience flows from respect and love, not fear of reprisal. Disobedience is primarily against love, as well as law! One’s relationship with God becomes the priority of life! That “Abraham believed God” (Gen. 15:56) was demonstrated in his life by his actions in Genesis 22.

II. Notes from Isaiah 41:10

This is a very common word from YHWH to His people (cf. Isa. 41:13,14; 43:1,5; 44:2,8; 51:7,12; 54:4,14). Notice why they should not fear.

1. YHWH is personally with them (i.e., Ps. 23:4)
2. YHWH is their covenant God (i.e., Gen. 15:1; Exod. 14:13; Jdgs. 6:23; Isa. 41:10)
3. He will strengthen them
4. He will help them (Isa. 41:10,14)
5. He will uphold them (Isa. 41:10,13)
6. all who oppose them will
 - a. be shamed
 - b. be dishonored
 - c. be brought to nothing (Isa. 41:11-12)
 - d. perish

“**to walk in Your ways**” Notice the conditional element. Remember Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28; Deut. 30:15,19. This decisive choice is known in the OT as “the two ways” (cf. Psalm 1).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:32-33

³²“Also concerning the foreigner who is not from Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your great name’s sake and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house, ³³then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name, and fear You as *do* Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name.”

6:32 “Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm” This is imagery of YHWH’s involvement in the exodus (cf. Exod. 6:1,6; 13:9; Deut. 4:34; 5:15; 6:21; 7:19; 9:29; 26:8; 1 Kgs. 8:42; 2 Kgs. 17:36; Neh. 1:10; Ps. 136:12; Jer. 12:17,21). This imagery is also found in Egyptian royal records. When used of YHWH it is anthropomorphic.

Special Topic: God Described As Human.

6:33 “that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You” This is the universal purpose of Solomon’s temple (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:43). YHWH desires that all humans, made in His image, will come to know Him (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6; Josh. 4:24; 1 Sam. 17:46; 2 Kgs. 19:19; Isa. 37:20; 55:1-5). YHWH chose Israel to choose the world!

The NT surely reinforces this great truth (cf. Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-47; John 3:16-17; 4:42; 20:30-31; Acts 1:8; Rom. 3:19-24; 1 Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 2:2; 4:10,14). This is the unifying truth that holds the Testaments together.

See Special Topic: YHWH’s Eternal Redemptive Plan.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:34-35

³⁴“When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to You toward this city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, ³⁵then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.”

This is imagery of YHWH as both King and Divine Warrior!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:36-39

³⁶“When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them and deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to a land far off or near, ³⁷if they take thought in the land where they are taken captive, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned, we have committed iniquity and have acted wickedly’; ³⁸if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been taken captive, and pray toward their land which You have given to their fathers and the city which You have chosen, and toward the house which I have built for Your name, ³⁹then hear from heaven, from Your dwelling place, their prayer and supplications, and maintain their cause and forgive Your people who have sinned against You.”

6:36 “(for there is no man who does not sin)” This is the terrible result of the fall of Genesis 3 (see Special Topic: The Fall). This sad truth is expressed in both Testaments.

1. OT
 - a. Gen. 6:5,11-12; 8:21
 - b. Job 14:1,4; 15:14; 25:4
 - c. Ps. 14:1-3; 51:5; 58:3
 - d. Isa. 48:8; 53:6
2. NT
 - a. Rom. 3:9-18,23; 5:12-21; 11:32
 - b. Gal. 3:22

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE FALL in the NT

(Genesis 3; see exegetical notes online in the commentary of Genesis)

The Fall affected all mankind is clearly expressed by Paul in Rom. 5:12-21.

Paul develops his theology of the sinfulness of all humanity in the book of Romans. The first point of “the good news” of the gospel is the bad news of human need! Paul develops this from Rom. 1:18-3:18 (the summary conclusion is Rom. 3:19-31). Romans describes the lostness, sinfulness, and need of all human beings.

1. immoral pagans
2. moral pagans
3. Jews

Everyone is responsible to God because of

1. natural revelation, Rom. 1:18-23
2. internal moral witness, Rom. 2:14-16

One of the most horrible recurrent phrases in Romans 1-3 is “God gave them over. . .” (cf. Rom. 1:24,26,28; Eph. 4:17-19). A shocking litany of OT texts is quoted in Rom. 3:9-18! Humans are in deep trouble, need, and rebellion! One does not need a “savior” until one recognizes his/her need!

Romans 5:12-21 is a discussion of Jesus as the second Adam (cf. 1 Cor. 15:21-22, 45-49; Phil. 2:6-8). It gives emphasis to the theological concept of both individual sin and corporate guilt. Paul’s development of mankind’s (and creation’s, cf. Rom. 8:18-23) fall in Adam was unique and different from the rabbis while his view of corporality was very much in line with rabbinical teaching. It showed Paul’s ability under inspiration to use, or supplement, the truths he was taught during his training in Jerusalem under Gamaliel (cf. Acts 22:3).

The doctrine of original sin from Genesis 3 and Paul was developed by Augustine and Calvin. It asserts that humans are born sinful. Often Psalm 51:5; 58:3; and Job 15:14; 25:4 are used as OT proof-texts. The alternate theological position that humans are morally and spiritually responsible for their own choices and destiny was developed first by the rabbis and then in the church by Pelagius and Arminius. There is some evidence for their view in Deut. 1:39; Isa. 7:15; and Jonah 4:11; John 9:41;

15:22,24; Acts 17:30; Rom. 4:15. The thrust of this theological position would be that children are innocent until an age of moral responsibility (for the rabbis this was 13 years old for boys and 12 years old for girls).

There is a mediating position in which both an innate evil propensity and an age of moral responsibility are both true! Evil is not only corporate, but a developing evil of self and sin (life apart from God). The wickedness of humanity is not the issue (cf. Gen. 6:5,11-12,13; Rom. 3:9-18,23), but the when, at birth or later in life?

“they take them away captive to a land far off or near” This is an allusion to exile (i.e., Lev. 26:33; Deut. 28:30-34,36,38-41,49-50,64-65; Ps. 106:27; Ezek. 12:15). YHWH removed the Canaanites from Canaan because of their sin (cf. Gen. 15:17-21) and when Israel sins He will remove them!

6:37 Notice the threefold confession.

1. we have sinned – BDB 306, KB 305, *Qal* PERFECT
2. we have committed iniquity – BDB 731, KB 796, *Hiphil* PERFECT
3. we have acted wickedly – BDB 957, KB 1294, *Qal* PERFECT

6:38 A whole-hearted, sincere repentance is required for Israel to return from exile (i.e., 1 Kgs. 8:48).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:40

⁴⁰**“Now, O my God, I pray, let Your eyes be open and Your ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place.”**

6:40-42 These verses are not found in the parallel from 1 Kings 8 (i.e., vv. 50-53) but are similar to Ps. 132:8-10.

There are several emphatic prayer requests.

1. let Your eyes be open, 2 Chr. 6:40 – BDB 224, KB 243, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
2. let Your ears be attentive, 2 Chr. 6:40 – BDB 834, KB 986, *Qal* PASSIVE PARTICIPLE used in a JUSSIVE sense, cf. Neh. 1:6,11; Ps. 130:2
3. arise, 2 Chr. 6:41 – BDB 877, KB 1086, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
4. let Your priests be clothed with salvation, 2 Chr. 6:41 – BDB 527, KB 519, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
5. let Your godly ones rejoice, 2 Chr. 6:41 – BDB 970, KB 1333, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
6. do not turn away the face, 2 Chr. 6:42 – BDB 996, KB 1427, *Hiphil* JUSSIVE
7. remember Your lovingkindness, 2 Chr. 6:42 – BDB 269, KB 269, *Qal* IMPERATIVE

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:41

⁴¹**“Now therefore arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your might; let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation and let Your godly ones rejoice in what is good.”**

6:41 “arise” This is an idiom for YHWH rising from His throne (i.e., 1 Chr. 13:6) to act on Israel’s behalf (i.e., Num. 10:35; Ps. 12:5; 68:1; 132:8).

“Your resting place” This refers to the ark as YHWH’s throne (cf. Ps. 132:8,14).

“be clothed with salvation” The OT word “salvation” (BDB 448) means “deliverance.” The priests are spoken of in 2 Chr. 6:41 (cf. Ps. 132:6) and the king in 2 Chr. 6:42. See Special Topic: Salvation (OT term).

SPECIAL TOPIC: SALVATION (OT Term)

This term (BDB 447, KB 446, both a MASCULINE and FEMININE NOUN) which basically means “to be wide and spacious” or “to be free,” has several connotations.

1. safety, 2 Sam. 22:3; Job 5:11; Ps. 12:5
2. welfare, prosperity, Job 30:15
3. divine salvation which encompasses both physical and spiritual deliverance
 - a. Gen. 49:18
 - b. Deut. 32:15

 - c. 2 Sam. 23:5
 - d. Ps. 3:2,8; 22:1; 35:3; 62:2; 69:29; 70:5; 78:22; 80:3; 89:26; 91:16; 106:4; 140:7
 - e. Isa. 12:2; 33:2; 51:6,8; 52:7,10; 56:1; 59:11; 60:18; 62:1,11
4. the idea of both physical and spiritual deliverance is clearly present in Jonah 2:9-10
5. victory, Exod. 14:30; 15:2; 1 Sam. 14:45; Ps. 20:6; 21:5; 44:4-5; 68:19-20; 118:14,15,21; Isa. 12:2; Hab. 3:8
6. often “rejoicing” is related to YHWH’s salvation, 1 Sam. 2:1; Isa. 25:9; 26:1; Ps. 9:14; 13:5; 21:1; 35:9; 118:15,21

Salvation involves the implementation of YHWH’s original intended fellowship and society with His human creatures. It involves individual and societal wholeness!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:42

⁴²“O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed; remember *Your* lovingkindness to Your servant David.”

6:42 “the face of Your anointed” This is a reference to the Davidic kings who were chosen and meant to be led by YHWH.

Special Topic: Anointing in the Bible.

SPECIAL TOPIC: “ANOINTING” IN THE BIBLE (Hebrew VERB, BDB 602, KB 643 I; NOUN, BDB 603)

- A. Used for beautification (BDB 691 I, cf. Deut. 28:40; Ruth 3:3; 2 Sam. 12:20; 14:2; 2 Chr. 28:15; Dan. 10:3; Mic. 6:15)
- B. Used for guests (BDB 206, cf. Ps. 23:5; Luke 7:38,46; John 11:2)
- C. Used for healing (BDB 602, cf. Isa. 61:1; Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34; James 5:14) [used in hygienic sense in Ezek. 16:9]
- D. Used in preparation for burial (cf. Mark 16:1; John 12:3,7; 19:39-40; note 2 Chr. 16:14, but without the VERB “anoint”)
- E. Used in a religious sense (of an object, BDB 602, cf. Gen. 31:13 [a pillar]; Exod. 29:36 [the altar]; Exod. 30:26; 40:9-16; Lev. 8:10-13; Num. 7:1 [the tabernacle])
- F. Used for installing leaders
 1. Priests
 - a. Aaron (Exod. 28:41; 29:7; 30:30)
 - b. Aaron’s sons (Exod. 40:15; Lev. 7:36)
 - c. standard phrase or title (Num. 3:3; Lev. 16:32)
 2. Kings
 - a. by God (cf. 1 Sam. 2:10; 2 Sam. 12:7; 2 Kgs. 9:3,6,12; Ps. 45:7; 89:20)
 - b. by the prophets (cf. 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 15:1,17; 16:3,12-13; 1 Kgs. 1:45; 19:15-16)
 - c. by priests (cf. 1 Kgs. 1:34,39; 2 Kgs. 11:12)
 - d. by the elders (cf. Jdgs. 9:8,15; 2 Sam. 2:7; 5:3; 2 Kgs. 23:30)

- e. of Jesus as Messianic king (cf. Ps. 2:2; Luke 4:18 [Isa. 61:1]; Acts 4:27; 10:38; Heb. 1:9 [Ps. 45:7])
 - f. Jesus' followers (cf. 2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20,27 [*chrisma*])
3. possibly of prophets (cf. 1 Kgs. 19:16; Isa. 61:1)
 4. unbelieving instruments of divine deliverance
 - g. Cyrus (cf. Isa. 45:1)
 - h. King of Tyre (cf. Ezek. 28:14, where he uses Garden of Eden metaphors)
 5. term or title "Messiah" means "an Anointed One" (BDB 603, cf. Ps. 2:2; 89:38; 132:10)

Acts 10:38 is a verse where all three persons of the Godhead are involved in anointing. Jesus was anointed (cf. Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; 10:38). The concept is widened to include all believers (cf. 1 John 2:27). The Anointed One has become the anointed ones! This may be parallel to Antichrist and antichrists (cf. 1 John 2:18). The OT symbolic act of physical anointing with oil (cf. Exod. 29:7; 30:25; 37:29) relates to those who were called and equipped by God for a special task (i.e., prophets, priests, and kings). The word "Christ" is a translation of the Hebrew term "the anointed one" or Messiah.

"lovingkindness" See Special Topic: Lovingkindness (*hesed*).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. What is "the thick cloud"?
2. To what previous Scripture does 2 Chr. 6:7 refer?
3. Does 2 Chr. 6:14 acknowledge the existence of other "gods"?
4. To what does "the highest heaven" refer?
5. In your opinion, what is the greatest theological purpose of the temple?
6. How is this chapter related to Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28?
7. Is YHWH's covenant with Israel conditional?
8. Why is 2 Chr. 6:32-34 so theologically significant?
9. Why does the Chronicler change the end of Solomon's prayer (i.e., 2 Chr. 6:40-41)?

2 CHRONICLES 7

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
The Shekinah Glory	Solomon Dedicates the Temple	The Consecration of the Sanctuary and the Divine Admonition	The Dedication of the Temple	The Dedication (MT versing)
7:1-3	7:1-3 (3d)	7:1-3 (3d)	7:1-6	7:1-3
Sacrifices Offered				
7:4-6	7:4-7	7:4-6		7:4-6
7:7		7:7	7:7	7:7-10
The Feast of Dedication				
7:8-10	7:8-11	7:8-10	7:8-10	
God's Promise and Warning			God Appears to Solomon Again	YHWH Appears and Gives a Warning
7:11	God's Second Appearance to Solomon	7:11	7:11-20	7:11-22
7:12-18	7:12-18	7:12-18		
7:19-22	7:19-22	7:19-22		
			7:21-22	

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 7:1-3

¹Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house. ²The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. ³All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the LORD, saying, "Truly He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting."

7:1 YHWH confirmed His acceptance of Solomon's temple in two ways.

1. fire fell from heaven and consumed the burnt offering (probably the original ones, not each and every one for the entire week), cf. Lev. 9:24; 1 Kgs. 18:24,38; 1 Chr. 21:26
2. the *shekinah* cloud of glory filled the structure; see note at 2 Chr. 6:1.

This is not mentioned in 1 Kings 8. See Josephus *Antiq.* 6.4.4-6.

7:3 "He is good, truly His lovingkindness is everlasting" This was a liturgical faith affirmation (cf. 2 Ch. 7:6,10. See full note at 2 Chr. 5:13.

It is possible that only the Levites sang and played music, while the assembly interjected liturgical statements at set points.

"**lovingkindness**" This is a special covenant term for YHWH's covenant loyalty and faithfulness (cf. 2 Chr. 7:6). See Special Topic: Lovingkindness (*hesed*).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 7:4-6

⁴Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD. ⁵King Solomon offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. Thus the king and all the people dedicated the house

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

7:5 The parallel in 1 Kgs. 8:63 calls these offerings “peace offerings,” meaning the assembled multitude could eat most of each animal. This is how this large gathered crowd was fed for 15 days.

7:6 This is another text that links David and Solomon (i.e., 2 Chr. 7:1 and 1 Chr. 21:26). Solomon continues the covenant of David (cf. 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17).

This is also another mention of “Levites.” The Chronicler may have been a Levite because he highlights their presence and ministry.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 7:7

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

7:7 Apparently there was not enough room on the bronze altar of sacrifice to burn all the animals, so Solomon expanded the burning sites. This was a unique occurrence (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:64-65).

There may have been a week of dedication sacrifices and a later week for the Feast of Booths.

“the bronze altar” See Special Topic: The Altar of Sacrifice.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 7:8-10

⁸So Solomon observed the feast at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly *who came* from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt. ⁹On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, for the dedication of the altar they observed seven days and the feast seven days. ¹⁰Then on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people to their tents, rejoicing and happy of heart because of the goodness that the LORD had shown to David and to Solomon and to His people Israel.

7:8 “from the entrance of Hamath to the brook of Egypt” This is the geographical extensions of the Promised Land (cf. Numbers 34; Joshua 15; 1 Kgs. 4:21).

1. the southern boundary was the brook of Egypt, cf. Num. 33:5; Josh. 15:4,47; it was well into the Negev and level with the Wilderness of Zin; it does not refer to the Nile, but a desert wadi (i.e., Wadi Al-Arish

2. the northern boundary phrase refers to the southern boundary of the country of “Hamath,” not the city. It was above Damascus (cf. 1 Chr. 13:5).

The normal idiom for the Promised Land became “from Dan to Beersheba” (the northern city and a southern city).

7:9 Solomon’s dedication coincided with the “Feast of Booths.” On the eighth day of that annual feast there was a “solemn assembly” (cf. Lev. 23:36; Num. 29:35-38).

7:10 “to their tents” This was an idiom from the days of the wilderness wanderings from which “the Feast of Booths” got its name. By this time Israel lived in houses, not tents (i.e., 1 Kgs. 8:66).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 7:11

¹¹Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king’s palace, and successfully completed all that he had planned on doing in the house of the LORD and in his palace.

7:11 Solomon's two early building projects (i.e., his palace and the temple) are mentioned (cf. 1 Kgs. 9:1,10). Hiram, king of Tyre, offered building materials and artisans for both.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 7:12-18

¹²Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. ¹³If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, ¹⁴and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land. ¹⁵Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayer *offered* in this place. ¹⁶For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. ¹⁷As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked, even to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, ¹⁸then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David, saying, 'You shall not lack a man *to be* ruler in Israel.'"

7:12 YHWH had appeared to Solomon earlier in a dream at Gibeon (cf. 1 Kings 3). This is another wonderful personal revelation (cf. 1 Kgs. 9:2-9).

7:13 "If" This covenant is a conditional covenant (see "if," 2 Chr. 7:17 [twice], 17,19). This whole subject of "conditional" or "unconditional" covenants is difficult because YHWH's promises functioned on two levels.

1. His redemptive plans for Israel (i.e., the Messiah, i.e., Isaiah 53), which are unconditional
2. His dealings with individuals, which are always conditional

Also remember that in the OT, "the two ways" was certainly conditional (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; 30:15,19; Psalm 1). Choices have consequences in time and eternity but so does YHWH's choice of redemption. See:

1. Special Topic: Covenant
2. Special Topic: YHWH's Eternal Redemptive Plan

"shut up the heavens. . ." See note at 2 Chr. 6:26-28.

7:14 Notice the conditions on "My people."

1. humble themselves – BDB 488, KB 484, *Niphal* IMPERFECT, cf. Lev. 26:41; 1 Kgs. 21:29; 2 Kgs. 22:19; 2 Chr. 12:6,7,12; 32:26
2. pray – BDB 813, KB 933, *Hithpael* IMPERFECT
3. seek My face – BDB 134, KB 152, *Piel* IMPERFECT, cf. Deut. 4:29; 2 Sam. 21:1; 1 Chr. 16:11; 2 Chr. 11:16; Ps. 24:6; 27:8; 34:4; 105:4
4. turn from their wicked ways – BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* imperfect;

This is not a one-time action but an ongoing attitude (i.e., IMPERFECT stems). This attitude set the spiritual stage for YHWH to act.

Special Topic: Repentance (OT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE (OT)

This concept is crucial but difficult to define. Most of us have a definition which comes from our denominational affiliation. However, usually a "set" theological definition is imposed on several Hebrew (and Greek) words which do not specifically imply this "set" definition. It must be remembered that NT authors (except Luke) were Hebrew thinkers using Koine Greek terms, so the place to start is the Hebrew terms themselves, of which there are primarily two.

1. *nacham* (BDB 636, KB 688)

2. *shub* (BDB 996, KB 1427)

The first, *nacham*, which originally seems to have meant “to draw a deep breath,” is used in several senses.

- a. “rest” or “comfort” (e.g., Gen. 5:29; 24:67; 27:42; 37:35; 38:12; 50:21; often used in names, cf. 2 Kgs. 15:14; 1 Chr. 4:19; Neh. 1:1; 7:7; Nahum 1:1)
- b. “grieved” (e.g., Gen. 6:6,7)
- c. “changed mind” (e.g., Exod. 13:17; 32:12,14; Num. 23:19; Job 42:5-6)
- d. “compassion” (e.g., Deut. 32:36)

Notice that all of these involve deep emotion! Here is the key: deep feelings that lead to action. This change of action is often directed at other persons, but also toward God. It is this change of attitude and action toward God that infuses this term with such theological significance. But here care must be exercised. God is said to “repent” (cf. Gen. 6:6,7; Exod. 32:14; Jdgs. 2:18; 1 Sam. 15:11,35; Ps. 106:45), but this does not result from sorrow over sin or error, but a literary way of showing God’s compassion and care (cf. Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Ps. 110:4; Jer. 4:27-28; Ezek. 24:14). Due punishment for sin and rebellion is forgiven if the sinner truly turns away from his/her/their sin and turns to God. It is a reorientation of life.

The second term, *shub*, means “to turn” (turn from, turn back, turn to). The VERB *shub* (BDB 996, KB 1427), basically means “to turn back” or “return.” It can be used of

1. turning from God, Num. 14:43; Jos. 22:16,18,23,29; Jdgs. 2:19; 8:33; 1 Sam. 15:11; 1 Kgs. 9:6; Jer. 3:19; 8:4
2. turning to God, 1 Kgs. 8:33,48; 2 Chr. 7:14; 15:4; 30:9; Ps. 51:13; 116:7; Isa. 6:10; 10:21,22; 31:6; Jer. 3:7,12,14,22; 4:1; 5:3; Hos. 3:5; 5:4; 6:1; 7:10,16; 11:5; 14:1,2; Amos 4:6,8,9,10,11 (notice esp. Jeremiah 7 and Amos 4)
3. YHWH initially telling Isaiah that Judah would not/could not repent (cf. Isa. 6:10), but not for the first time in the book, He calls on them to return to Him.

Repentance is not so much an emotion as it is an attitude toward God. It is a reorientation of life from self to Him. It denotes a willingness to change and be changed. It is not the complete cessation of sin, but a daily cessation of known rebellion! It is a reversal of the self-centered results of the Fall of Genesis 3. It denotes that the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27), though damaged, has been restored! Fellowship with God by fallen humans is possible again.

Repentance in the OT primarily means “change of action,” while “repentance” in the NT primarily means “change of mind” (see Special Topic: Repentance [NT]). Both of these are necessary for true biblical repentance. It is also necessary to realize that repentance is both an initial act and an ongoing process. The initial act can be seen in Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16 and 19; 20:21, while the ongoing process can be seen in 1 John 1:9; Revelation 2 and 3. Repentance is not an option (cf. Luke 13:3,5)!

If it is true that the two covenant requirements are “repentance” and “faith” (e.g., Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Mark 1:4,15; 2:17; Luke 3:3,8; 5:32; 13:3,5; 15:7; 17:3), then *nacham* refers to the intense feelings of recognizing one’s sin and turning from it, while *shub* would refer to the turning from sin and then turning to God (one example of these two spiritual actions is Amos 4:6-11, “you have not returned to Me” [five times] and Amos 5:4,6,14, “seek Me. . .seek the Lord. . .seek good and not evil”).

The first great example of the power of repentance is David’s sin with Bathsheba (cf. 2 Samuel 12; Psalm 32,51). There were continuing consequences for David, his family, and Israel, but David was restored to fellowship with God! Even wicked Manasseh can repent and be forgiven (cf. 2 Chr. 33:12-13).

Both of these terms are used in parallel in Ps. 90:13. There must be a recognition of sin and a purposeful, personal turning from it, as well as a desire to seek God and His righteousness (cf. Isa. 1:16-20). Repentance has a cognitive aspect, a personal aspect, and a moral aspect. All three are required, both to start a new relationship with God and to maintain the new relationship. The deep emotion of regret turns into an abiding devotion to God and for God!

“then I will. . .” This is conditional covenant terminology. YHWH is waiting for His covenant people to act like His covenant people. YHWH’s blessing flows from obedience (i.e., Leviticus 26;

Deuteronomy 28).

1. I will hear – BDB 1033, KB 1570, *Qal* IMPERFECT, cf. 2 Chr. 6:19,20,21,23,25,27,30,33,35,39,40

2. I will forgive – BDB 699, KB 757, *Qal* IMPERFECT, cf. 2 Chr. 6:21,25,27,30,39

3. I will heal – BDB 950, KB 1272, *Qal* IMPERFECT

All of these IMPERFECTS are in response of sinners seeking Him at the new temple (or facing the new temple, 2 Chronicles 6).

All of these are an ongoing promise to God’s repentant and obedient children. This was not meant to be a special occasion or a one-time event.

Through the years I have heard several sermons on this text applied to the USA. The USA is not national Israel. The USA is not part of YHWH’s eternal redemptive plan. Modern believers are not part of a performance-based covenant (i.e., Acts 15; Galatians 3; Hebrews). This text could apply as an application or significance but not as an original intent of the inspired author of Chronicles. Be careful of proof-texting OT texts and bringing them directly into the NT grace-based covenant.

“**will forgive**” Notice this does not involve a sacrifice. It is a declaration from YHWH. This set the theological stage for “declared righteous” of the NT (cf. Romans 4).

“**heal their land**” Exactly what this imagery means is uncertain. It may refer to

1. judgments of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 removed
2. restoration of peace and security
3. restoration of proper worship
4. restoration of godly leadership

7:15 This phrase shows that the theological context of chapter 7 goes back to 2 Chr. 6:20,40.

7:16 YHWH wants His people to seek Him. He wants to forgive, restore, and bless them! His fellowship was the purpose of the sacrificial system.

“**eyes. . .heart**” See Special Topic: Anthropomorphic Language to Describe God.

7:17 “**if**” See notes at 2 Chr. 7:13.

“**walk**” See note at 2 Chr. 6:27.

“**statutes. . .ordinances**” See Special Topic: Terms for God’s Revelation

SPECIAL TOPIC: TERMS FOR GOD’S REVELATION (USING DEUTERONOMY AND PSALMS)

I. “Statutes,” BDB 349, “an enactment, decree, or ordinance”

A. Masculine, קָטַב, KB 346 – Deut. 4:1,5,6,8,14,40,45; 5:1; 6:1,24; 7:11; 11:32; 16:12; 17:19; 26:17; 27:10; Ps. 2:7; 50:16; 81:4; 99:7; 105:10,45; 148:6

B. Feminine, כָּתַב, KB 347 – Deut. 6:2; 8:11; 10:13; 11:1; 28:15,45; 30:10,16; Ps. 89:31; 119:5, 8,12,16,23, 26,33, 48,54,64,68,71,80,83,112, 124, 135,145,155,171

II. “Law,” BDB 435, KB 1710, “instruction”

– Deut. 1:5; 4:44; 17:11,18,19; 27:3,8,26; 28:58,61; 29:21,29; 30:10; 31:9; Ps. 1:2; 19:7; 78:10; 94:12; 105:45; 119:1,18,29,34,44,51,53,55,61,70,72,77,85,92,97, 109,113,126,136,142,150,153,163,165,174

III. “Testimonies,” BDB 730, KB 790, “divine laws”

A. PLURAL, עֲדָה – Deut. 4:45; 6:17,20; Ps. 25:10; 78:56; 93:5; 99:7; 119:22,24, 46,59,79,95,119, 125, 138,146,152,167,168

B. עֲדוּת or עֲדָה – Ps. 19:7; 78:5; 81:5; 119:2,14,31,36,88,99,111,129,144,157

IV. “Precepts,” BDB 824, KB 959, “a charge”

– Ps. 19:8; 103:18; 111:7; 119:4,15,27,40,45,56,63,69,78, 87, 93,94,100,104,110, 128,134,141,159,168,173

V. “Commandments,” BDB 846, KB 622

– Deut. 4:2,40; 5:29; 6:1,2,17,25; 8:1,2,11; 10:13; 11:13; 15:5; 26:13, 17; 30:11,16; Ps. 19:8; 119:6,10,19,21,32, 35,47,48,60,66,73,86,96,98,115,127,131,143,151, 166,176

VI. “Judgments/ordinances,” BDB 1048, KB651, “rulings” or “justice”

– Deut. 1:17; 4:1,5,8,14,45; 7:12; 16:18; 30:16; 33:10,21; Ps. 10:5; 18:22; 19:19; 48:11; 89:30; 97:8; 105:5,7; 119:7,13,20,30,39,43,52,62, 75,84,102,106,120,137, 149,156,160,164; 147:19; 149:9

VII. “His ways,” BDB 202, KB 231, YHWH’s guidelines for His people’s lifestyle

– Deut. 8:6; 10:12; 11:22,28; 19:9; 26:17; 28:9; 30:16; 32:4; Ps. 119:3, 5,37,59

VIII. “His words”

A. BDB 182, KB 211 – Deut. 4:10,12,36; 9:10; 10:4; Ps. 119:9,16,17,25,28,42,43,49, 57,65,74,81,89, 101,105,107,114, 130,139,147, 160,161,169

B. BDB 57, KB 67

1. “word” – Deut. 33:9; Ps. 119:11,67,103,162,170,172

2. “promise”– Ps. 119:38,41,50,58,76,82,116,133,140,148,154

3. “command” – Ps. 119:158

All of these refer to God’s special revelation of Himself to Israel. They are basically synonymous. See Special Topic: Inspiration.

7:18 This goes back to YHWH’s promises to David in 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17 (cf. 2 Chr. 6:16).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 7:19-22

¹⁹“**But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,** ²⁰**then I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.** ²¹**As for this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’** ²²**And they will say, ‘Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers who brought them from the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore He has brought all this adversity on them.’”**

7:19 Notice the things that break the fellowship of the covenant relationship.

1. if you turn away (lit. “leave”) – BDB 736, KB 806, *Qal* PERFECT with *waw*
2. if you forsake My statutes and My commandments – BDB 678, KB 733, *Qal* PERFECT
3. if you commit idolatry (cf. 1 Kgs. 9:6) –
 - a. go after – BDB 229, KB 246, *Qal* PERFECT with *waw*
 - b. serve – BDB 712, KB 773, *Qal* PERFECT with *waw*
 - c. worship – BDB 1005, KB 295, *Hishtaphel* PERFECT with *waw*

This disobedience and idolatry was not a one-time act but a lifestyle. They were YHWH’s covenant people in name only. In their hearts, minds, actions they were fertility worshipers.

Special Topic: Fertility Worship of the ANE.

SPECIAL TOPIC: FERTILITY WORSHIP OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

I. Reasons For

- A. Ancient humans began as hunters-gatherers, but as nomadic life became settled, the need for crops and herds developed.
 - B. Ancient Near Eastern inhabitants were vulnerable to the forces of nature. As civilizations developed around the major bodies of fresh water they became dependant on the regular order of the seasons.
 - C. The forces of nature became gods who needed to be supplicated and controlled.
- II. Where and Why
- A. Fertility religions developed in
 1. Egypt (Nile)
 2. Mesopotamia (Tigris and Euphrates)
 3. Canaan (Jordan)
 - B. There is a basic commonality among the fertility cults of the Ancient Near East.
 - C. The changing and unpredictable seasons and weather conditions caused the development of myths using human/divine analogies as the basis of life in the spiritual realm and on earth.
- III. Who and How
- A. Who (the gods and goddesses)
 1. Egypt
 - a. *Isis* (female)
 - b. *Osiris* (male)
 2. Mesopotamia
 - a. *Ishtar/Inanna* (female)
 - b. *Tammuz/Dumuzi* (male)
 3. Canaan
 - a. *Ba'al* (male)
 - b. *Asherah, Astarte, Anath* (female)
 - B. Each of these pairs were mythologized in similar ways
 1. one dies
 2. the other restores
 3. the pattern of dying and rising gods mimics the annual cycles of nature
 - B. Imitation magic saw human sexual unions (i.e., marriage of the gods) as a way of insuring fertility of crops, herds, and people
- IV. The Israelites
- A. YHWH's people were warned (i.e., Leviticus and Deuteronomy) to avoid the fertility cults (especially of Canaan).
 - B. These cults were very popular because of the superstition of human beings and the added incentive of sexual activity.
 - C. Idolatry involves the blessing of life to be sought in cultic or ritual ways instead of a personal faith and trust in YHWH.
- V. Suggested Reading
- A. W. F. Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*
 - B. J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*
 - C. James G. Frazer
 1. *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*
 2. *Folklore in the Old Testament*
 3. *The Worship of Nature*
 - D. C. H. Gordon, *Before the Bible*
 - E. S. N. Kramer, *Mythologies of the Ancient World*

7:20 The consequence of idolatry was exile (cf. 2 Chr. 6:36-37). As YHWH took the pagan nations out of Canaan (cf. Gen. 15:16-21), He will take out the Israelites also (i.e., the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles, cf. Deut. 29:28).

Notice 2 Chr. 7:21-22, where YHWH prophesies about how the nations view His judgments on Israel.

“I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples” See 1 Kgs. 9:7-8.

I have included my commentary notes from Deut. 28:37.

You will become:

a.

NASB

“a horror,” v. 37

NKJV

“an astonishment”

NRSV

“object of horror”

NJB

“the astonishment”

BDB 1031 I, cf. 2 Kgs. 22:19; Jer. 5:30; 25:9,11,18,38; 29:18; 42:18; 44:12,22; 49:13,17; 50:23; 51:37,41

b.

NASB, NKJV, NRSV

“a proverb,” v. 37

NJB

“the byword”

BDB 605, cf. 1 Kgs. 9:7; Jer. 24:9

c.

NASB

“a taunt,” v. 37

NKJV, NRSV

“a byword”

NJB

“the laughing-stock”

BDB 1042, cf. 1 Kgs. 9:7; Jer. 24:9

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Where else in the OT does fire come down from heaven and consume things/people?
2. What does the theological affirmation at the end of 2 Chr. 7:3 mean?
3. Where else does Solomon have a divine revelation in a dream?
4. What is the implication of all the “if’s” of 2 Chr. 7:13-20?
5. How does 2 Chr. 7:14 apply today?
6. To what previous Scripture does 2 Chr. 7:18 refer?

2 CHRONICLES 8

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Solomon's Activities and Accomplishments	Solomon's Additional Achievements	Various Activities of Solomon	Solomon's Achievements	Conclusion: The Completion of the Building Programs (MT Versing)
8:1-2	8:1-10	8:1-2	8:1-10	8:1-10
8:3-10		8:3-10		
8:11	8:11	8:11	8:11	8:11
8:12-13	8:12-15	8:12-15	8:12-15	8:12-15
8:14-15				
8:16	8:16	8:16	8:16	8:16
				Solomon In His Glory
8:17-18	8:17-18	8:17-18	8:17-18	8:17-18

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 8:1-2

¹Now it came about at the end of the twenty years in which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house ²that he built the cities which Hiram had given to him, and settled the sons of Israel there.

8:1 The parallel is in 1 Kgs. 9:10-28. Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.5.1., explains “the twenty years” as seven for the temple and thirteen for the palace. He describes the palace in 1 Chr. 8.5.2.

8:2 “Hiram” In 2 Sam. 5:1; 1 Chr. 14:1 he is named “Hiram, King of Tyre.”

“the cities which Hiram had given to him” In the parallel of 1 Kgs. 9:10-14, it is Solomon who gave Hiram the cities. We learn from 1 Kgs. 9:11 that Hiram did not like the cities Solomon gave him and may have returned them. The gold mentioned in 2 Chr. 8:17-18 may have gone to Hiram as a payment.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 8:3-10

³Then Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and captured it. ⁴He built Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage cities which he had built in Hamath. ⁵He also built upper Beth-horon and lower Beth-horon, fortified cities *with* walls, gates and bars; ⁶and Baalath and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the cities for his chariots and cities for his horsemen, and all that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land under his rule. ⁷All of the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel, ⁸namely, from their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel had not destroyed, them Solomon raised as forced laborers to this day. ⁹But Solomon did not make slaves for his work from the sons of Israel; they were men of war, his chief captains and commanders of his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁰These were the chief officers of King Solomon, two hundred and fifty who ruled over the people.

8:3 This military campaign is not recorded in Kings.

8:4 “Tadmor” The 1 Kgs. 9:18 verse has “Tamar.” In a context extolling Solomon’s building projects

and military conquests, the small village of Tamar seems inappropriate. Tadmor was a major city 125 miles NE of Damascus on a major trade route (later called Palmyra). Modern commentators surmised Solomon fortified this city as a message to Mesopotamian empires!

Solomon took full advantage of the weakness of the empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia to expand and fortify his empire.

8:5 The two cities mentioned in 2 Chr. 8:5 controlled a pass between Jerusalem and Joppa. It was part of the larger fortification of Jerusalem.

8:7 See Special Topic: Pre-Israelite Inhabitants of Palestine.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE PRE-ISRAELITE INHABITANTS OF PALESTINE

A. There are several lists of peoples.

1. Genesis 15:19-21 (10)

- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| a. Kenite | d. Hittite | g. Amorite | j. Jebusite |
| b. Kenizzite | e. Perizzite | h. Canaanite | |
| c. Kadmonite | f. Rephaim | i. Girgashite | |

2. Exodus 3:17 (6)

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. Canaanite | d. Perizzite |
| b. Hittite | e. Hivite |
| c. Amorite | f. Jebusite |

3. Exodus 23:28 (3)

- a. Hivites
- b. Canaanites
- c. Hittites

4. Deuteronomy 7:1 (7)

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| a. Hittites | d. Canaanites | g. Jebusites |
| b. Girgashites | e. Perizzites | |
| c. Amorites | f. Hivites | |

5. Joshua 24:11 (7)

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| a. Amorite | d. Hittite | g. Jebusite |
| b. Perizzite | e. Girgashite | |
| c. Canaanite | f. Hivite | |

B. The origin of the names is dubious because of lack of historical data. Genesis 10:15-19 includes several of them as related to Canaan, a son of Ham.

C. Brief descriptions of the peoples mentioned

1. Kenite – BDB 884, KB 1098
 - non-Israelite
 - name related to “forger” or “smith,” which could refer to metal working or music (cf. Gen. 4:19-22)
 - connected to the area of Sinai north to Hebron
 - name connected to Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law (cf. Jdgs. 1:16; 4:11)
2. Kenizzite – BDB 889, KB 1114
 - relative of Jews
 - a clan of Edom (cf. Gen. 15:19)
 - lived in Negev
 - possibly absorbed into Judah (cf. Num. 32:12; Jos. 14:6,14)
3. Kadmonite – BDB 870 II, KB 1071 II

- non-Israelite, possibly a descendant of Ishmael (cf. Gen. 25:15)
- name relates to “easterner”
- lived in Negev
- possibly related to “the men of the east” (cf. Job 1:3)
- 4. Hittite – BDB 366, KB 363
 - non-Israelite
 - descendant of Heth
 - from kingdom of Anatolia (Asia Minor, Turkey)
 - were present very early in Canaan (cf. Genesis 23; Jos. 11:3)
- 5. Perizzite – BDB 827, KB 965
 - non-Israelite, possibly Hurrians
 - lived in forested area of Judah (cf. Gen. 34:30; Jdgs. 1:4; 16:10)
- 6. Rephaim – BDB 952, KB 1274
 - non-Israelite, possibly giants (cf. Gen. 14:5; Num. 33:33; Deut. 2:10-11,20)
 - lived on eastern bank of Jordan (cf. Gen. 15:20; Jos. 12:4; 13:12; Deut. 2:8-11,20; 3:13) or western bank (cf. Jos. 15:8; 17:15; 2 Sam. 5:18,22; 23:13; 1 Chr. 20:4)
 - line of warriors/heroes
- 7. Amorite – BDB 57, KB 67
 - northwestern Semitic people-group from Ham (cf. Gen. 10:16)
 - became general designation for inhabitants of Canaan (cf. Gen. 15:16; Deut. 1:7; Jos. 10:5; 24:15; 2 Sam. 21:2)
 - the name may mean “the west”
 - the ISBE, vol. 1, p. 119, says the term denotes
 - a. the inhabitants of Palestine generally
 - b. the population of the hill country as opposed to the coastal plain
 - c. a specific people group with their own king
- 8. Canaanite – BDB 489, KB 485
 - from Ham (cf. Gen. 10:15)
 - general designation of all the tribes in Canaan west of the Jordan
 - meaning of Canaan uncertain, possibly “merchant” or “red-purple dye”
 - as a people group they dwelt along the coastal plain (cf. Num. 13:29)
- 9. Girgashite – BDB 173, KB 202
 - from Ham (cf. Gen. 10:16) or at least “from a son of [i.e., the country of] Canaan,” ISBE, vol. 2, p. 1232)
- 10. Jebusite – BDB 101, KB 382
 - from Ham (cf. Gen. 10:16)
 - from city of Jebus/Salem/Jerusalem (cf. Jos. 15:63; Jdgs. 19:10)
 - Ezek. 16:3,45 asserts they were a mixed race from Amorite and Hittite
- 11. Hivites – BDB 295, KB 297
 - from Ham (cf. Gen. 10:17)
 - translated by LXX as Horite (cf. Gen. 34:2; 36:20-30; Jos. 9:7)
 - possibly from the Hebrew word “cave,” therefore, cave dwellers
 - they lived in the highlands of Lebanon (cf. Jos. 11:3; Jdgs. 3:3). In 2 Sam. 24:6-7 they are listed next to Tyre and Sidon

8:8 “Solomon raised as forced laborers” The commander of this group is mentioned in 1 Kgs. 4:6. This practice was common in the ANE.

“to this day” See note at 2 Chr. 5:9.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 8:11

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

8:11 The parallel in 1 Kgs. 9:23 has 550 supervisors, while this text has 250. No one knows why the numbers in Samuel – Kings do not agree with Chronicles. Here are the theories.

1. a scribal error
2. the numbers are used symbolically to show Solomon's greatness
3. there were different Hebrew texts behind each one
4. they represent different oral traditions (see John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*)

The best study so far on this subject is Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*. If the numbers relate to years of a king's reign, then possibly

1. use of two calendars
2. use of two ways to count the ascension year
3. the problem of co-reigns

This verse shows Solomon's respect for the city of David. He moves his foreign wife to a special palace he built for her.

The Chronicler omits all the terrible things Solomon did with his foreign wives in his old age (cf. 1 Kings 11).

In this chapter Solomon is depicted as

1. following the commands of David faithfully
2. being victorious in battle
3. building many projects throughout his domain
4. starting a fleet of ships to bring gold

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 8:12-13

¹²Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the Lord which he had built before the porch; ¹³and *did* so according to the daily rule, offering *them* up according to the commandment of Moses, for the sabbaths, the new moons and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths.

8:12 This is surprising, since Uzziah was condemned for offering a sacrifice; that was a priest's duty.

Earlier at the dedication of the temple, Solomon "blessed" the people (cf. 2 Chr. 6:3), which was also an act reserved for priests.

8:13 "sabbaths" See Special Topic: Sabbath (OT).

SPECIAL TOPIC: SABBATH (OT)

This is from the Hebrew word (BDB 992, KB 409) meaning "rest" or "cessation." It is connected to the seventh day of creation (see John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*) where God ceased His labor after finishing initial creation and rested (cf. Gen. 2:1-3). God did not rest because He was tired, but because (1) creation was complete and good (cf. Gen. 1:31) and (2) to give mankind a regular pattern for worship and rest. The usage as a day of worship starts with Gen. 2:2-3, where YHWH uses His rest as a pattern for animals (cf. Exod. 23:12) and mankind (humans need a regular schedule of work, rest, and worship). The Sabbath begins like all the days of Genesis 1, at twilight; therefore, twilight on Friday to twilight on Saturday was the official time period. All the details of its observance

are given in Exodus (especially chapters 16,20,31, and 35) and Leviticus (especially chapters 23-26). The first specialized use of this day by Israel was in Exod. 16:25-26 in the gathering of manna. It then becomes part of “the Ten Words” (cf. Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15). This is one example where the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 are slightly different from the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 5. Deuteronomy is preparing Israel for the settled, agricultural life in Canaan.

The Pharisees had taken these regulations and, by their oral discussions, interpreted them (i.e., the Oral Traditions) to include many rules. Jesus often performed miracles, knowingly violating their picky rules so as to enter into a theological dialogue with them (i.e., Matthew 12). It was not the Sabbath that Jesus rejected or belittled, but their self-righteous legalism and lack of love (cf. Mark 2:27-28).

The early church worshiped on both the Sabbath and the first day of the week (i.e., Sunday, resurrection day, cf. John 20:1,19; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2). The Synagogue addressed the growing Christian movement by demanding members to reject Jesus as the Messiah (i.e., The Eighteen Benedictions). At this point (i.e., A.D. 70) the Christians began to meet exclusively on Sunday.

“the new moons” Many commentators assume that this festival gained popularity after the exile because it is mentioned often in 1 and 2 Chronicles. Special Topic: Moon Worship.

SPECIAL TOPIC: MOON WORSHIP

Moon worship was the most widespread mythology of the Ancient Near East starting with *Sumer* (the first written culture of the ANE). There was both a male and female aspect to the myth. Originally the moon god came from the rape of the grain goddess, *Ninlil* by *Enlil*, the sky god. *Enlil* was cast out of the pantheon and condemned to the underworld for his act, but when *Ninlil* found out she was with child she joined him. The child, *Sin*, was allowed to climb into the sky each night.

The worship of the moon is designed by its different phases.

1. new moon – *Asimbabbar*
2. crescent moon – *Sin*
3. full moon – *Nanna* (Sumerian “illumination” from *En-su*, “lord of wisdom”)

These names basically mean “wise lord” (i.e., *Su’en*) or “illumination” (*Nanna*, Sumerian), worshiped at Ur of the Chaldees. The city itself was often called the city of Nannar. The fertility pair (i.e., *En-su* and consort *Ningal*) were worshiped at Ziggurats (large pyramids with flat tops) located in the city. The sun god (*Shamash*) was the firstborn of the couple and later *Ereshkigal* (the Queen of the Underworld) and *Inanna* (the Queen of Heaven/sky).

The cult was spread all across the ANE, but the major centers of worship were

1. Ur
2. Haran
3. Tema
4. Canaan
5. Mecca

Basically this mythology combined the fertility emphasis with astral worship.

The OT rejects astral worship (cf. Deut. 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs. 21:3,5; 23:5; Jer. 8:2; 19:13; Zeph. 1:5) and fertility worship (i.e., *Ba’al* and *Asherah*, Ugarit poems). The Hebrews, originally nomads, were very careful to resist moon worship because in general moon worship was characteristic of nomadic peoples who traveled at night, while the sun was much more generally worshiped by settled or agricultural peoples. Eventually nomads settle and then astral worship in general became the problem.

“the annual feasts” See Special Topic: Feasts of Israel.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 8:14-15

¹⁴Now according to the ordinance of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their duties of praise and ministering before the priests according to the daily rule, and the gatekeepers by their divisions at every gate; for David the man

of God had so commanded. ¹⁵And they did not depart from the commandment of the king to the priests and Levites in any manner or concerning the storehouses.

8:14 Solomon was faithful to the commands of David his father.

1. The division of priests is found in 1 Chronicles 24.
2. The divisions of Levites in 1 Chronicles 15.
3. The divisions of “gatekeepers” is found in 1 Chronicles 26.

“**David the man of God**” David is called by this title in Neh. 12:24,36. Moses was the first to be called by this title (cf. Deut. 33:1; Josh. 14:6). Later, other prophets bore this honorific designation. See NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 390, #9.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 8:16

¹⁶Thus all the work of Solomon was carried out from the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 8:17-18

¹⁷Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Eloth on the seashore in the land of Edom. ¹⁸And Hiram by his servants sent him ships and servants who knew the sea; and they went with Solomon’s servants to Ophir, and took from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon.

8:17 “Ezion-geber” This was the major city at the north end of the Gulf of Aqaba. It was the major southern seaport for Solomon’s trading endeavors.

8:18 Solomon’s fleet was made up of Phoenician ships and sailors (cf. 1 Kgs. 9:26-28).

“**Ophir**” See note at 1 Chr. 29:4. It was the source or marketplace for (cf. 1 Kgs. 9:28; 10:11):

1. expensive woods
2. jewels
3. gold

See Edwin Yamauchi, *The Stones and the Scriptures*, pp. 69071; NIDOTTE, vol. 1, pp. 321-322.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why are the events different between Samuel/Kings and Chronicles?
2. Did Solomon give Hiram 20 cities or vice versa?
3. Why are the numbers different between Samuel/Kings and Chronicles?
4. Who did Solomon use to build his projects?
5. Why did Solomon move Pharaoh’s daughter out of the “city of David”?
6. Does Solomon perform priestly duties in 2 Chr. 8:12? (cf. 2 Chr. 6:4)
7. Why are “the commandments” of both Moses (2 Chr. 8:13) and David (2 Chr. 8:14) mentioned?

8. Why is the large amount of gold mentioned in 2 Chr. 8;18?

2 CHRONICLES 9

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Visit of the Queen of Sheba	The Queen of Sheba's Praise of Solomon	The Visit of the Queen of Sheba	The Visit of the Queen of Sheba	Solomon in His Glory (MT versing) 8:17-9:12
9:1-9	9:1-4 9:5-9	9:1-4 9:5-9	9:1-4 9:5-8 9:9	
9:10-11	9:10-11	9:10-11	9:10-11	
9:12	9:12	9:12	9:12	
Solomon's Wealth and Power	Solomon's Great Wealth	Solomon's Wealth and Grandeur	King Solomon's Wealth	
9:13-16	9:13-16	9:13-21	9:13-16	9:13-19
9:17-21	9:17-21		9:17-19 9:20-21	9:20-24
9:22-24	9:22-24	9:22-28	9:22-24	
9:25-28	9:25 9:26-28		9:25-28	9:25-28
	Death of Solomon		Summary of Solomon's Reign	The Death of Solomon
9:29-30	9:29-31	9:29-31	9:29-31	9:29-31
Death of Solomon				
9:31				

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:1-9

¹Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with difficult questions. She had a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and a large amount of gold and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was on her heart. ²Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from Solomon which he did not explain to her. ³When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house which he had built, ⁴the food at his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his ministers and their attire, his cupbearers and their attire, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, she was breathless. ⁵Then she said to the king, "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. ⁶Nevertheless I did not believe their reports until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half of the greatness of your wisdom was not told me. You surpass the report that I heard. ⁷How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom. ⁸Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you, setting you on His throne as king for the LORD your God; because your God loved Israel establishing them forever, therefore He made you king over them, to do justice and righteousness." ⁹Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold and a very great *amount of* spices and precious stones; there had never been spice like that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

9:1 "the queen of Sheba" This is paralleled in 1 Kgs. 10:1-13. The best guess on the location of "Sheba" (BDB 985) is southwest Arabia. The area was known as "Saba" (ABD, vol. 5, pp. 1170-1171).

This would be the modern country of Yemen. The real purpose of her visit was probably economic. She wanted to secure trade deals and land routes involving Solomon's new fleet of ships at Ezion-geber and Eloth (cf. 1 Kgs. 9:26; 2 Chr. 8:17-18). This would connect goods from Africa and India. Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.6.5., incorrectly says she was Queen of Egypt and Ethiopia. Modern archaeology has confirmed that it also controlled a portion of Ethiopia (cf. Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 4, p. 470).

“to test Solomon” Apparently Solomon solved her riddles (cf. Jdgs. 14:12). 2 Chronicles 9:2 does not refer to all areas of knowledge.

9:2-6 She was very impressed (i.e., “breathless,” 2 Chr. 9:4) with Solomon's

1. wisdom (i.e., factual, practical, and problem solving)
2. building designs
3. administration
4. servants (i.e., dress and procedures)

9:4

NASB, NEB

“his stairway”

NKJV

“his entry way”

NRSV, NJB,

NET, LXX,

Peshitta

“his burnt offerings”

JPSOA

“the procession”

The UBS Text Project, p. 455, gives the NASB translation a “B” rating (some doubt).

1. and his stairway – וצליתו (BDB 751)
2. and his burnt offerings – וצלותו

The parallel in 1 Kgs. 10:5 has “and his burnt offerings” – וצלתו (BDB 750)

The NASB seems to fit the context best and refers to a royal procession to the store houses of the temple (i.e., “upper chambers,” cf. 2 Chr. 3:9,51) or to a special place for the king to worship in the temple.

9:5 “a true report” Here, the word “true” (BDB 54) refers to the rumors about Solomon's wisdom and wealth.

The VERB form (BDB 52, KB 63, *Hiphil* PERFECT) occurs in 2 Chr. 9:6. Hebrew, as Greek, usually adds a PREPOSITION to clarify the “belief” (i.e., “believe that. . .” or “believe in. . .”). One wonders which use of this word clarifies the Queen of Sheba's faith statements in 2 Chr. 9:8. Did she come to be a believer in Israel's God? Special Topic: Repentance (OT)

SPECIAL TOPIC: BELIEVE, TRUST, FAITH, AND FAITHFULNESS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

I. Opening Statement

It needs to be stated that the use of this theological concept, so crucial to the NT, is not as clearly defined in the OT. It is surely there, but demonstrated in key selected passages and persons.

The OT blends

- A. the individual and the community
- B. the personal encounter and covenant obedience

Faith is both personal encounter and daily lifestyle! It is easier to describe in a person than in a lexical form (i.e., word study). This personal aspect is best illustrated in

- A. Abraham and his seed
- B. David and Israel

These men met/encountered God and their lives were permanently changed (not perfect lives,

but continuing faith). Testing revealed weaknesses and strengths of their faith encounter with God, but the intimate, trusting relationship continued through time! It was tested and refined, but it continued as evidenced by their devotion and lifestyle.

II. Main root used

A. אָמַן (BDB 52)

1. VERB

a. *Qal* stem – to support, to nourish (i.e., 2 Kgs. 10:1,5; Esther 2:7, the non-theological usage)

b. *Niphal* stem – to make sure or firm, to establish, to confirm, to be faithful or trustworthy

(1) of men, Isa. 8:2; 53:1; Jer. 40:14

(2) of things, Isa. 22:23

(3) of God, Deut. 7:9; Isa. 49:7; Jer. 42:5

c. *Hiphil* stem – to stand firm, to believe, to trust

(1) Abraham believed God, Gen. 15:6

(2) the Israelites in Egypt believed, Exod. 4:31; 14:31 (negated in Deut. 1:32)

(3) Israelites believed YHWH spoke through Moses, Exod. 19:9; Ps. 106:12,24

(4) Ahaz did not trust in God, Isa 7:9

(5) whoever believes in it/him, Isa. 28:16

(6) believe truths about God, Isa. 43:10-12

2. NOUN (MASCULINE) – faithfulness (i.e., Deut. 32:20; Isa. 25:1; 26:2)

3. ADVERB – truly, verily, I agree, may it be so (cf. Deut. 27:15-26; 1 Kgs. 1:36; 1 Chr. 16:36; Isa. 65:16; Jer. 11:5; 28:6). This is the liturgical use of “amen” in the OT and NT.

B. אָמֶן (BDB 54) FEMININE NOUN, firmness, faithfulness, truth

1. of men, Isa. 10:20; 42:3; 48:1

2. of God, Exod. 34:6; Ps. 117:2; Isa. 38:18,19; 61:8

3. of truth, Deut. 32:4; 1 Kgs. 22:16; Ps. 33:4; 98:3; 100:5; 119:30; Jer. 9:5; Zech. 8:16

C. אָמוּנָה (BDB 53), firmness, steadfastness, fidelity

1. of hands, Exod. 17:12

2. of times, Isa. 33:6

3. of humans, Jer. 5:3; 7:28; 9:2

4. of God, Ps. 40:11; 88:11; 89:1,2,5,8; 119:138

III. Paul’s use of this OT concept

A. Paul bases his new understanding of YHWH and the OT on his personal encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9; 22; 26).

B. He found OT support for his new understanding in two key OT passages which use the root אָמַן.

1. Gen. 15:6 – Abram’s personal encounter initiated by God (Genesis 12) resulted in an obedient life of faith (Genesis 12-22). Paul alludes to this in Romans 4 and Galatians 3.

2. Isa. 28:16 – those who believe in it (i.e., God’s tested and firmly placed cornerstone) will never be

a. Rom. 9:33, “put to shame” or “be disappointed”

b. Rom. 10:11, same as above

3. Hab. 2:4 – those who know the faithful God should live faithful lives (cf. Jer. 7:28).

Paul uses this text in Rom. 1:17 and Gal. 3:11 (also note Heb. 10:38).

IV. Peter’s use of the OT concept

A. Peter combines

1. Isa. 8:14 – 1 Pet. 2:8 (stumbling block)

2. Isa. 28:16 – 1 Pet. 2:6 (cornerstone)

3. Ps. 118:22 – 1 Pet 2:7 (rejected stone)

B. He turns the unique language that describes Israel, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession” from

1. Deut. 10:15; Isa. 43:21

2. Isa. 61:6; 66:21

3. Exod. 19:6; Deut. 7:6

and now uses it for the church’s faith in Christ

V. John’s use of the concept

A. Its NT usage

The term “believe” is from the Greek term *pisteuō*, which can also be translated “believe,” “faith,” or “trust.” For example, the NOUN does not occur in the Gospel of John, but the VERB is used often. In John 2:23-25 there is uncertainty as to the genuineness of the crowd’s commitment to Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Other examples of this superficial use of the term “believe” are in John 8:31-59 and Acts 8:13, 18-24. True biblical faith is more than an initial response. It must be followed by a process of discipleship (cf. Matt. 13:20-22,31-32).

B. Its use with PREPOSITIONS

1. *eis* means “into.” This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus

a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; 1 John 5:13)

b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45, 48; 12:37,42; Matt. 18:6; Acts 10:43; Phil. 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:8)

c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)

d. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; 1 John 5:10)

e. into Jesus (John 12:11; Acts 19:4; Gal. 2:16)

f. into Light (John 12:36)

g. into God (John 14:1)

2. *en* means “in” as in John 3:15; Mark 1:15; Acts 5:14

3. *epi* means “in” or “upon,” as in Matt. 27:42; Acts 9:42; 11:17; 16:31; 22:19; Rom. 4:5, 24; 9:33; 10:11; 1 Tim. 1:16; 1 Pet. 2:6

4. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION as in Gal. 3:6; Acts 18:8; 27:25; 1 John 3:23; 5:10

5. *hoti*, which means “believe that,” gives content as to what to believe

a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (John 6:69)

b. Jesus is the I Am (John 8:24)

c. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him (John 10:38)

d. Jesus is the Messiah (John 11:27; 20:31)

e. Jesus is the Son of God (John 11:27; 20:31)

f. Jesus was sent by the Father (John 11:42; 17:8,21)

g. Jesus is one with the Father (John 14:10-11)

h. Jesus came from the Father (John 16:27,30)

i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, “I Am” (John 8:24; 13:19)

j. We will live with Him (Rom. 6:8)

k. Jesus died and rose again (1 Thess. 4:14)

VI. Conclusion

A. Biblical faith is the human response to a divine word/promise. God always initiates (i.e., John 6:44,65), but part of this divine communication is the need for humans to respond.

1. repentance

2. faith/trust

3. obedience

4. perseverance
- B. Biblical faith is
 1. a personal relationship (initial faith)
 2. an affirmation of biblical truth (faith in God’s revelation, i.e., Scripture)
 3. an appropriate obedient response to it (daily faithfulness)

Biblical faith is not a ticket to heaven or an insurance policy. It is a personal relationship. This is the purpose of creation, humans being made in the image and likeness (cf. Gen. 1:26-27) of God. The issue is “intimacy.” God desires fellowship, not a certain theological standing! But fellowship with a holy God demands that the children demonstrate the “family” characteristics (i.e., holiness, cf. Lev. 19:2; Matt. 5:48; 1 Pet. 1:15-16). The Fall (cf. Genesis 3) affected our ability to respond appropriately. Therefore, God acted on our behalf (cf. Ezek. 36:27-38), giving us a “new heart” and “new spirit,” which enables us through faith and repentance to fellowship with Him and obey Him!

All three are crucial. All three must be maintained. The goal is to know God (both Hebrew and Greek senses) and to reflect His character in our lives. The goal of faith is not heaven someday, but Christlikeness every day!

- C. Human faithfulness is the result (NT), not the basis (OT) for a relationship with God: human’s faith in His faithfulness; human’s trust in His trustworthiness. The heart of the NT view of salvation is that humans must respond initially and continually to the initiating grace and mercy of God, demonstrated in Christ. He has loved, He has sent, He has provided; we must respond in faith and faithfulness (cf. Eph. 2:8-9 and 10)!

The faithful God wants a faithful people to reveal Himself to a faithless world and bring them to personal faith in Him.

9:7

NASB, NKJV,

JPSOA “your men”

NRSV, NJB “your people”

REB, TEV “your wives”

Peshitta “your servants”

The MT has “your men” (BDB 35), which matches the parallel in 1 Kgs. 10:8.

9:8 She recognized that Solomon’s greatness was based on the blessing of YHWH.

1. who delighted in you
2. who set you on the throne (cf. 1 Chr. 28:5)
3. who represented YHWH as king (i.e., it was YHWH’s throne; He was king, cf. 1 Sam. 8:7; 1 Chr. 28:5)
4. who loved Israel
 - a. established their Davidic king forever (cf. 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17)
 - b. used Solomon to establish a just society
 - c. used Solomon to establish a righteous society (i.e., as a witness of YHWH’s character to the nations)

This phrase is also found in the mouth of Hiram/Hiram, King of Tyre, in 2 Chr. 2:11. This is a major theological affirmation of the fulfillment of YHWH’s promises to

1. David, cf. 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17
2. the Patriarchs

Special Topic: Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs, cf. Deut. 4:37; 7:7-8; 10:15

“justice” See NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 837-845.

“righteousness” See Special Topic: Righteousness.

SPECIAL TOPIC: RIGHTEOUSNESS

“Righteousness” is such a crucial topic that a Bible student must make a personal extensive study of the concept.

In the OT God’s character is described as “just” or “righteous” (VERB, BDB 842, KB 1003; MASCULINE NOUN, BDB 841, KB 1004; FEMININE NOUN, BDB 842, KB 1006). The Mesopotamian term itself comes from a “river reed,” which was used as a construction tool to judge the horizontal straightness of walls and fences. God chose the term to be used metaphorically of His own nature. He is the straight edge (ruler) by which all things are evaluated. This concept asserts God’s righteousness as well as His right to judge.

Man was created in the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1,3; 9:6). Mankind was created for fellowship with God (i.e., Gen. 3:8). All of creation is a stage or backdrop for God and mankind’s interaction. God wanted His highest creation, mankind, to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and be like Him! Mankind’s loyalty was tested (cf. Genesis 3) and the original couple failed the test. This resulted in a disruption of the relationship between God and humanity (cf. Rom. 5:12-21).

God promised to repair and restore the fellowship (cf. Gen. 3:15; see Special Topic: YHWH’s Eternal Redemptive Plan). He does this through His own will and His own Son. Humans were incapable of restoring the breach (cf. Rom. 1:18-3:20; Revelation 5).

After the Fall, God’s first step toward restoration was the concept of covenant based on His invitation and mankind’s repentant, faithful, obedient response (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-38). Because of the Fall, humans were incapable of appropriate action (cf. Rom. 3:21-31; Galatians 3). God Himself had to take the initiative to restore covenant-breaking humans. He did this by

1. declaring mankind righteous through the work of Christ (i.e., forensic righteousness)
2. freely giving mankind righteousness through the work of Christ (i.e., imputed righteousness)
3. providing the indwelling Spirit who produces righteousness (i.e., Christlikeness, the restoration of the image of God) in mankind
4. restoring the fellowship of the Garden of Eden (compare Genesis 1-2 with Revelation 21-22)

However, God requires a covenantal response. God decrees (i.e., freely gives, i.e., Rom. 5:8; 6:23) and provides, but humans must respond and continue to respond in

1. repentance
2. faith
3. lifestyle obedience
4. perseverance

Righteousness, therefore, is a covenantal, reciprocal action between God and His highest creation, based on the character of God, the work of Christ, and the enabling of the Spirit, to which each individual must personally and continually respond appropriately. The concept is called “justification by grace through faith” (i.e., Eph. 2:8-9). The concept is revealed in the Gospels, but not in these terms. It is primarily defined by Paul, who uses the Greek term “righteousness” in its various forms over 100 times.

Paul, being a trained rabbi, uses the term *dikaionē* in its Hebrew sense of the term *tsaddiq* used in the Septuagint, not from Greek literature. In Greek writings the term is connected to someone who conformed to the expectations of Deity and society (i.e., Noah, Job). In the Hebrew sense it is always structured in covenantal terms (see Special Topic: Covenant). YHWH is a just, ethical, moral God. He wants His people to reflect His character. Redeemed mankind becomes a new creature (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15). This newness results in a new lifestyle of godliness (Matthew 5-7; Gal. 5:22-24; James; 1 John). Since Israel was a theocracy there was no clear delineation between the secular (society’s norms) and the sacred (God’s will). This distinction is expressed in the Hebrew and Greek terms being translated into English as “justice” (relating to society) and “righteousness” (relating to religion).

The gospel (good news) of Jesus is that fallen mankind has been restored to fellowship with God. This has been accomplished through the Father’s love, mercy, and grace; the Son’s life, death, and resurrection; and the Spirit’s wooing and drawing to the gospel. Justification is a free act of God, but it

must issue in godliness (Augustine's position, which reflects both the Reformation emphasis on the freeness of the gospel and Roman Catholic emphasis on a changed life of love and faithfulness). For Reformers the term "the righteousness of God" is an OBJECTIVE GENITIVE (i.e., the act of making sinful mankind acceptable to God [positional sanctification], while for the Catholics it is a SUBJECTIVE GENITIVE, which is the process of becoming more like God [experiential progressive sanctification]. In reality it is surely both!!)

In my view all of the Bible from Genesis 4 – Revelation 20 is a record of God's restoring the fellowship of Eden. The Bible starts with God and mankind in fellowship in an earthly setting (cf. Genesis 1-2) and the Bible ends with the same setting (cf. Revelation 21-22). God's image and purpose will be restored!

To document the above discussions note the following selected NT passages illustrating the Greek word group.

1. God is righteous (often connected to God as Judge)
 - a. Romans 3:26
 - b. 2 Thessalonians 1:5-6
 - b. 2 Timothy 4:8
 - d. Revelation 16:5
2. Jesus is righteous
 - a. Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14 (title of Messiah)
 - b. Matthew 27:19
 - c. 1 John 2:1,29; 3:7
3. God's will for His creation is righteousness
 - a. Leviticus 19:2
 - b. Matthew 5:48 (cf. 5:17-20)
4. God's means of providing and producing righteousness
 - a. Romans 3:21-31
 - b. Romans 4
 - c. Romans 5:6-11
 - d. Galatians 3:6-14
5. Given by God
 - a. Romans 3:24; 6:23
 - b. 1 Corinthians 1:30
 - c. Ephesians 2:8-9
6. Received by faith
 - a. Romans 1:17; 3:22,26; 4:3,5,13; 9:30; 10:4,6,10
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:7,21
7. Through acts of the Son
 - a. Romans 5:21
 - b. 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - c. Philippians 2:6-11
8. God's will is that His followers be righteous
 - a. Matthew 5:3-48; 7:24-27
 - b. Romans 2:13; 5:1-5; 6:1-23
 - c. Ephesians 1:4; 2:10
 - d. 1 Timothy 6:11
 - e. 2 Timothy 2:22; 3:16
 - f. John 3:7
 - g. 1 Peter 2:24
9. God will judge the world by righteousness
 - a. Acts 17:31
 - b. 2 Timothy 4:8

Righteousness is a characteristic of God, freely given to sinful mankind through Christ. It is

1. a decree of God
2. a gift of God
3. an act of Christ
4. a life to be lived

But it is also a process of becoming righteous that must be vigorously and steadfastly pursued, which will one day be consummated at the Second Coming. Fellowship with God is restored at salvation but progresses throughout life to become a face-to-face encounter with Him (cf. 1 John 3:2) at death or the *Parousia*!

Here is a good quote to conclude this discussion. It is taken from *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* from IVP

“Calvin, more so than Luther, emphasizes the relational aspect of the righteousness of God. Luther’s view of the righteousness of God seems to contain the aspect of acquittal. Calvin emphasizes the marvelous nature of the communication or imparting of God’s righteousness to us” (p. 834).

For me the believer’s relationship to God has three aspects.

1. the gospel is a person (emphasis of the Eastern Church and Calvin)
2. the gospel is truth (emphasis of Augustine and Luther)
3. the gospel is a changed life (Catholic emphasis)

They are all true and must be held together for a healthy, sound, biblical Christianity. If any one is over emphasized or depreciated, problems occur.

We must welcome Jesus!

We must believe the gospel!

We must pursue Christlikeness!

9:9 These gifts were for several purposes.

1. to recognize Solomon’s greatness
2. to establish trade deals and routes
3. to show the merchandise she could provide

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:10-11

¹⁰The servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir, also brought alnum trees and precious stones. ¹¹From the alnum trees the king made steps for the house of the LORD and for the king’s palace, and lyres and harps for the singers; and none like that was seen before in the land of Judah.

9:10-12 These verses describe two of the imports of Solomon’s fleet.

1. alnum wood (see UBS, *Fauna and Flora of the Bible*, p. 88, also known as “sandalwood”), which was from southern India. Solomon used it in
 - a. steps for the temple and his palace
 - b. several musical instruments
2. precious stones (but the kind is unspecified)

9:11

NASB, NRSV,

NJB “steps”

NKJV “walkway”

TEV “stairs”

JPSOA “ramps”

REB “stands”

LXX “ascents”

Peshitta “stools”

KJV “terraces”

The MT has “highway” (BDB 701) but the BDB suggests it is a corruption of “supports” (BDB 703, cf. 1 Kgs. 10:12). However, this textual variation is not mentioned in the UBS Text Project.

It has been suggested that the word refers to another type of musical instrument because of the immediate context (i.e., *Tyndale OT Series*, 2 Chronicles, p. 353).

It has also been speculated that based on an Assyrian root, it means “gateway.”

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:12

¹²**King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire which she requested besides a return for what she had brought to the king. Then she turned and went to her own land with her servants.**

9:12 Solomon reciprocated the queen’s gifts by giving her even more (i.e., all she desired).

1. commercial trade deals
2. some of Solomon’s treasures
3. a male child (i.e., Ethiopian and Jewish tradition; descendants of this child were leaders in Ethiopia until WW II)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:13-16

¹³**Now the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, ¹⁴besides that which the traders and merchants brought; and all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon. ¹⁵King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 *shekels* of beaten gold on each large shield. ¹⁶He made 300 shields of beaten gold, using three hundred shekels of gold on each shield, and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon.**

9:13-21 These verses describe the opulent income and things Solomon produced from his imports (2 Chr. 9:21).

1. 666 talents of gold per year from his fleet of ships, 2 Chr. 9:13-14
2. 200 large ceremonial or decorative shields of gold, for “the house of the forest of Lebanon” (i.e., Solomon’s palace), 2 Chr. 9:15-16
3. a throne of ivory, precious wood inlaid with ivory carvings and covered in gold, a series of six steps, and a footstool of gold connected to the throne, 2 Chr. 9:17-18a (cf. 1 Kgs. 10:18-21)
4. in the throne room were several lion statues, also covered with gold, 2 Chr. 9:18b-19
5. all the vessels of Solomon’s throne room and “the house of the forest of Lebanon,” were of gold, 2 Chr. 9:20
6. the ships of Tarshish every three years brought
 - a. gold
 - b. silver
 - c. ivory (i.e., elephants, BDB 1042)
 - d. apes (BDB 880)
 - e. peacocks (BDB 1067)

Tarshish may refer to a type of ship and not a seaport (Jewish Study Bible, p. 178).

Special Topic: Tarshish

SPECIAL TOPIC: TARSHISH

This place name (BDB 1076 II, KB 797 I) could refer to

1. a city in southern Spain on the Atlantic side, which was a Phoenician colony (i.e., Tartessus, Isa. 23:7)
2. the island of Sardinia (cf. Gen. 10:4)

3. a city on the north African coast (Carthage was a colony of Phoenicia; from LXX of Ezek. 27:12)
4. a metaphor for a far distant port (KB 1797, B., d.)
5. a type of large sea-going commercial ship (cf. Isa. 23:1)
6. a rival maritime nation (cf. 1 Kgs. 10:22)

The book of Jonah asserts it is to the west of Israel (cf. Jon. 1:3; 4:2), how far is not stated but by implication, it is as far as Jonah could get from the God of Israel.

9:14

NASB, NRSV,

JPSOA “that which traders and merchants brought”

NKJV “besides *what* the traveling merchants brought”

TEV “in addition to the taxes paid by the traders and merchants”

NJB “beside what tolls and foreign trade brought in”

REB “in addition to the tolls levied on merchants and on traders”

Peshitta “besides the taxes from the cities and the traffic which the merchants brought”

The UBS Text Project, p. 456, gives the NASB form a “B” rating (some doubt). The same textual issue is also found in 1 Kgs. 10:15.

The NIDOTTE, vol. 3, p. 601, lists Solomon’s sources of revenue.

1. internally from taxation
2. externally from
 - a. tolls/tariffs on merchants
 - b. tribute from Arabic sheiks in the Negev
 - c. tribute collected from provincial governors
 - (1) possibly vassal states, cf. 2 Sam. 8:1-14
 - (2) royal appointees (cf. 1 Kgs. 4:7,27-28)

9:14-15 The weight of gold is not specified in the MT. Most translations assume a “shekel” but the 1 Kgs. 10:16-17 parallel has “minas.”

See Special Topic: ANE Weights and Volumes.

9:16 “the house of the forest of Lebanon” This was the name for Solomon’s palace because of the paneling and covering of cedar (cf. 1 Kgs. 7:2; 10:17,21; 2 Chr. 9:16,20).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:17-21

¹⁷Moreover, the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁸There were six steps to the throne and a footstool in gold attached to the throne, and arms on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the arms. ¹⁹Twelve lions were standing there on the six steps on the one side and on the other; nothing like *it* was made for any *other* kingdom. ²⁰All King Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; silver was not considered valuable in the days of Solomon. ²¹For the king had ships which went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks.

9:18 “footstool” This root (BDB 461) is used only here. The VERB form (BDB 461) means “to subdue.” Apparently this piece of furniture was where servants and visitors knelt at the king’s feet.

NASB, LXX “attached to”

NKJV, NRSV,

TEV, NJB,

JPSOA “fastened to”

REB “encased in”

This VERB (BDB 28, KB 31) usually means “to grasp,” “to take possession.” Possibly its use here (*Hophal* PARTICIPLE) reflects a different root (i.e., Akkadian), “to cover,” as in Job 26:9 (i.e., *Piel* stem). If so, the meaning in this context would be “overlaid” or “encased” in gold. This fits the context well. Most of the temple and Solomon’s palace were covered in gold.

9:20 Solomon’s palace is described in 1 Kgs. 7:1-12. Apparently silver had no value because gold was so plentiful.

9:21 “once every three years” The ships of Tarshish may have been large ocean-going vessels that traveled long distances for rare, expensive, and exotic goods. This trip would last over a year, one way (see Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.7.2). It must be remembered that in Jewish thought a part of a time designation was counted as a whole (i.e., Jesus in the tomb 3 days). So, this could be parts of two years and one whole year.

These exotic animals were an ANE way to show wealth and power (cf. 1 Kgs. 10:22).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:22-24

²²So King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. ²³And all the kings of the earth were seeking the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart. ²⁴They brought every man his gift, articles of silver and gold, garments, weapons, spices, horses and mules, so much year by year.

9:22-24 Solomon’s fame spread throughout the ANE. Many countries sent gifts.

1. silver and gold articles
2. garments (i.e., an ANE item of wealth and luxury)
3. weapons (or decorated armor, BDB 676)
4. spices (new or rare)
5. horses (cf. 2 Chr. 9:28)
6. mules (a royal mount)

The items usually used to denote wealth in the ANE are

1. precious metals
2. precious jewels
3. festive clothes
4. food stocks

9:23 “of the earth” the Hebrew term “earth” has a wide semantic range.

1. a piece of ground, field
2. a country, region
3. all the earth

Here, #2 fits best and refers to all the kingdom under Solomon’s influence (cf. 1 Kgs. 4:21).

Special Topic: Land, Country, Earth (OT).

SPECIAL TOPIC: LAND, COUNTRY, EARTH (*erets*)

Like all Hebrew roots, context is crucial in determining the intended meaning of the original author. The limited number of Hebrew roots (i.e., an ancient Semitic language) causes each of them to function with different meanings and connotations. This root (BDB 75, KB 90) can mean

1. the whole planet (although the ancients did not realize its size and shape. Usually it is used of the “known world”)
 - a. Genesis 1-2; 6-9; 10:32; 11:1,4,8,9; 14:19; 18:18,25; 22:18, etc.
 - b. Exodus 9:29; 19:5
 - c. Psalm 8:1,9; 24:1; 47:2,7; Jer. 25:26,29,30

- d. Proverbs 8:31
 - e. Isaiah 2:19,21; 6:3; 11:4,9,12; 12:5
2. earth in contrast to heaven
 - a. Genesis 1:2
 - b. Exodus 20:4
 - c. Deuteronomy 5:8; 30:19
 - d. Isaiah 37:16
 3. metaphor for the human inhabitants of the planet
 - a. Genesis 6:11; 11:1
 - b. 1 Kings 2:2; 10:24
 - c. Job 37:12
 - d. Psalm 33:8; 66:4
 4. country or territory
 - a. Genesis 10:10,11; 11:28,31
 - b. esp. Israel (a gift from YHWH, He owns it)
 5. soil, cf. Joshua 7:21
 6. underworld (KB 91)
 - a. Exodus 15:12
 - b. Psalm 22:29; 71:20; Jer. 17:13; Jonah 2:6
 7. new world
 - a. Isaiah 9:1-7; 65:17; 66:22
 - b. see NT, Rom. 8:19-22; Gal. 6:15; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1,5

Remember, context, context, context is crucial. Often cognate roots can help, but not always.

The book that helped me begin thinking about how this word is used in different senses is Bernard Namm, *Christian View of Science and Scripture*. He convinced me in local flood (i.e., Genesis 6-9). Be careful of basing your theology on the definition of English words!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:25-28

²⁵Now Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁶He was the ruler over all the kings from the Euphrates River even to the land of the Philistines, and as far as the border of Egypt. ²⁷The king made silver *as common* as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland. ²⁸And they were bringing horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all countries.

9:25-28 These verses describe the military power and extent of his vast kingdom. All of this wealth, wisdom, and power were gifts from YHWH (cf. 2 Chr. 1:11-12).

9:25 “4,000 stalls for horses and chariots and 12,000 horsemen” This number corresponds to 1 Kgs. 10:20 and 2 Chr. 1:14. The same numbers in 1 Kgs. 4:26 are the same for the number of “horsemen,” but the number of “horses” is inflated to “40,000.” See discussion at 2 Chr. 8:11 about the number problems in the historical books.

It is surprising how the Chronicles emphasizes Solomon’s wealth and power, when Deut. 17:14-17 restricts all of this.

1. do not multiply horses
2. do not get horses from Egypt (cf. 2 Chr. 1:16)
3. do not multiply wives
4. do not multiply silver and gold

The rabbis say the words “for himself” explain the restrictions but in context, this seems dubious.

9:26 This was the upper limit of YHWH's promise to Abraham (cf. Gen.15:18; Exod. 23:31; Deut. 1:7-8).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:29-30

²⁹Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, are they not written in the records of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? ³⁰Solomon reigned forty years in Jerusalem over all Israel.

9:29-31 These verses are the typical summary information found at the conclusion of a king's reign. It involves a list of written resources used to document Solomon's reign.

1. writings of Nathan the prophet
2. writings of Ahijah the Shilonite (cf. 1 Kgs. 11:29-30; 12:15)
3. visions of Iddo the seer, about Jeroboam, son of Nebat (Josephus says this is the unnamed prophet of 1 Kgs. 13:1-10)

“prophet. . .seer” For the different words used to describe this OT office/gift, see Special Topic: The Different Hebrew Terms for Prophet.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DIFFERENT HEBREW TERMS FOR PROPHET

Biblical Terms

1. *ro'eh* = “seer” (BDB 906), 1 Sam. 9:9. This reference shows the transition to the term *nabi*, which means “prophet” and comes from the root, “to call.” *Ro'eh* is from the general Hebrew term “to see.” This person understood God's ways and plans and was consulted to ascertain God's will in a matter.
2. *hozeh* = “seer” (BDB 302), 2 Sam. 24:11; Amos 7:12. It is basically a synonym of *ro'eh*. It is from a rarer Hebrew term “to see in a vision.” The PARTICIPLE form is used most often to refer to prophets.
3. *nabi'* = “prophet” (BDB 611), cognate of Akkadian verb *nabu* = “to call” and Arabic *naba'a* = “to announce.” This is the most common OT term to designate a prophet. It is used over 300 times. The exact etymology is uncertain, but “to call” at present seems the best option. Possibly the best understanding comes from YHWH's description of Moses' relationship to Pharaoh through Aaron (cf. Exod. 4:10-16; 7:1; Deut. 5:5). A prophet is someone who speaks for God to His people (cf. Amos 3:8; Jer. 1:7,17; Ezek. 3:4).
4. All three terms are used of the prophet's office in 1 Chr. 29:29; Samuel – *Ro'eh*; Nathan – *Nabi'*; and Gad – *Hozeh*.
5. The phrase *'ish ha - 'elohim*, “man of God,” is also a broader designation for a speaker for God. It is used some 76 times in the OT in the sense of “prophet.”
6. The NT word “prophet” is Greek in origin. It comes from (1) *pro*, which means “before” or “for”; (2) *phemi*, which means “to speak.”

9:30 “reigned forty years” This was the same length as David's reign. See Special Topic: Symbolic Numbers in Scripture, #7.

SPECIAL TOPIC: SYMBOLIC NUMBERS IN SCRIPTURE

- A. Certain numbers functioned both as numerals and symbols.
 1. One – God (e.g., Deut. 6:4; Eph. 4:4-6)
 2. Four – the whole earth (i.e., four corners, four winds, e.g., Isa. 11:12; Jer. 49:36; Dan.

7:2; 11:4; Zech. 2:6; Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27; Rev. 7:1)

3. Six – human imperfection (one less than 7, e.g., Rev. 13:18)

4. Seven – divine perfection (the seven days of creation). Notice the symbolic usages in

Revelation:

- a. seven candlesticks, Rev. 1:12,20; 2:1
- b. seven stars, Rev. 1:16,20; 2:1
- c. seven churches, Rev. 1:20
- d. seven spirits of God, Rev. 3:1; 4:5; 5:6
- e. seven lamps, Rev. 4:5
- f. seven seals, Rev. 5:1,5
- g. seven horns and seven eyes, Rev. 5:6
- h. seven angels, Rev. 8:2,6; 15:1,6,7,8; 16:1; 17:1
- i. seven trumpets, Rev. 8:2,6
- j. seven thunders, Rev. 10:3,4
- k. seven thousand, Rev. 11:13
- l. seven heads, Rev. 13:1; 17:3,7,9
- m. seven plagues, Rev. 15:1,6,8; 21:9
- n. seven bowls, Rev. 15:7; 21:9
- o. seven kings, Rev. 17:10

5. Ten – completeness

- a. use in Gospels
 - (1) Matt. 20:24; 25:1,28
 - (2) Mark 10:41
 - (3) Luke 14:31; 15:8; 17:12,17; 19:13,16,17,24,25
- b. use in Revelation
 - (1) Rev. 2:10, ten days of tribulation
 - (2) Rev. 12:3; 17:3,7,12,16, ten horns
 - (3) Rev. 13:1, ten crowns
- c. multiples of 10 in Revelation
 - (1) 144,000 = 12x12x1000, cf. Rev. 7:4; 14:1,3
 - (2) 1,000 = 10x10x10, cf. Rev. 20:2,3,6

6. Twelve – human organization

- a. twelve sons of Jacob (i.e., twelve tribes of Israel, Gen. 35:22; 49:28)
- b. twelve pillars, Exod. 24:4
- c. twelve stones on breastplate of High Priest, Exod. 28:21; 39:14
- d. twelve loaves, for table in Holy Place (symbolic of God's provision for the twelve tribes), Lev. 24:5; Exod. 25:30
- e. twelve spies, Deut. 1:23
- f. twelve rock carriers, Jos. 3:22; 4:2,3,4,8,9,20
- g. twelve apostles, Matt. 10:1
- h. use in Revelation
 - (1) twelve thousand sealed, Rev. 7:5-8
 - (2) twelve stars, Rev. 12:1
 - (3) twelve gates, twelve angels, twelve tribes, Rev. 21:12
 - (4) twelve foundation stones, names of the twelve apostles, Rev. 21:14
 - (5) New Jerusalem was twelve thousand stadia squared, Rev. 21:16
 - (6) twelve gates made of twelve pearls, Rev. 21:21
 - (7) tree of life with twelve kinds of fruit, Rev. 22:2

7. Forty – number for time

- a. sometimes literal (exodus and wilderness wanderings, e.g., Exod. 16:35); Deut. 2:7;

8:2

- b. can be literal or symbolic
 - (1) flood, Gen. 7:4,17; 8:6
 - (2) Moses on Mt. Sinai, Exod. 24:18; 34:28; Deut. 9:9,11,18,25
 - (3) divisions of Moses life:
 - (a) forty years in Egypt
 - (b) forty years in the desert
 - (c) forty years leading Israel
 - (4) Jesus fasted forty days, Matt. 4:2; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2
 - c. Note (by means of a Concordance) the number of times this number appears in time designation in the Bible!
8. Seventy – round number for people
- a. Israel, Exod. 1:5
 - b. seventy elders, Exod. 24:1,9
 - c. eschatological, Dan. 9:2,24
 - d. mission team, Luke 10:1,17
 - e. forgiveness (70x7), Matt. 18:22
- B. Good references
- 1. John J. Davis, *Biblical Numerology*
 - 2. D. Brent Sandy, *Plowshares and Pruning Hooks*

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 9:31

³¹And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam reigned in his place.

9:31 “slept with his fathers” This is a Hebraic idiom for death. The OT Israelite believed in a shadowy, conscious afterlife with a future resurrection (i.e., Dan. 12:2).

Special Topic: Where Are the Dead?

SPECIAL TOPIC: WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

I. Old Testament

A. All humans go to *Sheol* (there are no cognate roots and the etymology is uncertain, BDB 982, KB 1368), which was a way of referring to the place where the dead live, or the grave, mostly in Wisdom Literature and Isaiah. In the OT it was a shadowy, conscious but joyless, existence (cf. Job 10:21-22; 38:17).

B. *Sheol* characterized

- 1. associated with God’s judgment (fire), Deut. 32:22
- 2. a prison with gates, Job 38:17; Ps. 9:13; 107:18
- 3. A land of no return, Job 7:9 (an Akkadian title for death)
- 4. a land/realm of darkness, Job 10:21-22; 17:13; 18:18
- 5. a place of silence, Ps. 28:1; 31:17; 94:17; 115:17; Isa. 47:5
- 6. associated with punishment even before Judgment Day, Ps. 18:4-5
- 7. associated with *abaddon* (destruction; see Special Topic: *Abaddon*. . . *Apollyon*), in which God is also present, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Amos 9:2
- 8. associated with “the Pit” (grave), Ps. 16:10; 88:3-4; Isa. 14:15; Ezek. 31:15-17
- 9. wicked descend alive into *Sheol*, Num. 16:30,33; Job 7:9; Ps. 55:15
- 10. personified often as an animal with a large mouth, Num. 16:30; Pro. 1:12; Isa. 5:14; Hab. 2:5
- 11. people there called *Repha’im* (i.e., “spirits of the dead”), Job 26:5; Pro. 2:18; 12:16;

26:14; Isa. 14:9-11)

12. however, YHWH is present even here, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Pro. 15:11

II. New Testament

A. The Hebrew *Sheol* is translated by the Greek *Hades* (the unseen world)

B. *Hades* characterized (much like *Sheol*)

1. refers to death, Matt. 16:18

2. linked to death, Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14

3. often analogous to the place of permanent punishment (*Gehenna*), Matt. 11:23 (OT quote); Luke 10:15; 16:23-24

4. often analogous to the grave, Luke 16:23

C. Possibly divided (rabbis)

1. righteous part called *Paradise* (really another name for heaven, cf. 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7), Luke 23:43

2. wicked part called *Tartarus*, a holding place far below *Hades*, 2 Peter 2:4, where it is a holding place for evil angels (cf. Genesis 6; I Enoch); it is associated with the “Abyss,” Luke 8:31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 9:1-2,11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1,3

D. *Gehenna*

1. Reflects the OT phrase, “the valley of the sons of Hinnom,” (south of Jerusalem). It was the place where the Phoenician fire god, *Molech* (BDB 574, KB 591), was worshiped by child sacrifice (cf. 2 Kgs. 16:3; 21:6; 2 Chr. 28:3; 33:6), which was forbidden in Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5.

2. Jeremiah changed it from a place of pagan worship into a site of YHWH’s judgment (cf. Jer. 7:32; 19:6-7). It became the place of fiery, eternal judgment in I Enoch 90:26-27 and Sib. 1:103.

3. The Jews of Jesus’ day were so appalled by their ancestors’ participation in pagan worship by child sacrifice, that they turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Many of

Jesus’ metaphors for eternal judgment came from this landfill (fire, smoke, worms, stench, cf. Mark 9:44,46). The term *Gehenna* is used only by Jesus (except in James 3:6).

4. Jesus’ usage of *Gehenna*

a. fire, Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43

b. permanent, Mark 9:48 (Matt. 25:46)

c. place of destruction (both soul and body), Matt. 10:28

d. paralleled to *Sheol*, Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9

e. characterizes the wicked as “son of hell,” Matt. 23:15

f. result of judicial sentence, Matt. 23:33; Luke 12:5

g. the concept of *Gehenna* is parallel to the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14) or the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 13:42,50; Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14-15; 21:8). It is possible the lake of fire becomes the permanent dwelling place of humans (from *Sheol*) and evil angels (from *Tartarus*, 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude v. 6, or the abyss, cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-11; 20:1,3).

h. it was not designed for humans, but for Satan and his angels, Matt. 25:41

E. It is possible, because of the overlap of *Sheol*, *Hades*, and *Gehenna* that

1. originally all humans went to *Sheol/Hades*

2. their experience there (good/bad) is exacerbated after Judgment Day, but the place of the wicked remains the same (this is why the KJV translated *hades* (grave) as *gehenna* (hell).

3. the only NT text to mention torment before Judgment is the parable of Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus and the Rich Man). *Sheol* is also described as a place of punishment now (cf. Deut. 32:22; Ps. 18:1-5). However, one cannot establish a doctrine on a parable.

III. Intermediate state between death and resurrection

- A. The NT does not teach the “immortality of the soul,” which is one of several ancient views of the afterlife that assert:
 1. human souls exist before their physical life
 2. human souls are eternal before and after physical death
 3. often the physical body is seen as a prison and death as release back to pre-existent state
- 2. The NT hints at a disembodied state between death and resurrection
 1. Jesus speaks of a division between body and soul, Matt. 10:28
 2. Abraham may already have a body, Mark 12:26-27; Luke 16:23
 3. Moses and Elijah have a physical body at the transfiguration, Matthew 17
 4. Paul asserts that at the Second Coming the believers with Christ will get their new bodies first, 1 Thess. 4:13-18
 5. Paul asserts that believers get their new spiritual bodies on Resurrection Day, 1 Cor. 15:23,52
 6. Paul asserts that believers do not go to *Hades*, but at death are with Jesus, 2 Cor. 5:6,8; Phil. 1:23. Jesus overcame death and took the righteous to heaven with Him, 1 Pet. 3:18-22.

IV. Heaven

- A. This term is used in three senses in the Bible.
 1. the atmosphere above the earth, Gen. 1:1,8; Isa. 42:5; 45:18
 2. the starry heavens, Gen. 1:14; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 148:4; Heb. 4:14; 7:26
 3. the place of God’s throne, Deut. 10:14; 1 Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4; Eph. 4:10; Heb. 9:24 (third heaven, 2 Cor. 12:2)

- C. The Bible does not reveal much about the afterlife, probably because fallen humans have no way or capacity to understand (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9).
- D. Heaven is both a place (cf. John 14:2-3) and a person (cf. 2 Cor. 5:6,8). Heaven may be a restored Garden of Eden (Genesis 1-2; Revelation 21-22). The earth will be cleansed and restored (cf. Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; 2 Pet. 3:10). The image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) is restored in Christ. Now the intimate fellowship of the Garden of Eden is possible again.

However, this may be metaphorical (heaven as a huge, cubed city of Rev. 21:9-27) and not literal. 1 Corinthians 15 describes the difference between the physical body and the spiritual body as the seed to the mature plant. Again, 1 Cor. 2:9 (a quote from Isa. 64:4 and 65:17) is a great promise and hope! I know that when we see Him we will be like Him (cf. 1 John 3:2).

V. Helpful resources

- A. William Hendriksen, *The Bible On the Life Hereafter*
- B. Maurice Rawlings, *Beyond Death’s Door*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why is the reign of Solomon connected so often to the reign of David?
2. What about these Davidic kings would a post-exilic community in Judah take as encouragement?

3. Why are the theological affirmations of both Hiram/Hiram (2 Chr. 2:12) and the Queen of Shebe (2 Chr. 9:8) significant?

2 CHRONICLES 10

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Rehoboam's Reign of Folly	The Revolt Against Rehoboam	The division of the Kingdom	The Northern Tribes Revolt	The Schism
10:1-5	10:1-5	10:1-5	10:1-4 10:5	10:1-5
10:6-11	10:6-11	10:6-11	10:6 10:7 10:8-9 10:10-11	10:6-16a
10:12-15	10:12-15	10:12-15	10:12-15	
10:16-19 (16b)	10:16-19 (16b)	10:16-19 (16b)	10:16	(16a) 10:16b-17
			10:17	

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

A. This begins the Chronicler's account of the "Divided Monarchy" (cf. 2 Chr. 10:1-36:23).

B. He almost completely ignores the northern kingdom (i.e., Israel). He views it as a rebellious house that rejected the Davidic covenant (cf. 2 Chr. 10:19). He focuses on Judah, the temple, and the Davidic seed.

C. Much of this material is unique and not covered by Kings. The Chronicler used many sources for his historical record.

D. The Chronicler adopts the history of the Davidic Monarchy to encourage and strengthen the post-exilic faith community in restored Judah.

E. See Special Topic: Kings of the Divided Kingdom

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 10:1-5

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

10:1 "Rehoboam" This is Solomon's oldest son. The summary of his reign is in 2 Chr. 12:13-16. His name (BDB 932) is a word play on the VERB "to grow wide" or "grow large" (BDB 931).

"Shechem" This is the name of the ridge between Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim. This was the site where Joshua placed the stones from the Jordan (cf. Deut. 27:4). It was the site of a covenant renewal

ceremony just after Israel entered Canaan. It is similar to the curses and blessings of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. The Levites divided and went up on the two mountains. One pronounced the covenant blessing for obedience and the other group the curses for disobedience (cf. Deut. 11:29; 27:13; Josh 8:30-35).

The parallel of this event is in 1 Kgs. 12:1-20.

10:2 Jereboam, the exiled Ephraimitic labor, heard of Rehoboam's inauguration and returned from Egypt to organize a revolt (cf. 1 Kgs. 11:26-40). The problems were the royal

1. taxation burden (cf. 2 Chr. 9:14)
2. forced labor quotas (cf. 1 Kgs. 5:13; 11:28)
3. support for the royal table (cf. 2 Chr. 9:4)

See NIDOTTE, vol. 4, p. 733, #1.

10:4 Israel collectively expresses her problems with Solomon's reign (i.e., "hard yoke," see above).

1. reduce the forced labor quotas
2. reduce the taxation

10:5 Rehoboam asked for three days to review their requests.

2 Chronicles 10:6-11 describes the advice he received from

1. the counselors of Solomon (2 Chr. 10:6-7)
2. his peers at court (2 Chr. 10:8-10)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 10:6-11

"Then King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, "How do you counsel *me* to answer this people?" ⁷They spoke to him, saying, "If you will be kind to this people and please them and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever." ⁸But he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had given him, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him. ⁹So he said to them, "What counsel do you give that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, 'Lighten the yoke which your father put on us'?" ¹⁰The young men who grew up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you shall say to the people who spoke to you, saying, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter for us.' Thus you shall say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins! ¹¹Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I *will discipline you* with scorpions.'"

10:7-8 Here is the advice of Solomon's counselors.

1. be kind to them
2. please them
3. speak good to them
4. if #1-3, then they will be faithful to you

10:10 This is the advice of his royal peers and courtiers his own age.

1. do not give in to their requests
2. make your demands even stronger
 - a. thigh/loins vs. little finger
 - b. whips vs. scorpions
3. i.e., "show them who is boss!"

"My little finger" This is the MT NOUN "little" (BDB 882, cf. 1 Kgs. 12:10). "Finger" is just speculation.

10:11 "scorpion" This (BDB 785) may refer to a type of whip. The term is used

1. literally in Deut. 18:15
2. symbolically in Ezek. 2:6 (i.e., enemies)
3. for a whip in 1 Kgs. 12:11,14

Josephus, *Antiq* 8.8.2., says that it refers to

1. a shrub with thorns
2. a kind of whip

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 10:12-15

¹²So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day as the king had directed, saying, “Return to me on the third day.” ¹³The king answered them harshly, and King Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the elders. ¹⁴He spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father disciplined you with whips, but I *will discipline you* with scorpions.” ¹⁵So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn *of events* from God that the LORD might establish His word, which He spoke through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

10:15 The king’s hardened position was from the Lord. The splitting of the kingdom was a direct result of Solomon’s idolatry in his old age (cf. 1 Kgs. 11:26-40).

It is obvious that several bad choices were made

1. by Solomon
2. by Rehoboam
3. by Jeroboam I

but behind them all was the will of God (cf. 1 Kgs. 12:15; 2 Chr. 11:4). History is in His hand but humans are still responsible for their choices and the consequences!

Special Topic: God Hardened

SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD HARDENED (John 12:40; Rom. 9:18; 11:7,25)

This shocking statement has become the theological conflict between competing theological systems:

1. God’s sovereignty vs. human free will
2. Augustine vs. Pelagius
3. Calvin vs. Arminius

For me both are biblical truths. Both truths must be held in a theological tension (see Special Topic: Election/Predestination and the Need for A Theological Balance). The concept of “covenant” holds them together (see Special Topic: Covenant). God always comes first, sets the agenda, and calls to fallen mankind, (e.g., John 6:44,65), but we are responsible for our choices (e.g., John 1:12; 3:16). Human responsibility and its consequences mandate a human freedom (i.e., soul competency; see Special Topic: Eastern Literature [biblical paradoxes])! Moral actions are based on real choices. Choices have consequences in time and eternity! The Scriptures assert both truths (i.e., theological poles; see Special Topic: Eastern Literature [biblical paradoxes])!

It is surely possible that this theological difficulty for us is predicated on our misunderstanding of ancient Hebrew theological idioms. Israel’s unique monotheism (see Special Topic: Monotheism) demanded she defend it at all points. YHWH’s cause of all things was a Hebrew way of affirming monotheism (see Special Topic: Monotheism). Nothing just happened. There was one and only one cause—YHWH. The texts that assert this (cf. Eccl. 7:14; Isa. 45:7; Amos 6:3) have caused moderns to:

1. attribute evil to God
2. assert a radical form of sovereignty to God

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 10:16-19

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

Every man to your tents, O Israel;

Now look after your own house, David.”

So all Israel departed to their tents. ¹⁷But as for the sons of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. ¹⁸Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was over the forced labor, and the sons of Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

10:16 This was a formal repudiation of

1. Rehoboam
2. Solomon
3. David

This was a symbolic rejection of YHWH's promises to David, cf. 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17. 2 Chronicles 10:19 expresses this terrible reality.

“to your tents” This is a Hebraic idiom for returning to one's home. Here, it denotes “leaving” the Davidic seed for the Ephraimitic seed (i.e., Jeroboam I).

This same phrase was used in the rejection of David in 2 Sam. 20:1-2.

10:17 The tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and most of Levi remained with Rehoboam and the temple.

The Levites who lived in the north relocated to the southern kingdom (cf. 2 Chr. 11:13-17). After Rehoboam became disobedient, the priests rejected him (cf. 2 Chr. 11:17).

10:18 The tribes' anger can be seen in their stoning Hadoram, who was over the forced labor of Rehoboam. In 1 Kings he is called “Adoniram” (cf. 1 Kgs. 4:6; 5:14) or “Adoram” (1 Kgs. 12:18). A man by the same name was appointed by David to the same post (cf. 2 Sam. 20:24). This may be a family name.

“stoned him” See Special Topics:

1. Special Topic: Stone to Death
2. Special Topic: The Death Penalty in Israel

SPECIAL TOPIC: STONE TO DEATH (taken from Dr. Utley's notes on Deut. 13:10)

The MT has the VERB for “stoning to death” (BDB 709, KB 768, *Qal* PERFECT) and the term for “stone” (BDB 6), which literally would be “stone him with stones.” Stoning was a capital punishment which was done by the whole covenantal community (cf. Lev. 20:2,27; 24:13-23; Num. 15:32-36; Deut. 13:10; 21:21; Jos. 7:22-26) to rid itself of evil.

This is not the regular term used for judicial capital punishment. This term speaks of the urgency of immediate, radical purging of evil (cf. Exod. 32:27; Lev. 20:15,16; Num. 25:5; Deut. 13:10; Ezek. 9:6).

Persons were stoned by the community for:

1. idolatry, Lev. 20:2-5 (also possibly 6-8); Deut. 13:1-5; 17:2-7
2. blasphemy, Lev. 24:10-23; 1 Kings 11-14; Luke 4:29; Acts 7:58 (both reflect Exod. 22:28);

also note John 8:59; 10:31; 11:8

3. rejection of parental authority, Deut. 21:18-21 (possibly Lev. 20:9)
4. marital unfaithfulness, Deut. 22:22,23-27 (possibly Lev. 20:10-16)
5. treason (known disobedience to YHWH), Joshua 7

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DEATH PENALTY IN ISRAEL

Ancient Israel was to reflect the character of YHWH to the world (cf. Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Exod.

19:5-6). When intentional covenant rebellion distorted this missionary purpose, serious consequences manifested (i.e., death penalty).

The Pentateuch lists several categories:

1. sins against YHWH
 - a. Canaanite worship practices – Exod. 22:18; Lev. 20:2-3,27; Deut. 18:10-11
 - b. idolatry (heavenly hosts) – Exod. 22:20; Deut. 17:2-7
 - c. blasphemy – Exod. 22:28; Lev. 24:15-16
 - d. false prophecy – Deut. 13:1-11; 18:20-22
 - e. Sabbath violations – Exod. 31:14-15; 35:2
2. sexual sins
 - a. incest – Lev. 20:11-21
 - b. fornication – Lev. 19:29; 21:9; Deut. 22:13-21; 23:17-18
 - c. adultery – Exod. 20:14; Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:23-24
 - d. sodomy – Lev. 18:22; 20:13
 - e. bestiality – Exod. 22:19; Lev. 20:15-16
3. violation of covenant regulations against fellow Israelites
 - a. murder – Exod. 20:13; 21:12-14; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:16-21; Deut. 5:17
 - b. kidnaping (to sell) – Exod. 21:16; Deut. 24:7 and possibly Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:19
 - c. rebellion against parents – Deut. 21:18-21
 - d. false witness
 - e. taking holy war spoils – Joshua 7

The methods of execution also varied.

1. stoning – most common
2. burning – Gen. 38:24; Lev. 20:14; 21:9
3. hanging/impaling – Deut. 21:22-23
4. sword – Deut. 13:15

Exceptions for special cases.

1. cities of refuge and subsequent trial – Joshua 20
2. stringent investigations of accusations – Deut. 13:15; 17:4; 19:18
3. need for two witnesses – Num. 35:36; Deut. 17:6; 19:15

The death penalty was to be

1. a way to cleanse the land – Deut. 13:5; 17:12; 19:13,19; 21:9,21; 22:21,22,24; 24:7
2. a deterrent to others – Deut. 17:13; 19:20; 21:21

3. a way of stopping clan violence (i.e., no personal revenge, except regulations set for blood-avenger)

See *Ancient Israel*, vol. 1, pp. 147-163.

10:19 “to this day” See note at 2 Chr. 5:9.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why did Rehoboam go to Shechem when he had already been inaugurated king in Judah?
2. Who is Jeroboam?
3. Why were the northern tribes mad at Solomon?
4. What is the significant theological point of 2 Chr. 10:15?
5. How is 2 Chr. 10:16 related to 2 Sam. 20:1-2?
6. What is the theological significance of 2 Chr. 10:19? (also 10:16)

2 CHRONICLES 11

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Rehoboam Reigns Over Judah and Builds Cities 11:1-4	11:1-4	The Beginning of the Reign of Rehoboam 11:1-4	Shemaiah's Prophecy 11:1-4	(MT versing) 11:1-4
11:5-12	Rehoboam Fortifies the Cities 11:5-12	11:5-12	Rehoboam Fortifies the Cities 11:5-12	11:5-12
11:13	Priests and Levites Move to Judah 11:13-17	11:13-17	Priests and Levites Come to Judah 11:13-17	The Priests and Levites Migrate to Judah 11:13-17
Jeroboam Appoints False Priests 11:14-17				
Rehoboam's Family 11:18-23	The Family of Rehoboam 11:18-23	11:18-23	Rehoboam's Family 11:18-23	Rehoboam's Family 11:18-23

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 11:1-4

¹Now when Rehoboam had come to Jerusalem, he assembled the house of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors, to fight against Israel to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam. ²But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying, ³“Speak to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying, ⁴“Thus says the LORD, “You shall not go up or fight against your relatives; return every man to his house, for this thing is from Me.””” So they listened to the words of the LORD and returned from going against Jeroboam.

11:1 Rehoboam (see NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1127-1129) was going to restore his kingdom by military action against the northern tribes.

Having to flee in his chariot must have been a terrible embarrassment (cf. 2 Chr. 10:18).

“**180,000**” The issue involved in all large numbers in the OT is the semantic range of the word “thousand.”

Questioning the numbers is not a matter of not believing the Bible. It is a matter of the original, inspired, ANE author's intent.

1. use of round numbers
2. use of symbolic numbers
3. metaphorical use of large number to communicate importance
4. possible scribal error; the numbering system was difficult to read; each letter of the alphabet stood for a number, to increase the number by ten, a mark was placed over the letter

For more information, see

1. Special Topic: Symbolic Numbers in Scripture at 2 Chr. 9:30
2. Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*
3. John J. David, *Biblical Numerology*

See:

1. Special Topic: Thousand (*eleph*)
2. Special Topic: Symbolic Numbers in Scripture

11:2 “the word of the LORD” This refers to a prophetic revelation. At this period of Israel’s history, the word of a prophet replaced the use of the Urim and Thummim of the High Priest.

“Shemaiah the man of God” This prophet is mentioned in 2 Chr. 12:5-8,15.
For the phrase “man of God” see note at 2 C hr. 8:14.

11:3 “to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin” The word “Israel” can be understood in several ways (see note at 2 Chr. 12:1).

1. descendants of Jacob (i.e., covenant people)
2. Judah is the true Israel
3. northern tribal families living in the southern kingdom

Simeon is not mentioned because this tribe became part of Judah early.

11:4 This verse has one IMPERATIVE and possibly two IMPERFECTS used in a JUSSIVE sense.

1. you shall not go up – BDB 748, KB 828, *Qal* IMPERFECT
2. you shall not fight against – BDB 535, KB 526, *Niphal* IMPERFECT
3. return every man to his house – BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* IMPERATIVE

“for this thing is from Me” The prophecy related to the splitting of the kingdom is in 1 Kgs. 11:26-40. It was because of Solomon’s idolatry in his old age. This is alluded to in 2 Chr. 10:15. God is in control of history but human choices have consequences (i.e., Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 11:5-12

⁵Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built cities for defense in Judah. ⁶Thus he built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, ⁷Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam, ⁸Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, ⁹Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, ¹⁰Zorah, Aijalon and Hebron, which are fortified cities in Judah and in Benjamin. ¹¹He also strengthened the fortresses and put officers in them and stores of food, oil and wine. ¹²He put shields and spears in every city and strengthened them greatly. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

11:5-12 Rehoboam was worried about Jeroboam I’s ally, Egypt (cf. 2 Chr. 12:9,13). He was preparing for siege warfare.

1. food, oil, wine, 2 Chr. 11:11
2. shields, spears, 2 Chr. 11:12

The information in 2 Chr. 11:5-23 is unique to Chronicles. It must be from another written, unnamed source.

11:8 “Gath” Since Gath was one of the five major city-states of the Philistines, it is possible this should be “Moresheth Gath,” which was in western Judah and the home of the prophet Micah (cf. Mic. 1:14).

11:13-17 The tribe of Levi (i.e., priests and Levites) supported Judah because of (1) the Davidic seed and (2) the temple. They left the Levitical cities which were located north of Judah. See notes at Joshua 21.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 11:14-17

¹⁴For the Levites left their pasture lands and their property and came to Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests to the LORD. ¹⁵He set up priests of his own for the high places, for the satyrs and for the calves which he had made. ¹⁶Those from all the tribes of Israel who set their hearts on seeking the LORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers. ¹⁷They strengthened the

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

11:14 “for Jeroboam and his sons had excluded them from serving as priests” He wanted to start two new temple sites, one at Bethel (just north of Jerusalem) and one in Dan (a city in the far north of Canaan). See the parallel in 1 Kgs. 12:26-33.

11:15 The Chronicler’s disgust at Jeroboam’s actions can be seen in how he characterizes the worship of the northern tribe.

1. He set up priests of his own (not from the tribe of Levi as Moses required).
2. They served at “high places,” which were notorious fertility worship sites (cf. 1 Kgs. 12:30).
3. He asserts the worship was of “satyrs” (BDB 972 III, KB 1341 III).
4. He asserts the worship of the two golden calves (i.e., symbol of fertility, cf 1 Kgs. 12:28-33; 2 Kgs. 10:29; 17:16; 2 Chr. 13:8).

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE DEMONIC IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. The exact relationship between fallen angels and the demonic is uncertain. I Enoch asserts that the *Nephilim* of Gen. 6:1-8 are the source of evil (most rabbis also focus on Genesis 6 and not Genesis 3). I Enoch says that these half angel/half human beings were killed by the flood (it even asserts that their death was the purpose of the flood), and now their disembodied spirits are seeking a body host. This is interesting but not revelatory (i.e., inspired).

B. There are several hostile spirits or demons named in the OT.

1. *Satyrs* or “hairy ones,” possibly goat demons (BDB 972 III, KB 1341 III) – Lev. 17:7; 2 Chr. 11:15; Isa. 13:21; 34:14
2. *Shedim* (BDB 993, KB 1417) – Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37, to which sacrifices were made (similar to *Molech*)
3. *Lilith*, the female night demon (BDB 539, KB 528) – Isa. 34:14 (part of Babylonian and Ugarit myth)
4. *Azazel*, demon of the desert (name of chief demon in I Enoch, cf. 8:1; 9:6; 10:4-8; 13:1-2; 54:5; 55:4; 69:2) – Lev. 16:8,10,26 (BDB 736, KB 806)
5. Psalm 91:5-6 are personifications of pestilence (cf. Ps. 91:10), not spiritual beings (cf. Song of Songs 3:8)
6. Isaiah 13:21 and 34:14 list several desert animals as a way to show the desolation of destroyed places. Some assume that the list includes the demonic to illustrate that these destroyed places are also haunted (cf. Matt. 12:43; Luke 11:24; Rev. 18:2)

C. The OT monotheism (see Special Topic: Monotheism) silenced and modified the legends of the pagan nations, but sometimes names and titles of their superstitions are referred to (esp. poetic texts). The reality of evil spirits is a part of progressive revelation and is developed in the NT as is the person/angel of Satan (see Special Topic: Satan) and his spirit followers (i.e., demons).

11:16 Some from the north rejected the idolatry of Jeroboam I and faithfully came to Jerusalem to worship and sacrifice.

The beautiful phrase, “who set their heart on seeking the LORD God of Israel” denotes

1. the right attitude
2. the right place
3. the right priests
4. the right procedures

See note at 2 Chr. 7:14; and NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 723, (vi), (b).

11:17 “for three years” Rehoboam was obedient to God’s revelations to David, Solomon, and Moses for this period of time only. This temporary obedience becomes a terrible pattern.

1. Asa – 2 Chr. 16:7-10
2. Joash – 2 Chr. 24:1-24
3. Amaziah – 2 Chr. 25:14-24
4. Uzziah – 2 Chr. 26:16-21

“they walked in the way of David and Solomon” This means he was obedient to God’s revealed will but only for a period of three years.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 11:18-23

¹⁸Then Rehoboam took as a wife Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David *and of Abihail* the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse, ¹⁹and she bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah and Zaham. ²⁰After her he took Maacah the daughter of Absalom, and she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza and Shelomith. ²¹Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom more than all his *other* wives and concubines. For he had taken eighteen wives and sixty concubines and fathered twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. ²²Rehoboam appointed Abijah the son of Maacah as head and leader among his brothers, for he *intended* to make him king. ²³He acted wisely and distributed some of his sons through all the territories of Judah and Benjamin to all the fortified cities, and he gave them food in abundance. And he sought many wives *for them*.

11:18-23 These verses denote the palace intrigue (i.e., many wives, favorite wife, many from royal line).

1. Mahalath – David’s granddaughter
2. Abihail – Jesse’s granddaughter
3. Maacah – Absalom’s daughter (possibly granddaughter, i.e., Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.10.1.)

It is never stated where the Chronicler got this information, probably another written source.

11:18 “Jerimoth the son of David” Since this is not one of David’s sons mentioned in other texts, he may have been the son of a concubine (*Barnes Notes*, p. 386).

11:21 “concubines” These were legal, but second level, wives whose children did not inherit. See NIDOTTE, vol. 3, p. 618.

11:22 Rehoboam wanted the first son of his favorite wife to be king. He was not the first or oldest son. Abijah succeeded his father (cf. 1 Chronicles 13).

11:23 This “acted wisely” is connected to Rehoboam spreading out the royal princes into the fortified cities throughout the country. He tried to placate his other sons by giving them

1. their own city
2. large amounts of royal food
3. many wives

“**he sought many wives for them**” The MT can be understood in two very different ways.

1. This was one of the ways Rehoboam tried to keep all the royal princes happy (see note above).
2. It refers to his wives pulling him into idolatry, just as Solomon’s foreign wives did to him (i.e., more, young wives for himself).

The phrase “he acted wisely” then must be understood as

1. supporting #1 above or
2. sarcasm

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Do the differences in the large numbers between Samuel/Kings vs. Chronicles affect the trustworthiness of Scripture?
2. Why is Rehoboam initially presented as faithful to YHWH (i.e., 2 Chr. 11:1-4,17) and blessed by YHWH (i.e., fortified cities and many children) but not mentioned in Kings?
3. Describe the sins of Jeroboam I mentioned in 2 Chr. 11:14-15.
4. What is the theological emphasis of 2 Chr. 11:16?

2 CHRONICLES 12

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Shishak of Egypt Invades Judah 12:1-8	Egypt Attacks Judah 12:1-8	Rehoboam's Sin; His Punishment and Death 12:1-8	An Egyptian Invasion of Judah 12:1-4 12:5 12:6	Rehoboam's Unfaithfulness (MT versing) 12:1-8
Plunder Impoverishes Judah 12:9-12	12:9-12	12:9-12	12:7-8 12:9-12	12:9-11 Summary of the Reign
12:13-14	The End of Rehoboam's Reign 12:13-14	12:13-14	Summary of Rehoboam's Reign 12:13-14	12:12-14
12:15-16	12:15-16	12:15-16	12:15-16	12:15-16

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 12:1-8

¹When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the LORD. ²And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem ³with 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen. And the people who came with him from Egypt were without number: the Lubim, the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians. ⁴He captured the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem. ⁵Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, 'You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you to Shishak.'" ⁶So the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is righteous." ⁷When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, "They have humbled themselves so I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some *measure* of deliverance, and My wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak. ⁸But they will become his slaves so that they may learn *the difference between My service and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.*"

12:1 Apparently Rehoboam, for a brief period of three years, was faithful to YHWH (cf. 2 Chr. 11:1-4,17). YHWH's blessing, seen in his large family (2 Chr. 11:18-21), may have become a temptation (like Solomon). The "he did evil" of 2 Chr. 12:14 usually denotes idolatry (cf. 1 Kgs. 14:25).

"and all Israel" Here is the tragedy of unfaithful leadership. It causes an unfaithful populace! This "all Israel" may involve the once faithful of 2 Chr. 11:16.

The Chronicler used "all Israel" in several senses (NASB Study Bible, p. 601).

1. for both kingdoms – 2 Chr. 9:30; 11:16
2. for the northern tribes who followed Jeroboam I – 2 Chr. 10:16; 11:13
3. for Judah – here and 2 Chr. 11:3

12:2 The nature of Rehoboam's unfaithfulness is not stated, but what a contrast occurred.

1. "established and strong" (2 Chr. 12:1; aspect of the covenant blessings of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28)

2. “forsook the law. . .,” “they had been unfaithful to the LORD” (notice 2 Chr. 12:5)

Some violations of the covenant resulted in the invasion of Egypt. YHWH allowed the temple and palace treasures to be taken as booty. This strongly implies idolatry on Israel’s part, which polluted the temple. As #1 above was part of the “blessings” of Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; the invasion and ruin were part of the “curses.”

“in the fifth year” The NASB Study Bible, p. 601, mentions that Chronicles often inserts time elements, which are not found in Kings (i.e., 2 Chr. 11:17; 15:10,19; 16:1,12-13; 17:7; 21:20; 25:15,17,23; 26:16; 27:5,8; 29:3; 34:3; 36:21). He is obviously using Samuel/Kings and another source. Most of his information came from the writings of prophets (i.e., here, Shemaiah, cf. 2 Chr. 11:2; 12:5,15).

Since this invasion is mentioned in both Scripture and in secular sources, it becomes a crucial chronological marker for dating the events in Judah’s history (similar to the battles of Charchemish and Qarqar).

“unfaithful to the LORD” This VERB and NOUN (BDB 591, KB 612) are never used in Samuel or Kings but are crucial theological elements in Chronicles.

1. 5 times in 1 Chronicles
2. 12 times in 2 Chronicles
3. 5 times in Ezra

It is also very common in Ezekiel (13 times). Faithlessness is first a mental issue but quickly becomes an action issue. The covenant was conditional (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; 30; Psalm 1).

“Shishak” This Pharaoh (a Libyan title, like Pharaoh, they ruled Egypt in the 22nd dynasty) protected Jeroboam I from Solomon (cf. 1 Kgs. 11:40). This shows the growing power of Egypt. Earlier Egypt had given a royal daughter to seal a truce with Solomon and now an open act of defiance. Although the biblical account of this invasion is limited (cf. 1 Kgs. 14:25-28), there is an Egyptian inscription at the Temple of Amon at Karnack that describes this invasion. It claims he invaded as far north as Megiddo.

SPECIAL TOPIC: KINGS OF EGYPT

- A. Hyksos (Shepherd Kings – Semitic rulers) –1720/10-1550
- B. 18th Dynasty (1570-1310):
 1. 1570-1546 Amosis
 - a. made Thebes the capital
 - b. invaded southern Canaan
 2. 1546-1525 Amenophis I (Amenhotep I)
 3. 1525-1494 Thutmosis I
 4. 1494-1490 Thutmosis II – married Thutmosis I’s daughter, Hatshepsut
 5. 1490-1435 Thutmosis III (nephew of Hatshepsut)
 6. 1435-1414 Amenophis II (Amenhotep II)
 7. 1414-1406 Thutmosis IV
 8. 1406-1370 Amenophis III (Amenhotep III)

 9. 1370-1353 Amenophis IV (Akhenaten)
 - a. worshiped the Sun, Aten
 - b. instituted a form of high-god worship (monotheism)
 - c. Tel-El-Amarna letters are in this period
 10. ? Smenkhkare
 11. ? Tutankhamun (Tutankhaten)
 12. ? Ay (Aye-Eye)

13. 1340-1310 Haremhab
- C. 19th Dynasty (1310-1200):
1. ? Rameses I (Ramses)
 2. 1309-1290 Seti I (Sethos)
 3. 1290-1224 Ramesses II (Ramses II)
 - a. from archaeological evidence most likely Pharaoh of the exodus
 - b. built the cities of Avaris, Pithom and Ramses by Habaru (possibly Semites or Hebrew)
- slaves
4. 1224-1216 Marniptah (Merenptah)
 5. ? Amenmesses
 6. ? Seti II
 7. ? Siptah
 8. ? Tewosret
- D. 20th Dynasty (1180-1065):
1. 1175-1144 Rameses III
 2. 1144-1065 Rameses IV - XI
- E. 21st Dynasty (1065-935):
1. ? Smendes
 2. ? Herihor
- F. 22nd Dynasty (935-725 – Libyan):
1. 935-914 Shishak (Shosenk I or Sheshong I)
 - a. protected Jeroboam I until Solomon's death
 - b. conquered Palestine about 925 (cf. 1 Kings 14-25; 2 Chronicles 12)
 2. 914-874 Osorkon I
 3. ? Osorkon II
 4. ? Shoshnek II
- G. 23rd Dynasty (759-715 – Libyan)
- H. 24th Dynasty (725-709)
- I. 25th Dynasty (716/15-663 – Ethiopian/Nubian):
1. 710/09-696/95 Shabako (Shabaku)
 2. 696/95-685/84 Shebteko (Shebitku)
 3. 690/689, 685/84-664 Tirhakah (Taharqa)
 4. ? Tantamun
- J. 26th Dynasty (663-525 – Saitic):
1. 663-609 Psammetichus I (Psamtik)
 2. 609-593 Neco II (Necho)
 3. 593-588 Psammetichus II (Psamtik)
 4. 588-569 Apries (Hophra)
 5. 569-525 Amasis
 6. ? Psammetichus III (Psamtik)
- K. 27th Dynasty (525-401 – Persian):
1. 530-522 Cambyses II (Cyrus II's son)
 2. 522-486 Darius I
 3. 486-465 Xerxes I
 4. 465-424 Artaxerxes I
 5. 423-404 Darius II

12:3 This was a large multi-national army that invaded Judah from

1. Lubim – BDB 530, a people of NE Africa, also known as Lydia, cf. Gen. 22:10; 1 Chr. 1:17; Isa. 66:19; Dan. 11:43

2. Sukkiim – BDB 696, KB 753, paid mercenaries apparently from north Africa, possibly migrant shepherds like the Bedouin of Canaan (i.e., tent-swellers)

3. Ehtiopia – BDB 469, a Cushite military force from the area just south of Egypt. During this period a series of five non-Egyptian kings from the south ruled Egypt.

12:4 “the fortified cities of Judah” These are the very cities mentioned in 2 Chr. 11:5-12. These cities also were managed by Rehoboam’s sons (cf. 2 Chr. 11:23).

12:5 YHWH revealed to Rehoboam and the leaders of Israel the theological reason for this successful invasion. Israel’s covenant disobedience caused the curses of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 to come into effect! It was not a lack of power on YHWH’s part but sin on Israel’s part.

“You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you” What a terrible cause and effect. It reminds me of Rom. 1:24,26,28.

This is the direct opposite of “seek” (see 2 Chr. 11:16 vs. 2 Chr. 12:14). The *Tyndale OT Commentary* by Martin Selman, p. 372, makes this excellent comment that the violation of covenant law mentioned in 2 Chr. 12:1 was in reality a rejection of YHWH Himself (i.e., “Me”). There is always the tension between obedience (i.e., legalism) vs. heart faith (i.e., a circumcised heart; with all their heart, cf. Lev. 26:41; Deut. 10:16; 30:6; 1 Kgs. 8:61; 2 Kgs. 20:3; 1 Chr. 28:9; 29:19; 2 Chr. 12:4; Jer. 4:4). Attitude and motive, not just actions, are crucial in biblical faith. God sees the heart (cf. 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 6:30; 12:14; 15:12,15,17; 16:9; 19:3,9; 28:2; 30:19; 34:31).

12:6,7 YHWH desires faithfulness but even after disobedience there is a spiritual remedy (i.e., true repentance and obedience). Both the people and the king “humbled” themselves and prayed (2 Chr. 7:14). Leviticus 26:41 mentions “humble” as the key to forgiveness and restoration, but not without consequences. Even forgiven sin runs its course (cf. 2 Chr. 12:8,9). 2 Chronicles 12:12 is a summary to emphasize the power of repentance (i.e., the people of Nineveh in Jonah’s day).

Special Topic: Repentance (OT).

12:6 “the princes of Israel” Obviously the Chronicler believed Judah was the only legitimate covenant nation. The northern tribes may have the name as the descendants of Jacob but Judah has the reality.

“The LORD is righteous” This was a faith affirmation (cf. Neh. 9:8; Ps. 119:137; 129:4) related to the character of YHWH. His judgments are true and fair (cf. Exod. 34:6-7).

See

1. Special Topics: Righteousness
2. Special Topic: Characteristics of Israel’s God (OT)

12:7

NASB, NJB,

JPSOA

“some measure of deliverance”

NKJV, NRSV,

Peshitta

“some deliverance”

REB

“some measure of relief”

LXX

“a small degree of deliverance”

NET Bible

“I will deliver them soon”

JB, NIV, Barnes’ Notes **“for a short space”**

The MT has “some deliverance” or “escape” (BDB 812), which is usually used of a remnant. Many Judeans died in this invasion (cf. 2 Chr. 12:4, probably some royal princes, cf. 2 Chr. 11:23). The military menace of Egypt was not removed!

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE REMNANT (BDB 984, KB 1375), THREE SENSES

The OT concept of “a faithful remnant” is a recurrent theme of the Prophets (mostly in the eighth century prophets and Jeremiah). It is used in three senses:

1. those who survived the Exile (e.g., Ezra 9:8,14-15; Neh. 1:2-3; Isa. 10:20-23; 17:4-6; 37:4,31-32; 46:3; Jer. 23:3; 31:7-8; 42:15,19; 44:12,14,28; Micah 2:12; 5:7-8; 7:18; Hag. 1:12-14; 2:2; Zech. 8:6,11-12)
2. those who remain faithful to YHWH (e.g., Isa. 4:1-5; 11:11,16; 28:5; Joel 2:32; Amos 5:14-15)
3. those who are a part of the eschatological renewal and recreation (e.g., Amos 9:11-15; Zech. 8:6)

The parable of the soils in Mark 4:1-20 and Matt. 13:1-23, which quote Isa. 6:9-10, is a good example of how the NT understands this term (also note Rom. 9:6 in reference to Israel of Paul’s day).

The “remnant” of the NT is made up of Jews who trust Christ (cf. Rom. 9:27-29) and Gentiles who trust Christ (cf. Rom. 9:24-26). Both groups are spoken of in Rom. 9:30-35; 11:11-24,25-32. Believing Israel is not just racial (i.e., Rom. 9:6; 2:18-19) but a believing group of faithful followers of God’s new, complete revelation in Jesus. Saying this seems to be denying OT texts (i.e., Jer. 31:7-9; Micah 5:7-8) about national Israel being the remnant. Please look at my Special Topic: Why Do the OT Covenant Promises Seem Different From the NT Covenant Promises? The gospel changes everything!

12:8 Historical events involving YHWH’s people are an opportunity to teach and reveal YHWH’s will and plan. History is in the hand of God. This is the Bible’s revelatory worldview.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 12:9-12

⁹So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king’s palace. He took everything; he even took the golden shields which Solomon had made. ¹⁰Then King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place and committed them to the care of the commanders of the guard who guarded the door of the king’s house. ¹¹As often as the king entered the house of the LORD, the guards came and carried them and *then* brought them back into the guards’ room. ¹²And when he humbled himself, the anger of the LORD turned away from him, so as not to destroy *him* completely; and also conditions were good in Judah.

12:9 All of the treasures accumulated by David and Solomon are taken to Egypt. Shishak is succeeded by his son, Osorkon I. There is an inscription at Bubastis which says he contributed large amounts of gold and silver to the temples of Egypt (ABD, vol. 5, p. 1222). This was probably from Israel!

12:10-11 Rehoboam tried to compensate for the loss by making shields of bronze.

12:12 There is a word play on “turned away.” This word (BDB 996, KB 1427) is also commonly used for repentance. Rehoboam “humbled” himself, YHWH “repented” of His judgment and spared Jerusalem but, not without cost.

1. fortified cities destroyed
2. royal sons probably died
3. Jerusalem’s temple and royal palace emptied of treasure
4. Israel served Egypt for a period of time (cf. 2 Chr. 12:8)

YHWH wants to bless His people. He has provided three ways for sinful people in the OT to come into fellowship with Himself and stay in fellowship.

1. the sacrifice system
2. the Mosaic regulations (feast days, social laws, etc)
3. repentance

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 12:13-14

¹³So King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Now Rehoboam was

forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen from all the tribes of Israel, to put His name there. And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. ¹⁴He did evil because he did not set his heart to seek the LORD.

12:13-16 This is a typical summary conclusion to a king's life. It follows a set pattern of information (cf. 1 Kgs. 14:29-31).

12:13 "And his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess" This is a subtle hint at the problems caused by Solomon's foreign wives (cf. 1 Kgs. 11:1-8).

12:14 What a terrible recurrent pattern in the line of David. A few good kings, but mostly "evil." Shockingly the earthly representatives of YHWH were unfaithful to the covenant.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 12:15-16

¹⁵Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer, according to genealogical enrollment? And *there were* wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. ¹⁶And Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David; and his son Abijah became king in his place.

12:15 "prophet. . .seer" There are two different Hebrew words which denote a person who reveals YHWH's message.

SPECIAL TOPIC: OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Opening Statements

1. The believing community does not agree on how to interpret prophecy. Other truths have been established as to an orthodox position throughout the centuries, but not this one.

2. There are several well defined stages of OT prophecy

a. premonarchial

(1) individuals called prophets

(a) Abraham – Gen. 20:7

(b) Moses – Num. 12:6-8; Deut. 18:15; 34:10

(c) Aaron – Exod. 7:1 (spokesman for Moses)

(d) Miriam – Exod. 15:20

(e) Medad and Eldad – Num. 11:24-30

(f) Deborah – Jdgs. 4:4

(g) unnamed – Jdgs. 6:7-10

(h) Samuel – 1 Sam. 3:20

(2) references to prophets as a group – Deut. 13:1-5; 18:20-22

(3) prophetic group or guild – 1 Sam. 10:5-13; 19:20; 1 Kgs. 20:35,41; 22:6,10-13; 2 Kgs. 2:3,7; 4:1,38; 5:22; 6:1, etc.

(4) Messiah called prophet – Deut. 18:15-18

b. non-writing monarchial (they address the king):

(1) Gad – 1 Sam. 22:5; 2 Sam. 24:11; 1 Chr. 29:29

(2) Nathan – 2 Sam. 7:2; 12:25; 1 Kgs. 1:22

(3) Ahijah – 1 Kgs. 11:29

(4) Jehu – 1 Kgs. 16:1,7,12

(5) unnamed – 1 Kgs. 18:4,13; 20:13,22

(6) Elijah – 1 Kings 18 - 2 Kings 2

(7) Micaiah – 1 Kings 22

(8) Elisha – 2 Kgs. 2:9,12-13

c. classical writing prophets (they address the nation as well as the king): Isaiah – Malachi (except Daniel)

B. Biblical Terms

1. *Ro'eh* = “seer” (BDB 906, KB 1157), 1 Sam. 9:9. This reference itself shows the transition to the term *nabi*. *Ro'eh* is from the general term “to see.” This person understood God’s ways and plans and was consulted to ascertain God’s will in a matter.

2. *Hozeh* = “seer” (BDB 302, KB 301), 2 Sam. 24:11. It is basically a synonym of *Ro'eh*. It is from a rarer term “to see.” The PARTICIPLED form is used most often to refer to prophets (i.e., “to behold”).

3. *Nabi'* = “prophet” (BDB 611, KB 661), cognate of Akkadian VERB *Nabu* = “to call” and Arabic *Naba'a* = “to announce.” This is the most common term in the Old Testament to designate a prophet. It is used over 300 times. The exact etymology is uncertain but “to call” at present seems the best option. Possibly the best understanding comes from YHWH’s description of Moses’ relationship to Pharaoh through Aaron (cf. Exod. 4:10-16; 7:1; Deut. 5:5. A prophet is someone who speaks for God to His people (Amos 3:8; Jer. 1:7,17; Ezek. 3:4)

4. All three terms are used of the prophet’s office in 1 Chr. 29:29; Samuel – *Ro'eh*; Nathan – *Nabi'* and Gad – *Hozeh*.

5. The phrase, *ish ha – 'elohim*, “Man of God,” is also a broader designation for a speaker for God. It is used some 76 times in the OT in the sense of “prophet.”

6. The term “prophet” is Greek in origin. It comes from: (1) *pro* = “before” or “for” and (2) *phemi* = “to speak.”

II. DEFINITION OF PROPHECY

A. The term “prophecy” had a wider semantic field in Hebrew than in English. The history books of Joshua through Kings (except Ruth) are labeled by the Jews as “the former prophets.” Both Abraham (Gen. 20:7; Ps. 105:15) and Moses (Deut. 18:18) are designated as prophets (also Miriam, Exod. 15:20). Therefore, beware of an assumed English definition!

B. “Propheticism may legitimately be defined as that understanding of history which accepts meaning only in terms of divine concern, divine purpose, divine participation,” *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 3, p. 896.

C. “The prophet is neither a philosopher nor a systematic theologian, but a covenant mediator who delivers the word of God to His people in order to shape their future by reforming their present, “Prophets and Prophecy,” *Encyclopedia Judaica* vol. 13 p. 1152.

III. PURPOSE OF PROPHECY

A. Prophecy is a way for God to speak to His people, providing guidance in their current setting and hope in His control of their lives and world events. Their message was basically corporate. It is meant to rebuke, encourage, engender faith and repentance, and inform God’s people about Himself and His plans. They hold God’s people to fidelity to God’s covenants. To this must be added that often it is used to clearly reveal God’s choice of a spokesman (Deut. 13:1-3; 18:20-22). This, taken ultimately, would refer to the Messiah.

B. Often, the prophet took a historical or theological crisis of his day and projected this into an eschatological setting. This end-time view of history is unique in Israel and its sense of divine election and covenant promises.

C. The office of prophet seems to balance (Jer. 18:18) and usurp the office of High Priest as a way to know God’s will. The Urim and Thummim transcend into a verbal message from God’s spokesman. The office of prophet seems to also have passed away in Israel after Malachi. It does not reappear until 400 years later with John the Baptist. It is uncertain how the New Testament gift of “prophecy” relates to the Old Testament. New Testament prophets (Acts 11:27-28; 13:1; 15:32; 1 Cor. 12:10,28-29; 14:29,32,37; Eph. 4:11) are not revealers of new revelation or Scripture, but forth-tellers

and foretellers of God's will in covenant situations.

D. Prophecy is not exclusively or primarily predictive in nature. Prediction is one way to confirm his office and his message, but it must be noted "less than 2% of OT prophecy is Messianic. Less than 5% specifically describes the New Covenant Age. Less than 1% concerns events yet to come." (Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, p. 166).

E. Prophets represent God to the people, while Priests represent the people to God. This is a general statement. There are exceptions like Habakkuk, who addresses questions to God.

F. One reason it is difficult to understand the prophets is because we do not know how their books were structured. They are not chronological. They seem to be thematic but not always the way one would expect. Often there is no obvious historical setting, time frame or clear division between oracles. These books are difficult (1) to read through in one sitting; (2) to outline by topic; and (3) to ascertain the central truth or authorial intent in each oracle.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPHECY

A. In the Old Testament there seems to be a development of the concept of "prophet" and "prophecy." In early Israel there developed a fellowship of prophets, led by a strong charismatic leader such as Elijah or Elisha. Sometimes the phrase, "the sons of the prophets," was used to designate this group (2 Kings 2). The prophets were characterized by forms of ecstasy (1 Sam. 10:10-13; 19:18-24).

B. However, this period passed rapidly into individual prophets. There were those prophets (both true and false) who identified with the King, and lived at the palace (Gad, Nathan). Also, there were those who were independent, sometimes totally unconnected with the status quo of Israeli society (Amos). They include both male and female (2 Kgs. 22:14.)

C. The prophet was often a revealer of the future, conditioned on man's immediate response. Often the prophet's task was an unfolding of God's universal plan for His creation which is not affected by human response. This universal eschatological plan is unique among the prophets of the Ancient Near East. Prediction and Covenant fidelity are twin foci of the prophetic messages (cf. Fee and Stuart, p. 150). This implies that the prophets are primarily corporate in focus. They usually, but not exclusively, address the nation.

D. Most prophetic material was orally presented. It was later combined by means of theme, chronology, or other patterns of Near Eastern Literature which are lost to us. Because it was oral it is not as structured as written prose. This makes the books difficult to read straight through and difficult to understand without a specific historical setting.

E. The prophets use several patterns to convey their messages.

1. Court Scene – God takes His people to court, often it is a divorce case where YHWH rejects his wife (Israel) for her unfaithfulness (Hosea 4; Micah 6).

2. Funeral dirge – the special meter of this type of message and its characteristic "woe" sets it apart as a special form (Isaiah 5; Habakkuk 2).

3. Covenant Blessing Pronouncement – the conditional nature of the Covenant is emphasized and the consequences, both positively and negatively, are spelled out for the future (Deuteronomy 27-28).

V. HELPFUL GUIDELINES FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY

A. Find the intent of the original prophet (editor) by noting the historical setting and the literary context of each oracle. Usually it will involve Israel breaking the Mosaic Covenant in some way.

B. Read and interpret the whole oracle, not just a part; outline it as to content. See how it relates to surrounding oracles. Try to outline the whole book.

C. Assume a literal interpretation of the passage until something in the text itself points you to figurative usage; then put the figurative language into prose.

D. Analyze symbolic action in light of historical setting and parallel passages. Be sure to remember this Ancient Near Eastern literature is not western or modern literature.

E. Treat prediction with care.

1. Are they exclusively for the author's day?

2. Were they subsequently fulfilled in Israel's history?
3. Are they yet future events?
4. Do they have a contemporary fulfillment and yet a future fulfillment?
5. Allow the authors of the Bible, not modern authors, to guide your answers.

F. Special concerns

1. Is the prediction qualified by conditional response?
2. Is it certain to whom the prophecy is addressed (and why)?
3. Is there a possibility, both biblically and/or historically, for multiple fulfillment?
4. The NT authors, under inspiration, were able to see the Messiah in many places in the

OT that are not obvious to us. They seem to use typology or word play. Since we are not inspired we best leave this approach to them.

VI. HELPFUL BOOKS

- A. *A Guide to Biblical Prophecy* by Carl E. Amending and W. Ward Basque
- B. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart
- C. *My Servants the Prophets* by Edward J. Young
- D. *Plowshares and Pruning Hooks: Rethinking the Language of Biblical Prophecy and Apocalyptic* by D. Brent Sandy
- E. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, vol. 4, pp. 1067-1078

“And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually” What a terrible situation — covenant brothers fighting and killing covenant brothers!

There is no OT evidence of a full war but this probably refers to ongoing border skirmishes and raids (cf. 2 Chr. 13:4-20).

12:16 See note at 2 Chr. 9:31.

“Abijah” This was Rehoboam's favorite son (cf. 2 Chr. 11:21-22). In 1 Kgs. 14:31 he is called “Abijam,” possibly the name in Chronicles was his throne name. Often there was a name change at the coronation.

1. Uzziah – Azariah
2. Eliakim – Jehoiakim
3. Shallum – Jehoahaz
4. Jeconiah – Jehoiachin
5. Mattaniah – Zedekiah

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How did the king and the people forsake the Lord?
2. How is the naming of Shishak historically significant?
3. What does it mean to “humble” oneself?
4. Does 2 Chr. 12:12 show that the Chronicler is using two sources?

5. If Rehoboam did some good things (i.e., 2 Chr. 11:1-4,23; 12:6,7,12), why is he said to be an evil king (2 Chr. 12:14)?
6. Why is the naming of Rehoboam's mother historically significant?
7. Does 2 Chr. 12:16 teach "soul sleep" between death and resurrection?

2 CHRONICLES 13

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Abijah Succeeds Rehoboam	Abijah Reigns in Judah	The Reign of Abijah, His Great Victory Over the North	Abijah's War with Jeroboam	War Breaks Out (MT versing)
13:1-2a	13:1-3	13:1-2a	13:1-2a	13:1-3
13:2b-3		13:2b-7	13:2b-3	
Civil War				Abijah Addresses the Israelites
13:4-7	13:4-12		13:4-9	13:4-12
13:8-12		13:8-12		
			13:10-12	The Battle
13:13-19	13:13-20	13:13-22	13:13-18	13:13-18
				The End of the Reign of Abijah
Death of Jeroboam			13:19-20	13:19-23
13:20				
13:21-22	13:21-14:1		13:21-22	

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 13:1-2a

¹In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah. ²He reigned three years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Micaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.

13:1 "In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam" This is the only place in Chronicles that the parallel reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah are mentioned. This is regularly done in Kings.

"Abijah" This was Rehoboam's favorite son (cf. 2 Chr. 11:22). The parallel is in 1 Kings 15, but there it is a much briefer account and his name is spelled "Abijam." Obviously the Chronicler is using a different written source.

"Micaiah" The LXX has "Maacah" both here and in 1 Kgs. 15:2, but there are two different fathers listed.

1. here, Uriel
2. 1 Kgs. 15:2, Abishalom (possibly grandfather, cf. 2 Chr. 11:20)

This is the same name as one of Rehoboam's wives (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:2; 2 Chr. 11:20,21,22).

13:2 "He reigned three years" See Special Topic: Kings of the Divided Kingdom.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 13:2b-3

^{2b}Now there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. ³Abijah began the battle with an army of valiant warriors, 400,000 chosen men, while Jeroboam drew up in battle formation against him with 800,000 chosen men *who were* valiant warriors.

13:3 "400,000. . .800,000" These numbers seem inflated. This may be because

1. literary exaggeration to highlight YHWH's victory

2. the word “thousand” refers to a military unit

The best book on these numbers is Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*.

Special Topic: Thousand

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 13:4-7

⁴Then Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said, “Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel: ⁵Do you not know that the LORD God of Israel gave the rule over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt? ⁶Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, rose up and rebelled against his master, ⁷and worthless men gathered about him, scoundrels, who proved too strong for Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, when he was young and timid and could not hold his own against them.

13:4-12 Abijah addresses Jeroboam I from Mt. Zemaraim (cf. Josh. 18:22; LXX has “Samaria”).

1. YHWH gave David and his descendants the kingship over Israel forever (cf. 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17)
2. Jeroboam I rebelled against Solomon (i.e., 1 Kgs. 11:26)
3. he gathered an army of worthless men (i.e., “sons of Belial,” i.e., Deut. 13:13; 1 Sam. 2:12; 10:27; 1 Kgs. 21:10) who defeated Rehoboam
4. Jeroboam I has sinned by making rival temples with golden calves (i.e., located at Dan and Bethel, cf. 1 Kgs. 12:26-30)
5. Jeroboam I apparently confiscated the Levitical cities of the north and drove out the Levites
6. Judah had not forsaken YHWH (see notes at 2 Chr. 13:10-11)
7. the Aaronic priests still minister in the Jerusalem temple
8. because of #1-7, we have come to fight in YHWH’s name; do not resist us

In a real sense this challenge by Abijah represents the theology of the Chronicler (not the evil king of 1 Kgs. 15:3).

1. the only legitimate kingdom is Judah who is of the descendants of David; the northern tribes are an illegitimate kingdom with an illegitimate temple and priesthood
2. the only legitimate priesthood is the line of Aaron, tribe of Levi, and they are still performing the Mosaic rites in the only proper temple on Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem
3. the defeat of such a large army clearly shows YHWH’s favor on Judah and rejection of Israel under Jeroboam I

13:5 “a covenant of salt” This was the physical, cultural symbol of an eternal agreement (cf. Lev. 2:13; Num. 18:19). This refers to YHWH’s promise to David in 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17 (esp. vv. 13-14). See brief article in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 1752.

“forever” See Special Topic: Forever (*‘olam*).

13:7 “he was young and timid” This same phrase is used by David of Rehoboam in 1 Chr. 22:5; 29:1, but at the time of Jeroboam I’s rebellion he was in his early 40’s. This seems to be an excuse of the Chronicler for Solomon’s son’s

1. inabilities
2. indecisive personality

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 13:8-12

⁸“So now you intend to resist the kingdom of the LORD through the sons of David, being a great multitude and *having* with you the golden calves which Jeroboam made for gods for you. ⁹Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests like the peoples of *other* lands? Whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams, even he may become a priest of *what are* no gods. ¹⁰But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him; and the sons of Aaron are ministering to the

LORD as priests, and the Levites attend to their work. ¹¹Every morning and evening they burn to the LORD burnt offerings and fragrant incense, and the showbread is *set* on the clean table, and the golden lampstand with its lamps is *ready* to light every evening; for we keep the charge of the LORD our God, but you have forsaken Him. ¹²Now behold, God is with us at *our* head and His priests with the signal trumpets to sound the alarm against you. O sons of Israel, do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers, for you will not succeed.”

13:8 “*having with you the golden calves*” In the ANE, symbols of the nations’ gods and their priests went into battle with the troops. This can be seen in Israel in 1 Samuel 4, where Eli’s wicked sons took the ark into battle with the Philistines and it was captured.

Surprisingly, the text has “calves.” One wonders if both golden calf pedestals accompanied Israel’s troops. It is interesting that Judah captured the southern temple of Jeroboam I at Bethel, but the golden calf is not mentioned.

The golden calf idols were with Israel but YHWH Himself was with Judah!

13:9 What a castigation of Jeroboam I’s new temples.

1. He drove out the legitimate Levitical priests.
2. He made himself priests like the pagan nations.
3. He and his priests worshiped non-existent gods (i.e., the golden calves, 2 Chr. 13:8).
 - a. the calves were meant to represent YHWH (i.e., Exodus 32), possibly as pedestals for

His invisible presence

- b. but the calves were symbols of ANE fertility; they became the objects of *Ba’al* worship
- c. “of *what are* no gods”; see Special Topic: Monotheism at 2 Chr. 2:5

4. 2 Chr. 13:10 asserts Judah’s exclusive worship of YHWH, which implies a difference from Israel

See:

1. Special Topic: Fertility Worship of the ANE
2. Special Topic: Monotheism

13:10-11 “**we have not forsaken Him. . .but you have forsaken Him**” The VERB (BDB 736, KB 806, *Qal* PERFECT) is a recurrent VERB.

1. 1 Kgs. 9:3; 11:33; 18:18; 19:10,14
2. 2 Kgs. 2:2,4,6; 4:30; 17:16; 21:22; 22:17
3. in Chronicles it is used of
 - a. forsaking the Lord – 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 7:19,22; 12:1,5; 13:10-11; 15:2; 21:10; 24:20,24; 28:6; 29:6; 34:25
 - b. forsaking His commandments – 2 Kgs. 17:16 (i.e., idolatry)
 - c. forsaking His temple – 2 Chr. 24:18 (i.e., idolatry)

This language is reminiscent of the conclusion of Deuteronomy. YHWH’s people are judged because they forsake Him (cf. Deut. 28:20; 31:16) and His law (cf. Deut. 29:25), therefore, He forsakes them (cf. Deut. 31:17). Remember, Abraham’s descendants were part of a conditional covenant. There were consequences for obedience and disobedience (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28)!

13:11 The legitimate priests and Levites performed the Mosaic rituals (cf. 1 Chr. 23:28-31). This verse mentions the activity of the priests (i.e., offering burnt offerings every morning), but the other activities were primarily done by Levites. The author of Chronicles seems to have a special interest in them. In the post-exilic period the distinction between priests and Levites is minimized.

13:12 This verse must have been very comforting to a post-exilic audience facing the ire of the surrounding nations (cf. Ezra – Nehemiah).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 13:13-19

¹³But Jeroboam had set an ambush to come from the rear, so that *Israel* was in front of Judah and the ambush was behind them. ¹⁴When Judah turned around, behold, they were attacked both front and rear; so they cried to the LORD, and the priests blew the trumpets. ¹⁵Then the men of Judah raised a war cry, and when the men of Judah raised the war cry, then it was that God routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. ¹⁶When the sons of Israel fled before Judah, God gave them into their hand. ¹⁷Abijah and his people defeated them with a great slaughter, so that 500,000 chosen men of Israel fell slain. ¹⁸Thus the sons of Israel were subdued at that time, and the sons of Judah conquered because they trusted in the LORD, the God of their fathers. ¹⁹Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured from him *several* cities, Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron with its villages.

13:13-14 Even though Jeroboam I had a better military strategy, YHWH acted on behalf of Judah and Israel was defeated.

1. 500,000 killed
2. cities taken back
3. national weakness throughout Jeroboam I's remaining reign
4. YHWH struck him and he died (2 Chr. 13:20; 1 Kings 14)

13:14-15 Notice the expected acts involving a military action.

1. prayer to YHWH – before, during, and after the battle
 2. war cry – possibly involving YHWH's name
 3. blowing of trumpets by the Levitical priests
- Special Topic: Horns Used by Israel.

13:17 What a terrible slaughter of fellow descendants of Abraham. Civil wars are horrible but it was even worse among the unique covenant people of God.

In the modern western world, the individual has become supreme but remember the Bible is corporate. Each individual served a collective whole. I surely agree that God loves individuals, but His heart is also set on a people, chosen for a purpose. See Special Topic: YHWH's Eternal Redemptive Plan. This supercedes the place of individuals. Even for NT believers, the goal is not benefits for the individual but service to the health and growth of the Kingdom of God (i.e., 1 Cor. 12:7,11). We are saved to serve, not to get. Be careful of western individualism.

13:18 “because they trusted in the LORD” The reason for Judah's success in battle is clearly and emphatically identified. YHWH is said to have “routed Jeroboam” in v. 15. This clearly demonstrates the stated truth of v. 12, “God is with us as our head. . .do not fight against the LORD God of your fathers.” There are three key verbs for the concept of faith/trust.

1. The VERB “trusted” (BDB 1043, KB 1612, *Niphal* PERFECT) basically means “to lean on” or “support oneself on” (cf. 2 Chr. 14:11; 16:7,8; Isa. 31:1; 50:10; Mic. 3:11).
 2. This VERB is parallel with the more common VERB/NOUN to trust (BDB 53,54; see Special Topic: Believe, Trust, Faith, and Faithfulness in the OT) in Isa. 10:20.
 3. See also the other term for “trust” (BDB 105, KB 120) in Isa. 30:12; 31:1.
- Trust is a crucial element of OT faith!

13:19 “Bethel” This Ephraimite city was just a few miles north of Jerusalem and was the location of the southern temple of Jeroboam I's golden calves. What a symbolic judgment!

Its location was meant to be a rival to Jerusalem's temple.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 13:20

²⁰Jeroboam did not again recover strength in the days of Abijah; and the LORD struck him and he died.

There is no grim reaper. Death is in the hands of YHWH!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 13:21-22

²¹But Abijah became powerful; and took fourteen wives to himself, and became the father of twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. ²²Now the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways and his words are written in the treatise of the prophet Iddo.

13:21-22 This is a typical, but shorter, form of the summary of Abijah's reign. This may be because part of the family information appears in 2 Chr. 13:1-2.

Not surprisingly this account does not mention the evil summary of 1 Kgs. 15:3.

1. walked in the sins of his fathers
2. his heart was not fully devoted to YHWH

13:22

NASB "treatise"

NKJV "annals"

NRSV, JPSOA "story"

NJB "the midrash"

REB "discourse"

Peshitta "poems"

The MT has "midrash" (BDB 205), which is found only here and 2 Chr. 24:27 in the OT, but became a famous term in later Judaism for a commentary on Scripture. Here, it refers to a prophetic record or poem (Peshitta) but not scribal embellishments.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why is the account in Kings so different from this account?
2. How does Abijah's speech reflect the theology of the Chronicler?
3. How does this chapter explain the reason for Israel and Judah to split?
4. List the reasons Jeroboam I is condemned.
5. How are the "war cry" and the blowing of the trumpets related to Judah's victory?
6. Why do modern commentators question the numbers in Kings and Chronicles?

2 CHRONICLES 14

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Asa Succeeds Abijah in Judah		The Beginning of the Reign of Asa, and His Great Victory Over the Ethiopians	King Asa Defeats the Ethiopians	Peace Under Asa (MT versing) 13:23b-14:5
14:1	Asa Reigns in Judah	14:1-8	14:1-8	
14:2-8	14:2-8			14:6 14:7 Invasion by Zerah
14:9-15	14:9-15	14:9-15	14:9-11 14:12-15	14:9-10 14:11-12a 14:12b-15

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 14:1

¹So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David, and his son Asa became king in his place. The land was undisturbed for ten years during his days.

14:1 “slept with his fathers” This is a Hebrew idiom for being buried with the family. It does not suggest “soul sleep.” To the OT descendant of Abraham there was a conscious, but muted, afterlife. The theology of life after death is progressively revealed through Scriptures. It is not until the NT that a full understanding is revealed. See:

1. Special Topic: Where Are the Dead?
2. Special Topic: Resurrection

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE RESURRECTION

In the Bible, being brought back from death has three senses.

A. Those who did not die but who went to be with God (i.e., Enoch, cf. Gen. 5:24; Elijah, cf. 2 Kgs. 2:11), which is called, “being translated.”

B. Some, through the power of God, are brought back from death’s door to physical health; this is called “resuscitation.” They will die at some point in the future

C. There has been only one resurrection (i.e., Jesus); He died but was raised from the dead (*Hades*) and given a new body prepared for eternal life with God. He is the first fruits of the dead (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20, 23; “firstborn of dead,” cf. Col. 1:15, 17). Because of Him, believers will be resurrected at the Second Coming (cf. Ps. 49:15; 73:24; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 22:31-32; Mark 12:26-27; John 5:25,28-29; 6:39-40,44,54; Rom. 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 John 3:2).

Evidence for the resurrection

A. Fifty (50) days later at Pentecost, the resurrection had become the key note of Peter’s sermon (cf. Acts 2). Thousands who lived in the area where it happened believed!

B. The lives of the disciples were changed radically from discouragement (they were not expecting resurrection) to boldness, even martyrdom.

C. Paul lists many eyewitnesses in 1 Cor. 15:5-8, including himself (cf. Acts 9).

Significance of the resurrection

- A. Shows Jesus was who He claimed to be (cf. Matt. 12:38-40 prediction of death and resurrection)
- B. God put His approval on Jesus' life, teaching, and substitutionary death! (cf. Rom. 4:25)
- C. Shows us the promise to all Christians (i.e. resurrection bodies, cf. 1 Corinthians 15)

Claims from Jesus that He would rise from the dead

- A. Matt. 12:38-40; 16:21; 17:9,22, 23; 20:18-19; 26:32; 27:63
- B. Mark 8:31; 9:1-10,31; 14:28,58
- C. Luke 9:22-27
- D. John 2:19-22; 12:34; chapters 14-16

Both Peter and Paul assert that Psalm 16 refers to Jesus, the Messiah.

- A. Peter in Acts 2:24-32
- B. Paul in Acts 13:32-37

Further Study

- A. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell
- B. *Who Moved the Stone?* by Frank Morrison
- C. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, "Resurrection," "Resurrection of Jesus Christ"

"the city of David" If the context is about David's lineage or birth, this refers to Bethlehem, but if it is about his reign, then it refers to Jerusalem. See Special Topic: Moriah, Salem, Jebus, Jerusalem, Zion.

"The land was undisturbed for ten years" Contextually this could be because of

- 1. Abijah's defeat of Israel (cf. 2 Chronicles 13)
- 2. Asa's trust in YHWH and his reforms (cf. 2 Chr. 14:3-4)

This is part of the covenant blessings of Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28. The Chronicler is very interested in how these Judean kings related to YHWH. Judah's history is viewed through Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28. The "two ways" of Deut. 30:15,19 and Psalm 1 are paradigms.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 14:2-8

²Asa did good and right in the sight of the LORD his God, ³for he removed the foreign altars and high places, tore down the *sacred* pillars, cut down the Asherim, ⁴and commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers and to observe the law and the commandment. ⁵He also removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah. And the kingdom was undisturbed under him. ⁶He built fortified cities in Judah, since the land was undisturbed, and there was no one at war with him during those years, because the LORD had given him rest. ⁷For he said to Judah, "Let us build these cities and surround *them* with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought Him, and He has given us rest on every side." So they built and prospered. ⁸Now Asa had an army of 300,000 from Judah, bearing large shields and spears, and 280,000 from Benjamin, bearing shields and wielding bows; all of them were valiant warriors.

14:2 Asa did good and right in the sight of the LORD" This is a recurrent theme in Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. 6:18; 12:28; 13:18). This chapter lists several things he did to merit this evaluation (cf. 2 Chr. 15:8-15,16-18).

- 1. removed
 - a. foreign altars, 2 Chr. 14:3
 - b. high places, 2 Chr. 14:3,5 (cf. 2 Chr. 15:17; see Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, "High Places," pp. 284-288)
 - c. incense altars, 2 Chr. 14:5 (associated with *Ba'al* worship, cf. Lev. 26:30; 2 Chr. 34:4,7)
- 2. destroyed (cf. Deut. 12:2-3)
 - a. sacred pillars (i.e., raised stone which was a symbol of the male deity, cf. Exod. 23:24)
 - b. Asherim (i.e., a live tree or carved stake which was a symbol of the female deity, cf.

Exod. 34:13; 2 Chr. 15:16)

3. demanded his people
 - a. to seek YHWH
 - b. to observe His law

The Chronicler expands (i.e., three chapters) the material on the life of Asa. Kings only has a few verses (i.e., 1 Kgs. 15:9-24). Chronicles is using another prophetic written source.

1. positive – 2 Chr. 14:1-15:19
2. negative – 2 Chr. 16:1-14

Faithful at the beginning but faithless at the end becomes a terrible pattern.

14:4 “to seek the LORD God of their fathers” This VERB (BDB 205, KB 233, *Qal* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT) is a recurrent theme in Chronicles (cf. 1 Chr. 22:19; 28:9; 2 Chr. 12:14; 14:4,7; 15:2,12,13; 16:12; 26:5; 30:19; 31:12; 34:3). It illustrates the human volitional side of the conditional covenant of YHWH. Deity initiates but humans must respond. This is called “the two ways” in the OT (cf. Deut. 30:15,19; Psalm 1). The title “LORD” is YHWH, the covenant name for Israel’s Deity. See Special Topic: Names for Deity, D. at 2 Chr. 1:1b.

The title “God” is *Eloah*, the SINGULAR of *Elohim*, the title of Deity as creator, provider, and sustainer of all life. See:

1. Special Topic: Covenant
2. Special Topic: Names for Deity, C, D

“to observe the law and the commandment” Obedience is crucial in a performance-based covenant like the Mosaic covenant. See

1. Special Topic: Keep
2. Special Topic: Terms for God’s Revelation

SPECIAL TOPIC: KEEP (taken from Dr. Utley’s notes on Deut. 5:10)

It is a characteristic of Deuteronomy to link obedience to YHWH’s covenant to love for YHWH (cf. 6:5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1,13,22; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6,16,20).

YHWH’s love is not capricious, but clearly defined. He shows no partiality. His initiating covenant love is maintained by covenant obedience.

“Keep” (BDB 1036, KB 1581) is the key concept in this chapter (cf. Deut. 5:1,10,12,29,32 and many more times in Deuteronomy). The OT was based on the grace of YHWH and human obedience/performance. YHWH wanted to show human inability to respond appropriately (cf. Galatians 3). The NT (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-38) is based on God’s gracious initiation and redemption in Christ. Believers are still destined to be righteous (cf. Eph. 1:14; 2:10), but they have been accepted and forgiven by grace through faith (cf. Eph. 2:8-9). Now they obey/perform out of a sense of gratitude and family love (i.e., “those who love Me”). The goal is the same, a righteous (Christlike) people, but the mechanism has changed from human performance to Christ’s performance (cf. Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Another Hebrew root used in Deut. 6:4, “hear” (BDB 1033, KB 1581), also means “hear so as to do/obey.” Obedience is the evidence that faithful followers are faithful followers. Note Jesus’ words in Luke 6:46! One of the saddest passages in Isaiah describes Israel’s inability to obey (cf. Isa. 6:9-13)! Also note Jesus’ words in Matt. 7:21-23,24-27)!

14:5 This seems to be a repeat of 2 Chr. 14:3. It may reveal the use of two written sources combined. The Chronicler used several prophetic sources.

14:6-8 These verses show YHWH’s blessings on Asa (i.e., “because the LORD had given him rest,” cf. 2 Chr. 14:7).

It is surely possible these fortifications were to prevent another Egyptian attack like Shishak in 2

Chr. 12:1-12. Many commentators link the Cushite invasion of 2 Chr. 14:9-15 with

1. a Cushite Egyptian general under Shishak's son, Osorkon I
 2. a group of Bedouins left by Shishak as a buffer zone
- Special Topic: Kings of Egypt

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 14:9-15

⁹Now Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots, and he came to Mareshah. ¹⁰So Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up in battle formation in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. ¹¹Then Asa called to the LORD his God and said, "Lord, there is no one besides You to help *in the battle* between the powerful and those who have no strength; so help us, O LORD our God, for we trust in You, and in Your name have come against this multitude. O LORD, You are our God; let not man prevail against You." ¹²So the LORD routed the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. ¹³Asa and the people who *were* with him pursued them as far as Gerar; and so many Ethiopians fell that they could not recover, for they were shattered before the LORD and before His army. And they carried away very much plunder. ¹⁴They destroyed all the cities around Gerar, for the dread of the LORD had fallen on them; and they despoiled all the cities, for there was much plunder in them. ¹⁵They also struck down those who owned livestock, and they carried away large numbers of sheep and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

14:9-15 These verses describe one attempted military invasion by a superior force. The invader was completely crushed and despoiled. Shishak of Egypt (cf. 2 Chr. 12:1-12) was successful in his attack on Judah because of Rehoboam's sin but Asa's faithfulness is honored by YHWH.

14:9 "Zerah the Ethiopian" This person seems to be the leader of a bedouin, Arabian group (cf. Hab. 3:7), but not a ruler of the nation of Cush or Ethiopia. His name is known only from this text.

Some commentators see this person as a general of Shishak's successor, who was trying to repeat the Egyptian victory over Rehoboam.

The use of "chariots" (2 Ch. 14:9) supports Egyptian mercenaries but the mentioning of "camels" (14:15) would support bedouin.

"an army of a million men and 300 chariots" This number is simply unrealistic. The high number of men does not correspond to the number of chariots (the Peshitta has "36,000 chariots").

Literally, the MT has "a thousand thousands," so again, what is the intended meaning of *eleph*?

Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.11.1., says there were

1. 900,000 footmen
2. 100,000 horsemen
3. 300 chariots

Josephus obviously is following the Chronicler's account; where he got this specific additional information is uncertain. If this number is literal, the invader must be Egypt.

For a defense of the literal numbers, see Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 129-134. See:

1. Special Topic: Thousand (*eleph*)

14:10 "valley of Zephathah at Mareshah" These are very specific locations which show the historicity of the account.

Zephathah was possibly one of the southern cities fortified by Rehoboam (cf. 2 Chr. 11:6-10). Its location is uncertain.

The name Mareshah is also a city fortified by Rehoboam (cf. Josh. 15:44; 2 Chr. 11:8). *The MacMillan Bible Atlas*, map #122, separates Zephathah and Mareshah as about 20 miles north of Gerar. Gerar (cf. Gen. 20:1) is about 25 miles southwest of Beersheba. It may refer to a region and not a city. We know of this military conflict only from 2 Chronicles 14. It is not mentioned in Kings or outside the

Bible.

1. Special Topic: Old Testament Historiography Compared with Contemporary Near Eastern Cultures
2. Genre and Interpretation: Old Testament Narrative

SPECIAL TOPIC: OLD TESTAMENT HISTORIOGRAPHY COMPARED WITH CONTEMPORARY NEAR EASTERN CULTURES

Mesopotamian sources

1. Like most ancient literature the subject is usually the king or some national hero.
2. The events are often embellished for propaganda purposes.
3. Usually nothing negative is recorded.
4. The purpose was to support current status quo institutions or explain the rise of new regimes.
5. The historical distortions involve
 6. embellished claims of great victories
 7. earlier achievements presented as current achievements
 8. only positive aspects recorded
9. The literature served not only a propagandistic function, but was also a didactic function.

Egyptian sources

10. They support a very static view of life, which was not affected by time.
11. The king and his family are the object of much of the literature.
12. It, like Mesopotamian literature, is very propagandistic.
 13. no negative aspects
 14. embellished aspects

Rabbinical sources (later)

15. Attempt to make Scripture relevant by Midrash, which moves from the faith of the interpreter to text and does not focus on authorial intent nor historical setting of the text
16. *Halakha* deals with truths or rules for life
17. *Haggada* deals with application and encouragement for life
18. Peshet – later development seen in Dead Sea Scrolls. It used a typological approach to see the prophetic fulfillment of past events in the current setting. The current setting was the prophesied eschaton (coming new age).

It is obvious that ancient Near Eastern genres and later Jewish literature are different from Old Testament Scripture. In many ways the genres of the Old Testament, though often sharing characteristics of contemporary literature, are unique, especially in their depiction of historical events. The closest to Hebrew historiography is the Hittite literature.

It must be acknowledged how different ancient historiography is from modern, western historiography. Herein lies the problem for interpretation. Modern historiography attempts to be objective (non-propaganda, if this is possible) and to document and record in chronological sequence what “really happened!” It attempts to document “cause and effect” of historical events. It is characterized by details!

Just because Near Eastern histories are not like modern histories does not make them wrong, inferior, or untrustworthy. Western modern histories reflect the biases (presuppositions) of their writers. Biblical history is by its very nature (inspiration) different. There is a sense in which biblical history is seen through the eyes of the faith of the inspired author and for the purposes of theology, but it is still a valid historical account.

This historicity of the Old Testament is important to me as a way of advocating my faith to others. If the Bible can be demonstrated to be historical then its faith claims have stronger appeal to non-believers. My faith does not rest on the historical confirmation of archaeology and anthropology, but these help to introduce the message of the Bible, and to give it a credibility that otherwise it would not have.

To summarize then, historicity does not function in the area of inspiration, but in the area of

apologetics and evangelism.

SPECIAL TOPIC: GENRE AND INTERPRETATION: OLD TESTAMENT NARRATIVE

I. OPENING STATEMENTS

- A. The relationship between the OT and other ways of the chronicling events
 - 1. Other ancient Near Eastern literature is mythological
 - a. polytheistic (usually humanistic gods reflecting the powers of nature but using interpersonal conflict motifs)
 - b. Based on the cycles of nature (dying and rising gods)
 - 2. Greco-Roman is for entertainment and encouragement rather than the recording of historical events per se (Homer in many ways reflects Mesopotamian motifs)
- B. Possibly the use of three German terms illustrates the difference in types or definitions of history
 - 3. “Historie,” the recording of events (bare facts)
 - 4. “Geschichte,” the interpretation of events showing their significance to mankind
 - 5. “Heilsgeschichte” refers uniquely to God’s redemptive plan and activity within the historical process
- 6. The OT and NT narratives are “Geschichte” which leads to an understanding of Heilgeschichte. They are selected theologically-oriented historical events
 - 7. selected events only
 - 8. chronology not as significant as theology
 - 9. events shared to reveal truth
- 10. Narrative is the most common genre in the OT. It has been estimated that 40% of the OT is narrative. Therefore, this genre is useful to the Spirit in communicating God’s message and character to fallen mankind. But, it is done, not propositionally (like the NT Epistles), but by implication, summation or selected dialog/monolog. One must continue to ask why this is recorded. What is it trying to emphasize? What is its theological purpose?

This in no way is meant to depreciate the history. But, it is history as the servant and channel of revelation.

II. Biblical Narratives

- 11. God is active in His world. Inspired Bible authors chose certain events to reveal God. God is the major character of the OT.
- 12. Every narrative functions in several ways:
 - 13. who is God and what is He doing in His world
 - 14. mankind is revealed through God’s dealing with individuals and national entities
 - 15. as an example, specifically notice Joshua’s military victory linked to covenant performance (cf. Jos. 1:7-8; 8:30-35).

C. Narratives are often strung together to make a larger literary unit which reveals a single theological truth.

III. Interpretive principles of OT narratives

- 16. The best discussion I have seen about interpreting OT narratives is by Douglas Stuart in *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, pp. 83-84
- 17. An OT narrative usually does not directly teach a doctrine.
- 18. An OT narrative usually illustrates a doctrine or doctrines taught propositionally elsewhere.
- 19. Narratives record what happened—not necessarily what should have happened or what ought to happen every time. Therefore, not every narrative has an individual identifiable moral of the story.

20. What people do in narratives is not necessarily a good example for us. Frequently, it is just the opposite.
21. Most of the characters in OT narratives are far from perfect, and their actions also.
22. We are not always told at the end of a narrative whether what happened was good or bad. We are expected to be able to judge that on the basis of what God has taught us directly and categorically elsewhere in the Scripture.
23. *All* narratives are selective and incomplete. Not all the relevant details are always given (cf. John 21:25). What does appear in the narrative is everything that the inspired author thought important for us to know.
24. Narratives are not written to answer all our theological questions. They have particular, specific, limited purposes and deal with certain issues, leaving others to be dealt with elsewhere, in other ways.
25. Narratives may teach either explicitly (by clearly stating something) or implicitly (by clearly implying something without actually stating it).
26. In the final analysis, God is the hero of all biblical narratives.
27. Another good discussion on interpreting narratives is in Walter Kaiser's *Toward Exegetical Theology*:

“The unique aspect of the narrative portions of Scripture is that the writer usually allows the words and actions of the people in his narrative to convey the main thrust of his message. Thus, instead of addressing us through direct statements, such as are found in doctrinal or teaching portions of Scripture, the writer tends to remain instead somewhat in the background as far as direct teaching or evaluative statements are concerned. Consequently, it becomes critically important to recognize the larger context in which the narrative fits and to ask why the writer used the specific selection of events in the precise sequence in which he placed them. The twin clues to meaning now will be *arrangement* of episodes and *selection* of detail from a welter

of possible speeches, persons, or episodes. Furthermore, the divine reaction to and estimate of these people and events must often be determined from the way the author allows one person or a group of people to respond at the climax of the selected sequence of events; that is, if he has not interrupted the narration to give his own (in this instance, God's) estimate of what has taken place” (p. 205).

- C. In narratives the truth is found in the whole literary unit and not the details. Beware of proof-texting or using OT narratives as a precedent for your life.

IV. Two levels of interpretation

- A. YHWH's redemptive, revelatory acts for Abraham's seed
- B. YHWH's will for every believer's life (in every age)
- C. The first focuses on “knowing God” (salvation), the second on “serving Him” (the Christian life of faith, cf. Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6,11).

14:11 This is Asa's prayer and faith affirmation.

1. there is no one beside You to help
2. for we (i.e., Judah) trust in You (BDB 1043, KB 1612; see note at 2 Chr. 13:18)
3. we come against this multitude in Your name
4. You are our God (i.e., covenant language)
5. let not man prevail against You (i.e., an attack on Judah was an attack on YHWH)

See:

1. Special Topic: Monotheism
2. “The Name” of YHWH
3. Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs

14:12 Notice the victory was YHWH's victory (cf. 2 Chr. 13:16).

14:13 These verses describe the defeat and plunder of this large invading army.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why is the description of Asa's reign so different between 1 Kings 15 and here?
2. List the reforms of Asa.
3. Define Asherim.
4. Why was Asa successful in his early years?
5. Who is Zerah? How could his army be so large and yet have no other historical references in or outside the Bible?
6. How does Asa's prayer reflect the theology of the Chronicler?

2 CHRONICLES 15

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
The Prophet Azariah Warns Asa	The Reform of Asa	Asa's Reform	Asa's Reforms	Azariah's Sermon and the Reform (MY versing)
15:1-7	15:1-7	15:1-7	15:1-7	15:1-7
Asa's Reforms				Asa's Religious Reforms
15:8-15	15:8-9	15:8-15	15:8 15:9-15	15:8-15
	15:10-15			
15:16-19	15:16-17 15:18-19	15:16-19	15:16-19	15:16-18 15:19

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 15:1-7

¹Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded, ²and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the LORD is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. ³For many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law. ⁴But in their distress they turned to the LORD God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him. ⁵In those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. ⁶Nation was crushed by nation, and city by city, for God troubled them with every kind of distress. ⁷But you, be strong and do not lose courage, for there is reward for your work."

15:1 "the Spirit of God" This is an OT idiom of YHWH's empowering a person to do His will.

1. the artistic work of the tabernacle – Exod. 28:3; 31:3; 35:31
2. 70 elders to help Moses – Num. 11:16,17,25,26,29
3. prophets
 - a. Balaam – Num. 24:2
 - b. Azariah – 2 Chr. 15:1
 - c. Jahaziel – 2 Chr. 20:14
 - d. Zechariah – 2 Chr. 24:20
 - e. Ezekiel – Ezek. 11:5
4. judges – Jdgs. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6,19; 15:14,19
5. leaders
 - a. Joshua – Deut. 34:9
 - b. Saul – 1 Sam. 10:6,10; 11:6
 - c. David – 1 Sam. 16:13
 - d. Cyrus – 2 Chr. 36:22
 - e. Zerubbabel and Joshua – Haggai 1:14
6. servants
 - a. Saul's messengers – 1 Sam. 19:20,23
 - b. David's men – 1 Chr. 12:18
7. Suffering Servant Songs (i.e., Messianic) – Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 59:21; 61:1

15:2 Notice the reciprocal, conditional covenant. In this context it is the Judean king who is called on to seek YHWH and then YHWH will allow Himself to be found.

There is no greater blessing than the presence of YHWH! This presence involves both human and divine will/volition. See full note at 2 Chr. 7:14 and Deut. 4:29.

15:3 This verse calls Judah, “Israel.” For the Chronicler the only true “Israel” was the Davidic seed and the temple in Jerusalem.

The covenant people had fallen into a period of spiritual malaise.

1. without the true God (some rabbis see *Elohim* here as government leaders)
2. without a teaching priest
3. without the Law

What a sorry spiritual condition for the unique covenant people!

I have one pause about my previous comments in v. 7, “But you” seems to be a textual marker that vv. 3-7 are about the northern tribes’ rebellious state and not Judah’s.

Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.12.2., sees this as a future warning to Judah based on their obedience or disobedience to the covenant.

The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, p. 487, and *Barne’s Notes On the Whole Bible*, p. 391, assert that this paragraph refers to the period of the Judges, therefore, is a flashback.

Obviously, no one knows!

15:4 This is the outworking of the promise of 2 Chr. 15:2. They recognized their need and turned to the only source of help.

15:5 This described the danger of traveling in a country full of lawlessness.

15:7 These are the same words

1. Moses spoke to Joshua – Deut. 31:7,8,23
2. YHWH spoke to Joshua – Josh. 1:6,7,9,18
3. Joshua spoke to the people – Josh. 10:25

They are a theological worldview! YHWH is with them and for them, who can be successful against them!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 15:8-15

⁸Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke, he took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. He then restored the altar of the LORD which was in front of the porch of the LORD. ⁹He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them, for many defected to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. ¹⁰So they assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa’s reign. ¹¹They sacrificed to the LORD that day 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought. ¹²They entered into the covenant to seek the LORD God of their fathers with all their heart and soul; ¹³and whoever would not seek the LORD God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, man or woman. ¹⁴Moreover, they made an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets and with horns. ¹⁵All Judah rejoiced concerning the oath, for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought Him earnestly, and He let them find Him. So the LORD gave them rest on every side.

15:8-15 Asa acted to fix the spiritual malaise (this material is paralleled in 1 Kgs. 15:9-15).

1. he removed the idols from the land, 2 Chr. 15:8 (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:12)
2. he restored the sacrificial altar of the temple, 2 Chr. 15:8

3. he gathered all the faithful of both kingdoms to Jerusalem, 2 Chr. 15:9-10
4. they renewed their covenant with YHWH (i.e., an oath, 2 Chr. 15:12,14,15)
5. took action against all who would not follow Him, 2 Chr. 15:13 (i.e., Exod. 22:20; Deut. 13:6-9; 17:2-7; one person's sin affects the whole, cf. Joshua 7; Rom. 5:12-21)
6. he initiated a major worship event, 2 Chr. 15:14
7. YHWH responded with peace and security for him, 2 Chr. 15:15
8. he restored the dedicated things to the temple, 2 Chr. 15:18 (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:15)

These reforms are very similar to those enacted by Hezekiah (cf. 2 Kings 16; 2 Chronicles 30). These verses show a terrible pattern of idolatry when compared to 2 Chr. 14:2-4. This idolatry was recurrent!

15:8 The UBS Text Project, p. 461, suggests that this may refer to another written prophetic source.

NASB, NRSV, TEV – “Azariah the son of Oded the prophet”

NKJV, JPSOA, REB, Vul.– “the prophecy of Oded the prophet”

NJB – “the words of the prophecy”

LXX – “the prophecy of Adad the prophet”

Peshitta – “words of Azariah the son of Azor the prophet”

The MT has “and the prophecy, Oded the prophet.” The UBS Text Project gives this a “B” rating (some doubt).

The NASB goes back to 2 Chr. 15:1, while the MT seems to refer to a prophet Oded (or a family of prophets) mentioned in 2 Chr. 28:9!

“and from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim” We know nothing about this incident. The Chronicler often combines prophetic written sources that mention things/events that are not elaborated on. The Chronicler is both an author and a compiler.

15:9 “those from Ephraim, Manasseh and Simeon” This is surprising! Simeon was incorporated into Judah very early and had no independent existence. Why it is included with a group from the northern tribes is uncertain.

15:10 “assembled at Jerusalem” This is a covenant renewal ceremony (the original affirmation is in Exod. 24:1-3) like

1. Moses held in Deut. 29:1
2. Joshua held in Josh. 8:30-35; 24:25
3. Samuel held in 1 Sam. 11:14
- 4,5. David held in 1 Chr. 13:2-5; 28; 29
6. Jehoiada held in 2 Chr. 23:16
7. Hezekiah held in 2 Chr. 29:10
8. Josiah held in 2 Chr. 34:31
9. Ezra held in Nehemiah 8

“the third month” This would be harvest time. It could relate to (1) the first giving of the Law (cf. Exodus 19-20) or (2) the Feast of Booths (cf. Lev. 23:15-16). This may be where later Judaism associated the Week of Booths with commemorating the giving of the Law.

Special Topic: ANE Calendars

15:11 “from the spoil they had brought” This refers to 2 Chr. 14:14-15. This spoil was from the crushing defeat of the invading army (i.e., 2 Chr. 14:9-15).

15:14 “with a loud voice, with shouting, with trumpets and with horns” These actions could refer to worship or war (cf. 2 Chr. 13:15). The shout would be an affirmation of faith (i.e., 2 Chr. 12:6).

This sounds like the OT precedent to 1 Thess. 4:16.

Special Topic: Horns Used by Israel

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 15:16-19

¹⁶He also removed Maacah, the mother of King Asa, from the *position of queen mother*, because she had made a horrid image as an Asherah, and Asa cut down her horrid image, crushed *it* and burned *it* at the brook Kidron. ¹⁷But the high places were not removed from Israel; nevertheless Asa's heart was blameless all his days. ¹⁸He brought into the house of God the dedicated things of his father and his own dedicated things: silver and gold and utensils. ¹⁹And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.

15:16 Fertility worship had even spread into the royal family but Asa acted and removed the *Asherah* (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:13).

“Maacah” This was the wife of Rehoboam and mother of Abijah (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:2; 2 Chr. 11:20,21,22). Apparently Asa's mother had the same name (different father, cf. 1 Kgs. 15:10,13; 2 Chr. 15:16). These common names cause great confusion for historians and Bible interpreters. This could be Asa's grandmother.

15:17 The local “high places” were not removed (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:14). Probably because of local resistance. Religious traditions are hard to eradicate! Abijah removed them in 2 Chr. 14:3, but they must have been rebuilt and used again by Asa's day.

“Asa's heart was blameless all his days” What a wonderful affirmation (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:11,14).

However, 2 Chronicles 16 shows that this was an overstatement (cf. 2 Chr. 15:10). Like so many Israelite kings, he started well but finished poorly.

Special Topic: Blameless, Innocent, Guiltless, Without Reproach

SPECIAL TOPIC: BLAMELESS, INNOCENT, GUILTLESS, WITHOUT REPROACH

A. Opening Statements

1. This concept theologically describes mankind's original state (i.e., Genesis 1, the Garden of Eden).
2. Sin and rebellion have decimated this condition of perfect fellowship (i.e., Genesis 3).
3. Humans (male and female) long for the restoration of fellowship with God because they are made in His image and likeness (i.e., Gen. 1:26-27).
4. God has dealt with sinful mankind in several ways
 - a. godly leaders (i.e., Abraham, Moses, Isaiah)
 - b. sacrificial system (i.e., Leviticus 1-7)
 - c. godly examples (i.e., Noah, Job)
5. Ultimately God provided the Messiah
 - a. as full revelation of Himself (cf. John 1:1-14; Col. 1:13-17; Heb. 1:2-3)
 - b. as the perfect sacrifice for sin (cf. Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:21)
6. Christians are made blameless
 - a. legally through Christ's imputed righteousness (cf. Romans 4-6)
 - b. progressively through the work of the Spirit
 - c. the goal of Christianity is Christlikeness (cf. Rom. 8:28-30; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 1 Thess. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:15), which in reality, is the restoration of the image of God lost in the fall of Adam and Eve.
7. Heaven is a restoration of the perfect fellowship of the Garden of Eden. Heaven is the New Jerusalem coming down out of God's presence (cf. Rev. 21:2) to a purified earth (cf. 2 Pet. 3:10). The Bible begins and ends on the same themes.
 - a. intimate, personal fellowship with God

- b. in a garden setting (Genesis 1-2 and Revelation 21-22)
- c. by prophetic statement, the presence and companionship of animals (cf. Isa. 11:6-9)

B. Old Testament

1. There are so many different Hebrew words that carry the concept of perfection, blamelessness, innocence that it would be hard to name and show all the intricate relationships.
2. The main terms carrying the concept of perfection, guiltlessness, or innocence (according to Robert B. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, pp. 94-99) are:

1. *shalom* (BDB1022)

- b. *thamam* (BDB1070)
- c. *calah* (BDB478)

d. The Septuagint (i.e., the Bible of the early church) translates these Hebrew concepts into Koine Greek terms used in the NT (see C. below).

e. The key concept is connected to the sacrificial system.

1. *amōmos* (cf. Exod. 29:1; Lev. 1:3,10; 3:1,6; Num. 6:14)

2. *amiantos* and *aspilus* also have cultic connotations

f. New Testament

g. the legal concept

1. the Hebrew legal cultic connotation is translated by *amōmos* (cf. Eph. 5:27; Phil. 2:15; 1 Pet. 1:19)

2. the Greek legal connotations (cf. 1 Cor. 1:8; Col. 1:22)

2. Christ is the sinless, blameless, innocent One (*amōmos*, cf. Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19)

3. Christ's followers must emulate Him (*amōmos*, cf. Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Phil. 2:15; Col. 1:22; 2 Pet. 3:14; Jude v. 24; Rev. 14:5)

4. This concept is also used of church leaders

1. *aneglētos*, "without accusation" (cf. 1 Tim. 3:10; Titus 1:6-7)

2. *anepileptos*, "above criticism" or "no handle for reproach" (cf. 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:7; 6:14; Titus 2:8)

5. The concept of "undefiled" (*amiantos*) is used of

a. Christ Himself (cf. Heb. 7:26)

b. the Christian's inheritance (cf. 1 Pet. 1:4)

6. The concept of "wholeness" or "soundness" (*holoklēria*) (cf. Acts 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:23;

James 1:4)

7. The concept of "without fault," "guiltless innocence" is conveyed by *amemptos* (cf. Luke 1:6; Phil. 2:15; 3:6; 1 Thess. 2:10; 3:13; 5:23)

8. The concept of "not subject to blame" is conveyed by *amōmētos* (cf. 2 Pet. 3:14)

9. The concept of "spotless," "unblemished" is often used in passages that have one of the above terms also (cf. 1 Tim. 6:14; James 1:27; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2 Pet. 3:14)

10. The number of words in Hebrew and Greek which convey this concept shows its importance. God has provided our need through Christ and now calls on us to be like Him.

Believers are positionally, forensically declared "right," "just," "blameless" by the work of Christ. Now believers are to possess their position. "Walk in the light as He is in the light" (cf.

1 John 1:7). "Walk worthy of the calling" (cf. Eph. 4:1,17; 5:2,15). Jesus has restored the image of God. Intimate fellowship is now possible, but remember God wants a people who reflect His character, as His Son did, to a lost world (i.e., the nations). We are called to nothing less than holiness (cf. Matt. 5:20,48; Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:13-16). God's holiness, not only legally, but existentially!

15:19 This seems to be a clear statement but it is hard to reconcile with 1 Kgs. 15:16 and 2 Chronicles

16. There have been several proposed solutions.

1. It refers to the splitting of the kingdom (see Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the*

Hebrew Kings, pp. 82-84, 198, 209).

2. It was a theological way to assert YHWH's blessing.

3. The NIV Study Bible suggests a change from 35th year to 25th year, and therefore, refers to the conflict with Baasha, King of Israel.

For an attempt to reconcile these dates in Kings vs. Chronicles, see Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 225-226.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. What does it mean that “the Spirit of God came on”?
2. Explain in your own words how 2 Chr. 15:2 reveals the crucial aspect of human choice in OT faith?
3. Who is 2 Chr. 15:3-7 talking about?
4. Why is Asa encouraged to be strong?
5. How does one seek the Lord with all heart and soul?
6. Why is the date in 2 Chr. 15:19 a problem?

2 CHRONICLES 16

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Asa Wars Against Baasha	Asa's Treaty With Syria	The War with Baasha; Asa's Apostasy, Punishment, and Death	Troubles with Israel	War with Israel (MT versing)
16:1-6	16:1-6	16:1-6	16:1-3 16:4-6	16:1-6
Asa Imprisons the Prophet	Hanani's Message to Asa		The Prophet Hanani	
16:7-10	16:7-10	16:7-10	16:7-10	16:7-10
	Illness and Death of Asa		The End of Asa's Reign	The End of the Reign of Asa
16:11-14	16:11-12 16:13-14	16:11-14	16:11-14	16:11-14

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 16:1-6

¹In the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order to prevent *anyone* from going out or coming in to Asa king of Judah. ²Then Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the king's house, and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Aram, who lived in Damascus, saying, ³"*Let there be a treaty between you and me, as between my father and your father. Behold, I have sent you silver and gold; go, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so that he will withdraw from me.*" ⁴So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim and all the store cities of Naphtali. ⁵When Baasha heard *of it*, he ceased fortifying Ramah and stopped his work. ⁶Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber with which Baasha had been building, and with them he fortified Geba and Mizpah.

16:1 "In the thirty-sixth year" There is some confusion about this date. See notes at 2 Chr. 15:19 and Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 225-226.

"Ramah" There are several cities by this name (BDB 928 II), which means "height." The one mentioned here is in the ancient tribal allocation of Benjamin, about four miles north of Jerusalem on the main highway.

This would have been a strategic city (i.e., trade route). It was an obvious provocation by Israel (cf. 1 Kgs. 15:16-1).

Possibly Baasha wanted to stop Israelite pilgrims from attending the feasts in Jerusalem.

16:2 Asa's actions in seeking help from Syria (i.e., by payment of the temple treasures) instead of trusting YHWH causes YHWH to send a prophet to confront him (2 Chr. 16:7), but Asa hardened his heart (v. 10).

The alliance with Syria would have involved rituals using the names of Syrian's gods.

Several of Judah's kings sought foreign/pagan military alliances.

1. Asa – here (Syria)
2. Jehoshaphat – 2 Chr. 20:35-37 (Israel)
3. Ahaziah – 2 Chr. 22:1-9 (Israel)

4. Ahaz – 2 Chr. 28:16-21 (Assyria)

“Ben-hadad” This was a royal title for the kings of Syria. Literally, it is “son of Hadad” (BDB 122, a fertility deity). Scholars still debate how many kings went by this title.

“hadad” He is an ANE storm god who gave rain for fertility (BDB 212). He is analogous with *Ba’al*, the Canaanite storm god. He is known by several names (ABA, p. 11)

1. *Hadad* – Amorites, Arameans (Syria)
2. *Adad* – Mesopotamia
3. *Hadda/Ba’al* – Canaan (Ras Shamra texts)
4. *Ramman/Rimmon* – 2 Kgs. 5:18 also

a. Syrian

b. Zech. 12:11

he was the war god of the Assyrians; his symbol was a young bull (like *Ba’al*)

16:3 Apparently Ben-hadad had a non-aggression treaty with Baasha but gold and silver quickly caused him to change allegiance!

16:4 What Baasha did to Judah (i.e., loss of the trade route revenue) now Syria did to Israel.

16:6 Asa took the building materials of Baasha and used them to fortify two of his northern border cities (i.e., against further encroachment by Israel).

However, this shows that a military success is not always a good thing or a divine thing.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 16:7-10

⁷At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, “Because you have relied on the king of Syria and have not relied on the LORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has escaped out of your hand. ⁸Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim an immense army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the LORD, He delivered them into your hand. ⁹For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars.” ¹⁰Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him for this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time.

16:7 “the seer” This is one of several terms used to denote a prophet. The Chronicler based his compilation on written prophetic sources.

Special Topic: The Different Hebrew Terms for Prophet

“king of Syria” The second use of this phrase is surprising since the Syrians were purchased allies. There are some LXX MSS (i.e., Lucian) that have “the King of Israel” (cf. NEB, REB, TEV), which makes more contextual sense. The UBS Text Project, p. 462, gives “the army of the king of Aram” a “B” rating (some doubt).

16:8 The prophet reminds Asa of YHWH’s marvelous deliverance from the army of Zerah, the Ethiopian in 2 Chr. 14:9-15.

16:9 “the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth” The “eyes” of the Lord is anthropomorphic imagery.

The phrase “move to and fro” (BDB 1001, KB 1439, *Polel* ACTIVE PARTICIPLE) is an idiom used several times in the OT.

1. here, to denote YHWH actively seeking those who have sought Him with their whole heart
2. of those who seek YHWH, Dan. 12:4; Amos 8:12

3. for YHWH seeking one godly person in Jerusalem so as to spare it from judgment, Jer. 5:1
4. in connection to YHWH restoring the temple under Zerubbabel, Zech. 4:10

Special Topic: God Described As Human

“earth” This Hebrew word can mean “land,” “country,” or “earth,” depending on the context. Here, it could refer to Canaan or if this has a monotheistic orientation, the whole earth.

Special Topic: Land, Country, Earth (OT)

“whose heart is completely His” This is an idiom for complete faith, obedience, and devotion. It was first used in various phrases in Deuteronomy (cf. Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1,13,22; 19:9; 26:16; 30:2,6,10,16,20). It then was used in the historical books for occasions and actions of certain people.

1. Solomon – 1 Kgs. 8:23
2. Josiah – 2 Kgs. 23:3
3. soldiers of David – 1 Chr. 12:38
4. David counsels Solomon – 1 Chr. 28:9
5. the people as they brought an offering for David’s plans for the temple – 1 Chr. 29:9
6. YHWH’s obedient servants – 2 Chr. 6:14
7. used of those who repent – 2 Chr. 6:38

“You have acted foolishly in this” See Special Topic: Foolish People.

SPECIAL TOPIC: FOOLISH PEOPLE

This attitude/person is expressed by several OT terms.

1. “fool,” “foolish person (BDB 17, KB 21) – cf. Job 5:2,3; Ps. 107:17; Pro. 1:7 (and many more); Isa. 19:11; 35:8; Jer. 4:22; Hos. 9:7
2. “self-confident one” (BDB 493, KB 489) – cf. Ps. 49:10; 92:6; 94:8; Pro. 1:22,32 (many more); Eccl. 2:14-16; 5:1,3,4 (many more)
3. “empty person” (BDB 614, KB 663) – cf. Deut. 32:6,21; 2 Sam. 3:33; 23:13; Job 2:10; 30:8; Ps. 14:1; 39:8; 53:1; 74:18,22; Pro. 17:7,21; 30:22; Jer. 17:11
4. “thickheaded” (BDB 698, KB 754) – cf. Gen. 31:28; 1 Sam. 13:13; 2 Sam. 15:31; 24:10; 1 Chr. 21:8; 2 Chr. 16:9; Eccl. 2:19; 10:3,14; Isa. 44:25; Jer. 5:21

Jesus used three words to describe foolish people.

1. *aphrōn*, Luke 11:40; 12:20
2. *anoētos*, Luke 24:25
3. *mōros*, Matt. 5:22; 23:17,19

The strongest statement by Jesus in regard to the use of this characterization of one person by another is in Matt. 5:22, where *mōros* reflects the Aramaic word *raca*, which means incapable of life. This section is not dealing with what specific titles one can or cannot call another person, but with a supposed believer’s attitude toward others, especially covenant brothers.

The Greek term, *mōros*, translated “fool,” was meant to reflect the Aramaic term *raca*. However, Jesus’ word play was not to the Greek word *mōros*, but the primarily Hebrew word *mōreh*, BDB 598, which meant “rebel against God” (cf. Num. 20:10; Deut. 21:18,20; see F. F. Bruce, *Answers to Questions*, p. 42). Jesus called the Pharisees by this very term in Matt. 23:17. Not only our actions, but our motives, attitudes, and purposes determine sin against our fellow human. Murder, as far as God is concerned, can be a thought! Hatred of our brother or sister clearly shows that we do not know God (cf. 1 John. 2:9-11; 3:15, and 4:20). Socially speaking, a hateful thought is better than a death, but remember that this section of Scripture is meant to shatter all self-righteousness and pride in one’s own goodness.

Paul follows the OT and Jesus in using several terms to describe foolish people.

1. *aphrōn*, 1 Cor. 15:36; 2 Cor. 11:16,19; 12:6,11
2. *mōros*, 1 Cor. 3:18; 4:10 and a related form in Rom. 1:22

People who claim to know God, but think and act in inappropriate ways, are often characterized as

poor thinkers! Paul's sarcastic comments, so frequent in 1 and 2 Corinthians, reveal this type of person. They were so confident that they possessed knowledge that they could not see nor recognize true knowledge!

“Indeed, from now on you will surely have wars” This is the opposite of YHWH's promised “rests” for His obedient covenant partners (i.e., Exod. 33:14; Deut. 3:20; 12:10; 25:19; Josh. 1:13,15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1; 2 Sam. 7:1,11; 1 Kgs. 5:4; 1 Chr. 22:9,18; 23:25; 2 Chr. 14:6,7; 15:15; 20:30).

16:10 It is always dangerous to speak to power. But for Asa, who started so well (cf. 2 Chr. 14:2,17), like so many of the Israelite kings, his reign ended poorly.

This is the first recorded royal action against YHWH's spokesman. Other persecution of prophets followed.

1. Micaiah, son of Imla – 2 Chr. 18:4-27
2. Zechariah, son of Jehoiada – 2 Chr. 24:20-22
3. characteristics of the covenant people – Matt. 5:12
4. John the Baptist by Herod – Mark 6:14-29

Surprisingly, Kings omits the account. Usually most of the negative things about the kings of Judah are in Kings but omitted in Chronicles. This is just the reverse!

“Asa oppressed some of the people at the same time” These were probably those who supported Hanani as a true prophet of YHWH. The text does not define “oppressed” but if Asa's treatment of Hanani is the example (i.e., not just prison, but stocks), it was severe.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 16:11-14

¹¹Now, the acts of Asa from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ¹²In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians. ¹³So Asa slept with his fathers, having died in the forty-first year of his reign. ¹⁴They buried him in his own tomb which he had cut out for himself in the city of David, and they laid him in the resting place which he had filled with spices of various kinds blended by the perfumers' art; and they made a very great fire for him.

16:11-14 This is the characteristic summary of Asa's life and reign.

16:11 “they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel” This is one of many written sources. See Introduction to Chronicles, IV. F.

16:12 “the physicians” This text does not condemn this practice (BDB 950) but just Asa's lack of trust in YHWH. See NIDOTTE, vol. 3, pp. 1168-1169. Biblically YHWH is the “healer” of sin and sickness.

Asa's rebellious spirit continued. He continued to trust humans, not YHWH.

1. Ben-hadad of Syria – 2 Chr. 16:1-4
2. the royal physicians – 2 Chr. 16:12

16:14 “spices of various kinds” See Special Topic: Burial Spices.

SPECIAL TOPIC: BURIAL SPICES

- A. Myrrh, a fragrant gum from Arabian trees
 1. This spice is mentioned twelve times in the OT, mostly in wisdom literature as a perfume
 2. It was one of the gifts brought by the Magi to baby Jesus (cf. Matt. 2:11)
 3. Its symbolism is striking

- a. used in “holy anointing oil” (Exod. 30:23-25)
 - b. used as a gift for a king (Matt. 2:11)
 - c. used to anoint Jesus at His burial (cf. John 19:39 and symbolically in John 11:2). This was according to Jewish customs described in the Talmud (i.e., Berakhoth 53a).
- B. Aloes, a fragrant type of wood
- 1. connected to fragrant perfume (cf. Num. 24:6; Ps. 45:8; Pro. 7:17; Song of Songs 4:14)
 - 2. it was used, mixed with myrrh, by the Egyptians as part of the embalming process
 - 3. Nicodemus brought a large amount of this to Jesus’ burial and anointed Him with it (cf. John 19:39). This was according to Jewish customs described in the Talmud (i.e., Betsah 6a).

“they made a great fire for him” There is no parallel in 1 Kgs. 15:23-24. This appears to be some kind of memorial (cf. 2 Chr. 21:19; Jer. 34:5) and not cremation. The use of “spices” strongly implies a burial.

For a good brief discussion see Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, “Death and Funeral Rites,” pp. 56-61.

Special Topic: Cremation

SPECIAL TOPIC: CREMATION

I. OLD TESTAMENT

- A. Cremation (burning) was one of the four ways to inflict capital punishment in Leviticus (cf. 20:14; 21:9, examples, Gen. 38:24 and Jos. 7:15,25).
- B. People friendly with Saul, reclaimed his body and those of his three sons from the Philistines and burned (BDB 976, LXX) them before burying their bones in the land of Benjamin (cf. 1 Sam. 31:12-13, omitted in the parallel of 1 Chr. 10:12). This text is the only seemingly positive cremation in the OT (cf. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 5, p. 1074). It may also refer to burning spices at the grave site (cf. 2 Chr. 16:14; 21:19; Jer. 34:5).
- C. Burning corpses was a symbol of judgment.
 - 1. a Judean prophet predicts the burning of the priests at Bethel on its sacrificial altar (cf. 1 Kgs. 13:2)
 - 2. in the eschaton the foreign invaders of Canaan will be burned and buried (cf. Ezek. 39:11-16)
 - 3. In connection with a plague of judgment in Amos 6:10 (i.e., difficult text)
- D. The issue of cremation has sometimes been falsely linked to the OT use of fire as a metaphor for judgment (cf. Isa. 30:33). Cremation metaphors (i.e., “pyre”) are used to accentuate eschatological condemnation.
- E. Cremation was seen as a humiliation (cf. Amos 2:1).
- F. Burial was practiced by all of the countries of the Ancient Near East (cf. Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, vol. 1, p. 57).

C. RABBINICAL JUDAISM

- F. Most early rabbis assert that burying is commanded by Deut. 21:23.
- G. Cremation is forbidden in the Talmud (*Sanh. 7:2,24b*) and *Mishna* (*’Abodiah Zarah 1.3*).
- H. Modern Judaism allows those cremated to be placed in Jewish cemeteries (cf. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 5, p. 1074), possibly an influence by the cremation of Jews by the Nazis

III. GREECE AND ROME

- A. Both of these civilizations practiced cremation.
 - 1. Greece regularly (Sophocles, *Electra*, 1136-1139)
 - 2. Rome as a viable, but not common, option (Cicero, *Deleg 2,22,56*)
- B. The cultures of the Mediterranean had a different attitude toward cremation than the cultures of the Ancient Near East. Tacitus mentions that the Jews bury, not burn (*His. 5.5*)

IV. NEW TESTAMENT

There is no discussion or mention of this subject in the NT. The physical body is viewed as a

temporary shelter (cf. 2 Corinthians 5). Something of the old body will be reunited with the believer at the Second Coming, but there are no details or explanations (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13-18). This is simply not an issue of “faith and practice” for Christians. Like the Jews of the OT, believers of the NT assert a bodily resurrection. There is a physicalness to eschatology, but the how or why is not specified! The condition or location of the physical remains do not affect a believer’s reunion with Jesus. Faith in Christ is the key, not physical remains!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why is there a number problem in 2 Chr. 16:1?
2. Why was the capture of Ramah significant?
3. Who is Hadad?
4. Explain the imagery of
 - a. “the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth”
 - b. “whose heart is completely His”
5. Does Chronicles condemn physicians?
6. Was Asa cremated?

2 CHRONICLES 17

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Jehoshaphat Succeeds Asa	Jehoshaphat Reigns in Judah	The Initially Good and Prosperous Reign of Jehoshaphat	Jehoshaphat Becomes King	Jehoshaphat's Military Policy (MT version)
17:1-2	17:1-9	17:1-6	17:1-6	17:1-2
His Good Reign				His Devotion to Religion
17:3-9		17:7-9	17:7-9	17:3-6
			Jehoshaphat's Greatness	17:7-9
17:10-19	17:10-11	17:10-19	17:10-13a	17:10-11
	17:12-19			17:12
				The Army
				17:13a
			17:13b-19	17:13b-14a
				17:14b
				17:15
				17:16
				17:17
				17:18
				17:19

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 17:1-2

¹Jehoshaphat his son then became king in his place, and made his position over Israel firm.
²He placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had captured.

17:1 "Jehoshaphat" "Jehoshaphat" means "YHWH is Judge" (BDB 221). 2 Chronicles 17-20 deals with his reign. This material is not in Kings and, therefore, comes from the Chronicler's prophet source or other written annals (cf. 2 Chr. 16:11).

There may have been a three year co-reign with Asa (because of Asa's debilitating foot disease). Therefore, the "third year" of 2 Chr. 17:17 would have been his first year after the death of Asa.

See Special Topic: Kings of the Divided Kingdom

NASB, JB "over Israel"

**NKJV, NRSV,
 TEV, NJB,
 REB, LXX**

Peshitta "against Israel"

JPSOA "took a firm hold of Israel"

Again Judah is called "Israel" (NASB, JB, JPSOA). The implication is that Judah is the true descendant of Jacob.

The MT has the PREPOSITION לַע, which has a large semantic range (BDB 752-759). 2 Chronicles

17:2 seems to support “against.” The powerful northern King, Ahab, mentioned so predominately in Kings, is the focus.

17:2 “in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had captured” This goes back to 2 Chr. 13:19; 15:8. It would include “Ramah” (2 Chr. 16:1).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 17:3-9

³The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father David’s earlier days and did not seek the Baals, ⁴but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did. ⁵So the LORD established the kingdom in his control, and all Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. ⁶He took great pride in the ways of the LORD and again removed the high places and the Asherim from Judah. ⁷Then in the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah; ⁸and with them the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tobadonijah, the Levites; and with them Elishama and Jehoram, the priests. ⁹They taught in Judah, *having* the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

17:3-9 “The LORD was with Jehoshaphat” There are several reasons given.

1. He followed the example of early David, 2 Chr. 17:3 (i.e., the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17 is the theological key, cf. 2 Kgs. 2:2; 2 Chr. 34:2).
2. He did not practice fertility worship, 2 Chr. 17:3.
3. He sought the God of David, 2 Chr. 17:4 (see note at 2 Chr. 7:14).
4. He obeyed YHWH’s commandments, 2 Chr. 17:4 (see Special Topic: Keep at 2 Chr. 14:4b).
5. He did not act like the northern tribes, 2 Chr. 17:4.
6. He took pride in the ways of the Lord, 2 Chr. 17:6 (lit. “his heart was high in the ways of YHWH”).
7. He removed the high places, 2 Chr. 17:6.
8. He sent
 - a. five officials
 - b. nine Levites (cf. 2 Chr. 35:3)
 - c. two priestsinto the cities of Judah to teach the Law of Moses, 2 Chr. 17:7-9 (cf. Deut. 6:4-9; 33:10).

The Chronicler does not spend any space or ink on Ahab and Jezebel!

17:3 “his father David” The MT is supported by the Peshitta, but some MSS of the LXX have “his father,” implying Asa. Asa also was faithful only during his early years.

“earlier days” There is some confusion in the Hebrew text. This could refer to

1. Asa (LXX)
2. David (MT, Peshitta)
3. Jehoshaphat (NIV, see *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 496)

“the Baals” *Ba’al* was the male fertility god of the Canaanite pantheon. This worship could be expressed as a SINGULAR (cf. 1 Kgs. 16:31) or a PLURAL, as here (cf. 1 Kgs. 18:18). This fertility god was worshiped by imitation magic at local high places (i.e., ritual sex). Every town and village had their own high place.

17:3,6 “Baal. . . Asherim” These were the male and female gods of Canaanite fertility worship.

See Special Topic: Fertility Worship of the ANE.

17:5 YHWH blessed Jehoshaphat by

1. establishing his kingdom, 2 Chr. 17:5
2. all Judah bringing tribute, 2 Chr. 17:5
 - a. expected gifts to a new king
 - b. taxes, cf. 1 Sam. 10:27; 1 Kgs. 10:25
3. great riches and honor, 2 Chr. 17:5
4. protection from attack by the surrounding nations because of their dread of YHWH, 2 Chr.

17:10

5. gifts brought by Philistines, 2 Chr. 17:11
6. animals brought by Arabians, 2 Chr. 17:11 (Josephus, *Antiq.* 8.15.1., says they brought more every year)
7. he grew greater and greater, 2 Chr. 17:12
 - a. built cities
 - b. large army

17:6 “He took great pride in the ways of the LORD” This is literally “his heart was lifted up,” which usually denotes a prideful event (cf. Deut. 8:14; 2 Chr. 26:16; Ps. 131:1), but here it is a positive attitude toward YHWH and His Law.

“and again removed the high places” Asa also tried to remove the local *Ba'al* and *Asherah* worship sites but the people kept reopening them (cf. 2 Chr. 15:17; 20:33). They are removed again under Hezekiah (cf. 2 Kgs. 18:4) and Josiah (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:4-8).

17:7

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, TEV,

NJB, JPSOA “Ben-hail”

LXX “the sons of the mighty”

Peshitta “the commanders of the armies”

AB “outstanding men”

The name “Ben-hail” (BDB 122) occurs only here. Why the ancient versions took it as a descriptive phrase and not a name is uncertain. Possibly, “ben,” “son of. . .,” caused the confusion. These government or royal leaders did not do the teaching but acted as governmental enforcers or organizers.

17:9 “the book of the law of the LORD” One wonders what this book contained (cf. Deut. 17:18-20; 2 Chr. 34:14; Neh. 9:3).

1. all the Pentateuch
2. Deuteronomy only
3. some of the historical books

The verse implies that Jehoshaphat had many copies of the Law made so that each group could have a copy to teach the people from.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 17:10-19

¹⁰Now the dread of the LORD was on all the kingdoms of the lands which *were* around Judah, so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat. ¹¹Some of the Philistines brought gifts and silver as tribute to Jehoshaphat; the Arabians also brought him flocks, 7,700 rams and 7,700 male goats. ¹²So Jehoshaphat grew greater and greater, and he built fortresses and store cities in Judah. ¹³He had large supplies in the cities of Judah, and warriors, valiant men, in Jerusalem. ¹⁴This was their muster according to their fathers’ households: of Judah, commanders of thousands, Adnah was the commander, and with him 300,000 valiant warriors; ¹⁵and next to him was Johanan the

commander, and with him 280,000; ¹⁶and next to him Amasiah the son of Zichri, who volunteered for the LORD, and with him 200,000 valiant warriors; ¹⁷and of Benjamin, Eliada a valiant warrior, and with him 200,000 armed with bow and shield; ¹⁸and next to him Jehozabad, and with him 180,000 equipped for war. ¹⁹These are they who served the king, apart from those whom the king put in the fortified cities through all Judah.

17:10 “the dread of the LORD” There are many Hebrew terms that express this concept. Fear can be a good thing (i.e., Jer. 32:40) when it is used in the sense of awe or reverence (see Special Topic: Fear), but in this context, it refers to the divine fear of YHWH given to the covenant people’s enemies (cf. Exod. 15:14-16; 23:27; Deut. 2:25; 11:25; Ps. 105:38; 2 Chr. 14:14).

17:14-18 These numbers add up to over a million. They probably represent military units of a much smaller number.

1. the NASB Study Bible, p. 606, suggests “300 units. . .280 units. . .200 units. . .200 units. . .180 units”
2. the *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 497, suggests that “‘*eleph*” (thousand) should be “‘*allup*” (leader)
 - a. אלף – thousand
 - b. אלוף – chief
3. however, NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 407, rejects this identification
There is obviously some form of conscription for labor and the military in 2 Chronicles.
 - a. Asa – 2 Chr. 14:7 (for labor)
 - b. Jehoshaphat – here, (for military)
 - c. Amaziah – 2 Chr. 25:5 (for military)
 - d. Uzziah – 2 Chr. 26:11-13 (for military)

See Special Topic: Thousand (*eleph*).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How does 2 Chr. 17:1-2 refer to Ahab, King of Israel, without mentioning him?
2. To what does the ADJECTIVE “earlier” refer?
3. List the ways Jehoshaphat followed YHWH.
4. What were “the high places”?
5. Why is 2 Chr. 17:7 unique?
6. What does “the book of the law of the LORD” include?
7. Explain “the dread of the LORD.”
8. Why can the numbers of 2 Chr. 17:14-18 not be taken literally?

2 CHRONICLES 18

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Jehoshaphat Allies With Ahab	Micaiah Warns Ahab	Jehoshaphat's Ill-fated Alliance with Ahab	The Prophet Micaiah Warns Ahab	His Alliance with Ahab and the Intervention of the Prophet
18:1-3	18:1-3	18:1-3	18:1-3a 18:3b-4	18:1-3 The Spurious Prophets Predict Success
18:4-7	18:4-5	18:4-11	18:5a 18:5b 18:6 18:7	18:4-8
Ahab's False Prophets Assure Victory	18:6-11		18:8 18:9-11	18:9-11
18:8-11				
Micaiah Brings Word From God				The Prophet Micaiah Predicts Defeat
18:12-13	18:12-17	18:12-13	18:12 18:13	18:12-16 (16)
18:14-17 (16)		18:14-17	18:14a 18:14b 18:15 18:16 18:17	18:17-22
18:18-22	18:18-22	18:18-22	18:18-21 18:22	
18:23-27	18:23-27	18:23-27	18:23 18:24 18:25-26 18:27	18:23-27
Ahab's Defeat and Death	Ahab Dies in Battle		The Death of Ahab	The Battle
18:28-34	18:28-19:3	18:28-34	18:28-29 18:30-34	28:28-32 28:33-34

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:1-3

¹Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor; and he allied himself by marriage with Ahab.
²Some years later he went down to *visit* Ahab at Samaria. And Ahab slaughtered many sheep and oxen for him and the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead.
³Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, "Will you go with me *against* Ramoth-gilead?" And he said to him, "I am as you are, and my people as your people, and *we will be* with

you in the battle.”

18:1 This is a repeat of 2 Chr. 17:5. Jehoshaphat had no reason to enter an alliance with Israel.

“**he allied himself by marriage with Ahab**” There was no need to do this. Jehoshaphat made an alliance with a *Ba'al* worshiping king (cf. 1 Kings 17-19; 2 Chr. 19:2). This alliance would have involved religious liturgy and actions.

It was Jehoshaphat’s son Joram who married Athaliah, Ahab’s daughter.

18:2 “Some years later” The MT has “at the end of years.” Characteristically bad things happened in the later part of the Judean king’s reign. See parallel account in 1 Kgs. 22:2-40.

“**he went down**” There are two possibilities.

1. literal – Jerusalem was higher than Samaria
2. theological – everywhere is down from the city of YHWH

“**slaughtered many sheep and oxen**” The implication is a peace offering, in which the meat was shared, but the text does not say this. It may just have been a banquet (see note at 2 Chr. 18:9).

The purpose of the meal was to get Judah to go to war with Israel to capture Ramoth-gilead (cf. 2 Chr. 18:3).

NASB, NRSV,

NJB “induced”

NKJV, TEV,

JPSOA “persuaded”

REB “incited”

LXX “deceived”

Peshitta “advised”

This VERB (BDB 694, KB 749, *Hiphil* IMPERFECT with *waw*, cf. 2 Chr. 18:31) usually has a negative sense (i.e., Deut. 13:6; 1 Sam. 26:19; 2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Kgs. 21:25; 2 Kgs. 18:32; 1 Chr. 21:1; 2 Chr. 18:2; 32:11,15). It is also used in this chapter in a more neutral sense in v. 31 (i.e., diverted).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:4-7

⁴Moreover, Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, “Please inquire first for the word of the LORD.” ⁵Then the king of Israel assembled the prophets, four hundred men, and said to them, “Shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?” And they said, “Go up, for God will give *it* into the hand of the king.” ⁶But Jehoshaphat said, “Is there not yet a prophet of the LORD here that we may inquire of him?” ⁷The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me but always evil. He is Micaiah, son of Imla.” But Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say so.”

18:4 The Chronicler presents Jehoshaphat in a positive, spiritual way (i.e., he wanted confirmation from YHWH).

18:5 These 400 prophets may be linked to those who opposed Elijah at Mount Carmel (cf. 1 Kings 18).

“Go up, for God will give *it* into the hand of the king” “Go” is a *Qal* IMPERATIVE (BDB 748, KB 828), while “give” is a *Qal* IMPERFECT (BDB 678, KB 733) used in a JUSSIVE sense (cf. 2 Chr. 18:11).

They claimed to know the will of God but they simply spoke what they thought the king wanted to hear (cf. v. 14). They were sincere (cf. v. 23) but they were not guided by YHWH.

“Hand” is an idiom for power and control.

Special Topic: Hand.

SPECIAL TOPIC: HAND (ILLUSTRATED FROM EZEKIEL)

The word “hand” (BDB 388, KB 386) has several connotations and usages.

1. literal (i.e., hand of a human)
 - a. symbol of the entire person, Ezek. 3:18; 18:8,17; 33:6,8
 - b. symbol of human weakness, Ezek. 7:17,27; 21:7; 22:14
 - c. symbol of foreign enemies, Ezek. 7:21; 11:9; 16:39; 21:31; 23:9,28; 28:10; 30:12; 34:27; 38:12; 39:23
 - d. literal hand, Ezek. 8:11; 12:7; 16:11; 37:17,19,20
 - e. symbol of false leaders’ power, Ezek. 13:21,22,23; 34:10
 - f. symbol of a nation, Ezek. 23:31,37,42,45; 25:14; 27:15; 28:9; 30:10,22,24,25; 31:11; 39:3
2. anthropomorphic of deity
 - a. YHWH’s giving of revelation, Ezek. 1:3; 3:14,22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; 40:1 (2:9 is other imagery of revelation – scroll on a hand)
 - b. YHWH’s power in judgment, Ezek. 6:14; 13:9; 14:9,13; 16:27; 20:33; 25:7,13,16; 35:3; 39:21
 - c. YHWH Himself (His personal Presence), Ezek. 20:22
 - d. YHWH’s power to deliver, Ezek. 20:34 (possibly key usage from Exodus, cf. 3:20; 4:17; 6:1; 7:19; 13:3)
3. anthropomorphic of Cherubim, Ezek. 1:8; 8:3; 10:7,8,12,21
4. anthropomorphic of destroying angels, Ezek. 9:1-2; 21:11
5. symbol of a pledge or oath, Ezek. 17:18; 20:5 (twice), 6,15,23,28; 36:7; 44:12; 47:14
6. symbol of joy, Ezek. 25:6
7. anthropomorphic of an angel, Ezek. 40:3,5; 47:3

18:6 One wonders if there is a theological distinction between *Elohim* (God) in 2 Chr. 18:5 and “YHWH” in v. 6. However, Micaiah calls YHWH by *Eloah* in v. 13 (i.e., the SINGULAR of *Elohim*). For some reason the prophetic word of 400 northern prophets did not convince Jehoshaphat.

Special Topic: Apostasy, I., E. and F.

SPECIAL TOPIC: APOSTASY (*aphistēmi*)

This Greek term *aphistēmi* has a wide semantic field. However, the English term “apostasy” is derived from this term and prejudices its usage to modern readers. Context, as always, is the key, not a preset definition.

This is a compound term from the preposition *apo*, which means “from” or “away from” and *histēmi*, “to sit,” “to stand,” or “to fix.” Notice the following (non-theological) usages:

1. to remove physically
 - a. from the Temple, Luke 2:37
 - b. from a house, Mark 13:34
 - c. from a person, Mark 12:12; 14:50; Acts 5:38
 - d. from all things, Matt. 19:27,29
2. to remove politically, Acts 5:37
3. to remove relationally, Acts 5:38; 15:38; 19:9; 22:29
4. to remove legally (divorce), Deut. 24:1,3 (LXX) and NT, Matt. 5:31; 19:7; Mark 10:4; 1 Cor. 7:11
5. to remove a debt, Matt. 18:7
6. to show unconcern by leaving, Matt. 4:20; John 4:28; 16:32
7. to show concern by not leaving, John 8:29; 14:18

8. to allow or permit, Matt. 13:30; 19:14; Mark 14:6; Luke 13:8

In a theological sense the VERB also has a wide usage:

1. to cancel, pardon, remit the guilt of sin, Exod.32:32 (LXX); Num. 14:19; Job 42:10 and NT, Matt. 6:12,14-15; Mark 11:25-26
2. to refrain from sin, 2 Tim. 2:19
3. to neglect by moving away from
 - a. the Law, Matt. 23:23; Acts 21:21
 - b. the faith, Ezek. 20:8 (LXX); Luke 8:13; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 3:12

Modern believers ask many theological questions that the NT writers would have never thought about. One of these would relate to moderns tendency to separate faith (justification) from faithfulness (sanctification).

There are persons in the Bible who are involved in the people of God and something happens to cause them to leave.

I. Old Testament

- II. Those who heard the twelve (ten) spies' report, Numbers 14 (cf. Heb. 3:16-19)
- III. Korah, Numbers 16
- C. Eli's sons, 1 Samuel 2, 4
- D. Saul, 1 Samuel 11-31
- E. False prophets (examples)
 1. Deut. 13:1-5 18:19-22 (ways to know a false prophet)
 2. Jeremiah 28
 3. Ezekiel 13:1-7
- F. False prophetesses
 1. Ezekiel 13:17
 2. Nehemiah 6:14
- G. Evil leaders of Israel (examples)
 1. Jeremiah 5:30-31; 8:1-2; 23:1-4
 2. Ezekiel 22:23-31
 3. Micah 3:5-12

II. New Testament

- A. This Greek term is literally "to apostasize." The Old and New Testaments both confirm an intensification of evil and false teaching before the Second Coming (cf. Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; Acts 20:29,30; 2 Thess. 2:9-12; 2 Tim. 4:4). This Greek term may reflect Jesus' words in the Parable of the Soils found in Matthew 13; Mark 4; and Luke 8. These false teachers are obviously not Christians, but they came from within (cf. Acts 20:29-30; 1 John 2:19); however, they are able to seduce and capture immature believers (cf. Heb. 3:12).

The theological question is were the false teachers ever believers? This is difficult to answer because there were false teachers in the local churches (cf. 1 John 2:18-19). Often our theological or denominational traditions answer this question without reference to specific Bible texts (except the proof-text method of quoting a verse out of context to supposedly prove one's bias).

- B. Apparent faith
 - C. Judas, John 17:12
 - D. Simon Magnus, Acts 8
 - E. Those spoken of in Matt. 7:13-23
 - F. Those spoken of in Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8
 - G. The Jews of John 8:31-59
 6. Alexander and Hymenaeus, 1 Tim. 1:19-20

7. Those of 1 Tim. 6:21
8. Hymenaeus and Philetus, 2 Tim. 2:16-18
9. Demas, 2 Tim. 4:10
10. False teachers, 2 Peter 2:19-22; Jude vv. 12-19
11. antichrists, 1 John 2:18-19

C. Fruitless faith

1. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15
2. 2 Peter 1:8-11

We rarely think about these texts because our systematic theology (Calvinism, Arminianism, etc.) dictates the mandated response. Please do not pre-judge me because I bring up this subject. My concern is proper hermeneutical procedure. We must let the Bible speak to us and not try to mold it into a preset theology. This is often painful and shocking because much of our theology is denominational, cultural or relational (parent, friend, pastor), not biblical (see Special Topic: What Does It Mean to “Receive,” “Believe,” “Confess/Profess,” and “Call Upon?”). Some who are in the People of God turn out to not be in the People of God (e.g., Rom. 9:6).

18:7 Ahab’s view of Micaiah is very clear (i.e., “I hate him”). Obviously he had prophesied to Ahab many times before. YHWH had revealed His will to this northern pagan king. Micaiah’s message had always been rejected by Ahab.

“Let not the king say so” This is a *Qal* IMPERFECT (BDB 55, KB 65) used in a JUSSIVE sense.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:8-11

⁸Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, “Bring quickly Micaiah, Imla’s son.” ⁹Now the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting each on his throne, arrayed in *their* robes, and *they* were sitting at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹⁰Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron for himself and said, “Thus says the LORD, ‘With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are consumed.’” ¹¹All the prophets were prophesying thus, saying, “Go up to Ramoth-gilead and succeed, for the LORD will *give it* into the hand of the king.”

18:8 “officer” This (BDB 710) literally means “eunuch” or “castrated person.” Originally it referred to servants of the harem or court, but it came to mean “government official” (i.e., Potiphar is called by this term but he is married, Genesis 39; see NIDOTTE, vol. 3, pp. 288-294).

18:9

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, TEV,

JPSOA “at the threshing floor”

NJB “in an open space”

REV, Peshitta “at the entrance”

LXX “in the wide space”

AB, p. 104 “a plaza”

KB 203 says the basic root refers to “threshing,” but the implication of the NOUN is a large open space outside, but close to, the gate of the city. This huge amount of slaughtered animals is not connected to the cultic center of Samaria, nor the two golden calves at Dan or Bethel. This was a fellowship event, not a worship event.

18:10 This use of physical items to accentuate the prophet’s message is like

1. Jeremiah
 - a. made a wooden yoke – Jer. 27:2; 28:10
 - b. made an iron yoke – Jer. 28:13-14

2. Ezekiel
 - a. ate a scroll – Ezekiel 3
 - b. seized Jerusalem using a brick – Ezekiel 4
 - c. cut his hair and divided it into three groups – Ezekiel 5
 - d. made a chain – Ezek. 7:23
 - e. dug through the wall of his house – Ezekiel 8 (also 12:4)
 - f. prepared bandages – Ezek. 12:3

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:12-13

¹²Then the messenger who went to summon Micaiah spoke to him saying, “Behold, the words of the prophets are uniformly favorable to the king. So please let your word be like one of them and speak favorably.” ¹³But Micaiah said, “As the LORD lives, what my God says, that I will speak.”

18:12 Ahab’s messenger (cf. 2 Chr. 18:8) encourages Micaiah to speak like all the other 400 prophets have spoken (i.e., favorably of the attack). He does this but in a sarcastic way in v. 14.

18:13 “As the LORD lives” This is a word play on the covenant name for Israel’s Deity, YHWH, which is a form of the VERB “to be” (cf. Exod. 3:14-16). He is the ever-living, only-living God.

See Special Topic: Names for Deity, D.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:14-17

¹⁴When he came to the king, the king said to him, “Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?” He said, “Go up and succeed, for they will be given into your hand.”

¹⁵Then the king said to him, “How many times must I adjure you to speak to me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?” ¹⁶So he said,

“I saw all Israel
Scattered on the mountains,
Like sheep which have no shepherd;
And the LORD said,
‘These have no master.

Let each of them return to his house in peace.’”

¹⁷Then the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?”

18:14 This is the exact message of 2 Chr. 18:11, which parallels the IMPERATIVE of v. 5.

18:15 Ahab must have been accustomed to Micaiah’s sarcasm.

18:16 In poetic form Micaiah predicts the death of Ahab in the battle. Perhaps that is why he spoke v. 14!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:18-22

¹⁸Micaiah said, “Therefore, hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing on His right and on His left. ¹⁹The LORD said, ‘Who will entice Ahab king of Israel to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said this while another said that.

²⁰Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD and said, ‘I will entice him.’ And the LORD said to him, ‘How?’ ²¹He said, ‘I will go and be a deceiving spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then He said, ‘You are to entice *him* and prevail also. Go and do so.’ ²²Now therefore, behold, the LORD has put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of these your prophets, for the LORD has proclaimed disaster against you.”

18:18-22 This is either

1. a glimpse into the “heavenly council” (i.e., YHWH and His angels, cf. Job 1-2; Isa. 6:8; Dan. 7:9-10; also note Ps. 103:21; 148:2)
2. a literary dialogue or dramatic vision to communicate the future. I am attracted to this one because it bothers me that YHWH put a “deceiving spirit” in the mouth of prophets, even fake prophets. He is the unchanging “holy one” (cf. Ps. 102:26-27; Mal. 3:6; James 1:17). YHWH’s character is crucial. See *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, pp. 230-231.

18:18 “sitting on His throne” YHWH does not have a throne. This is ANE imagery for power and reign. YHWH symbolically dwelt between the wings of the *cherubim* over the ark in the Holy of Holies. YHWH does not have a physical body.

Special Topic: Anthropomorphic Language to Describe Deity.

“all the host of heaven” The term may refer

1. in military contexts to the heavenly armies of angels (i.e., Lord of Hosts, i.e., Josh 6:15)
2. in contexts related to astral deities who they thought controlled human lives (cf. Deut. 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs. 17:16; 2 Chr. 33:3,5; Jer. 8:2; 19:13; Ezek. 8:16; Zeph. 1:5)
3. simply to the lights in the sky (i.e., sun, moon, stars, comets, cf. Isa. 34:4; 40:26; 45:12)
4. here, to the servant angels of the heavenly council

Special Topic: LORD of Hosts

“standing on His right and on His left” The “standing” is in contrast to YHWH sitting. They are servants.

The “right. . .left” is an idiom for the numerous angelic servants (cf. Deut. 33:2; Ps. 68:17; Dan. 7:10; Heb. 12:22; Jude v. 14; Rev. 5:11).

18:19

NASB, NRSV,

NJB, JPSOA,

REV, Peshitta

NKJV

TEV, LXX

“entice”

“persuade”

“deceive”

Although this is a different VERB (BDB 834, KB 984, *Piel* IMPERFECT) from 2 Chr. 18:2, “induced”/“deceived,” it is semantically parallel of deception and trying to affect another’s will (cf. Ps. 78:6; Jer. 20:7; Ezek. 14:9). This VERB occurs in 2 Chr. 18:19,20,21 (note 1 Kgs. 22:20,21,22).

18:20 “a spirit came forward” Here and in 1 Kgs. 22:21, the MT has the DEFINITE ARTICLE “the Spirit.” One wonders if this is meant to denote Satan (see Special Topic: Satan). He was one of the angels present before YHWH (cf. Job 1-2; Zechariah 3).

We hear similar imagery in 1 Sam. 16:14-15, where “an evil spirit from YHWH” replaces the “holy spirit,” which goes to David. There is so much about the angelic realm that humans do not know (i.e., Daniel 10)! See Special Topic: Spirit in the Bible.

YHWH used evil to accomplish His purposes, as He did in relation to the Messiah.

SPECIAL TOPIC: SATAN

This is a very difficult subject for several reasons.

1. The OT does not reveal an archenemy of good, but a servant of YHWH (see A. B. Davidson, *OT Theology*, pp. 300-306), who offers mankind an alternative and also accuses mankind of unrighteousness. There is only one God (see Special Topic: Monotheism), one power, one cause in the OT—YHWH (cf. Isa. 45:7; Amos 3:6).
2. The concept of a personal archenemy of God developed in the interbiblical (non-canonical)

literature under the influence of Persian dualistic religion (*Zoroastrianism*). This, in turn, greatly influenced rabbinical Judaism and the Essene community (i.e., Dead Sea Scrolls).

3. The NT develops the OT themes in surprisingly stark, but selective, categories.

If one approaches the study of evil from the perspective of biblical theology (each book or author or genre studied and outlined separately), then very different views of evil are revealed.

If, however, one approaches the study of evil from a non-biblical or extra-biblical approach of world religions or eastern religions, then much of the NT development is foreshadowed in Persian dualism and Greco-Roman spiritism.

If one is presuppositionally committed to the divine authority of Scripture (as I am!), then the NT development must be seen as progressive revelation. Christians must guard against allowing Jewish folklore or western literature (Dante, Milton) to further influence the concept. There is certainly mystery and ambiguity in this area of revelation. God has chosen not to reveal all aspects of evil, its origin (see Special Topic: Lucifer), its development, its purpose, but He has revealed its defeat!

In the OT the term “satan” or “accuser” (BDB 966, KB 1317) can relate to three separate groups.

1. human accusers (cf. 1 Sam. 29:4; 2 Sam. 19:22; 1 Kgs. 11:14,23,25; Ps. 109:6)
2. angelic accusers (cf. Num. 22:22-23; Job 1-2; Zech. 3:1)
3. demonic accusers (cf. 1 Chr. 21:1; 1 Kgs. 22:21; Zech. 13:2)

Only later in the intertestamental period is the serpent of Genesis 3 identified with Satan (cf. *Book of Wisdom* 2.23-24; *II Enoch* 31:3), and even later does this become a rabbinical option (cf. *Sot* 9b and *Sanh.* 29a). The “sons of God” of Genesis 6 become angels in *I Enoch* 54:6. I mention this, not to assert its theological accuracy, but to show its development. In the NT these OT activities are attributed to angelic, personified evil (cf. 2 Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9).

The origin of personified evil is difficult or impossible (depending on your point of view) to determine from the OT. One reason for this is Israel’s strong monotheism (see Special Topic: Monotheism; also note 1 Kgs. 22:20-22; Eccl. 7:14; Isa. 45:7; Amos 3:6). All causality (cf. Isa. 45:7; Amos 3:6) was attributed to YHWH to demonstrate His uniqueness and primacy (cf. Isa. 43:11; 44:6,8,24; 45:5-6,14,18,21,22).

Sources of possible information are (1) Job 1-2, where Satan is one of the “sons of God” (i.e., angels) or (2) Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, where prideful near-eastern kings (Babylon and Tyre) are possibly used to illustrate the pride of Satan (cf. 1 Tim. 3:6). I have mixed emotions about this approach. Ezekiel uses Garden of Eden metaphors, not only for the king of Tyre as Satan (cf. Ezek. 28:12-16), but also for the king of Egypt as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Ezekiel 31). However, Isaiah 14, particularly vv. 12-14, seems to describe an angelic revolt through pride. If God wanted to reveal to us the specific nature and origin of Satan, this is a very oblique way and place to do it. We must guard against the trend of systematic theology of taking small, ambiguous parts of different testaments, authors, books, and genres and combining them as pieces of one divine puzzle.

I agree with Alfred Edersheim (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. 2, appendices XIII [pp. 748-763] and XVI [pp.770-776]) that rabbinical Judaism has been overly influenced by Persian dualism and demonic speculation. The rabbis are not a good source for truth in this area. Jesus radically diverges from the teachings of the Synagogue in this area. I think that the concept of an archangelic enemy of YHWH developed from the two high gods of Iranian dualism, *Ahkiman* and *Ormaza*, and were then developed by the rabbis into a biblical dualism of YHWH and Satan.

There is surely progressive revelation in the NT as to the personification of evil, but not as elaborate as the rabbis. A good example of this difference is the “war in heaven.” The fall of Satan is a logical necessity, but the specifics are not given (see Special Topic: Fall of Satan and His Angels). Even what is given is veiled in apocalyptic genre (cf. Rev. 12:4,7,12-13). Although Satan is defeated in Jesus and exiled to earth, he still functions as a servant of YHWH (cf. Matt. 4:1; Luke

22:31-32; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20).

We must curb our curiosity in this area. There is a personal force of temptation and evil, but there is still only one God and we are still responsible for our choices. There is a spiritual battle, both before and after salvation. Victory can only come and remain in and through the Triune God. Evil has been defeated and will be removed (cf. Rev. 20:10)!

SPECIAL TOPIC: SPIRIT IN THE BIBLE

- I. Old Testament (*ruah*, BDB 924, KB 1197; see Special Topic: Breath, Wind, Spirit [OT])
 - A. The actions of the monotheistic God (i.e., Spirit, used about 90 times in the OT)
 1. positive, Genesis 1:2
 2. negative, 1 Sam. 16:14-16,23; 1 Kgs. 22:21-22; Isa. 29:10
 3. The God-given life force in humanity (i.e., God's breath, cf. Gen. 2:7)
 4. The Septuagint translates *ruah* by *pneuma* (used about 100 times in the LXX)
 5. In later rabbinical writings, apocalyptic writing and the Dead Sea Scrolls, influenced by Zoroastrianism, *pneuma* is used of angels and demons
- II. The Greek terms
 - A. *pneō*, to blow
 - B. *pnoē*, wind, breath
 - C. *pneuma*, spirit, wind
 - D. *pneumatikos*, pertaining to the spirit
 - E. *pneumatikōs*, spiritually
- III. Greek philosophical background (*pneuma*)
 - A. Aristotle used the term as the life force that develops from birth until self-discipline
 - B. The Stoics used the term as synonymous to *psuchē*, (soul) even *nous* (mind) in the sense of the five physical senses and the human intellect.
 - C. In Greek thought the term became equivalent to divine action (i.e., divination, magic, occult, prophecy, etc.).
- IV. New Testament (*pneuma*; see Special Topic: Spirit in the NT)
 - A. God's special presence, power, and equipping
 - B. The Spirit is connected to God's activity in the church (mostly in John)
 1. prophecy
 2. miracles
 3. boldness to proclaim the gospel
 4. wisdom (i.e., the gospel)
 5. joy
 6. brings in the new age
 7. conversion (i.e., wooing and indwelling)
 8. Christlikeness
 9. special gifts of ministry
 10. prays for believersThe Spirit awakens mankind's desire for fellowship with God, for which they were created. This fellowship is possible because of the person and work of Jesus, God's Messiah (see Special Topic: Messiah). The new spiritual awakening leads to Christlike living, serving, and trusting.
 - C. It can best be understood as a spiritual continuum with the Holy Spirit on one end and mankind as a physical creature of this planet, but also a spiritual creature in God's image, at the other end.
 - D. Paul is the NT author who develops a theology of the Spirit/spirit.
 1. Paul uses Spirit to contrast flesh (i.e., sin nature)
 2. Paul uses spirit to contrast the physical
 3. Paul uses Spirit/spirit to contrast human thinking, knowing, and being

- E. Some examples from 1 Corinthians
1. the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:3
 2. the power and wisdom of God conveyed through the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor. 2:4-5
 3. God's actions in the believer
 - a. new mind-set, 1 Cor. 2:12; 14:14,32
 - b. new temple, 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20
 - c. new life (i.e., morality), 1 Cor. 6:9-11
 - d. new life symbolized in baptism, 1 Cor. 12:13
 - e. one with God (i.e., conversion), 1 Cor. 6:17
 - f. God's wisdom, not the world's wisdom, 1 Cor. 2:12-15; 14:14,32,37
 - g. spiritual giftedness of every believer for ministry, 1 Corinthians 12 and 14
 4. the spiritual in contrast to the physical, 1 Cor. 9:11; 10:3; 15:44
 5. spiritual realm in contrast to physical realm, 1 Cor. 2:11; 5:5; 7:34; 15:45; 16:18
 6. a way of referring to a human's spiritual/inner life as distinct from one's physical body, 1

Cor. 7:34

- F. Humans live in two realms by creation (i.e., the physical and the spiritual). Mankind fell from intimacy with God (Genesis 3). Through Christ's life, teachings, death, resurrection, and promised return, the Spirit woos fallen humans to exercise faith in the gospel (i.e., John 6:44,65), at which point they are restored to fellowship with God. The Spirit is that personal part of the Trinity which characterizes the New Age of righteousness. The Spirit is God the Father's agent and the Son's Advocate in this "age" (see Special Topic: Jesus and the Spirit). A problem exists because the new age has occurred in time, while the old age of sinful rebellion still exists. The Spirit transforms the old into the new, even while they both exist.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:23-27

²³Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, "How did the Spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?" ²⁴Micaiah said, "Behold, you will see on that day when you enter an inner room to hide yourself." ²⁵Then the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son; ²⁶and say, 'Thus says the king, "Put this *man* in prison and feed him sparingly with bread and water until I return safely.'"" ²⁷Micaiah said, "If you indeed return safely, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Listen, all you people."

18:23 This court prophet of Ahab truly thought he represented deity. There are many self-deceived false prophets. "The Spirit of the LORD" represents the true Spirit of prophecy.

How does one know/recognize a false prophet? I have included my notes from Deut. 18:20-22:

Deut. 18:20-22 God's speaker will be known by (1) speaking in YHWH's name, not the names of other gods (cf. v. 20); (2) the accuracy of his statements (cf. v. 22); and (3) Deut. 13:1-2 must also be taken into account because God's dealing with Israel was based on their spiritual response.

One wonders how contemporary hearers are to judge a prophet if their prediction is beyond their lifetime. Also, what about conditional prophecy that depends on the repentant faith response of the people of that day to which it is addressed (i.e., Jonah)?

The evaluation of those who claim to speak for God is not easy. Here are some criteria:

1. content of message
2. lifestyle of the messenger
3. correlation of the message with other Bible passages

False prophets, false teachers, are often very dynamic, educated, logical, and winsome people. In our day the marks of a false speaker might be:

1. an emphasis on money
2. a sexual license
3. a claim to exclusive access to God

(see *A General Introduction to the Bible* by Norman Geisler and William Nix, pp. 241-242)

Helpful Books on the Reality of an Evil Spiritual Realm

1. *Christian Counseling and the Occult* by Kurt Kouch
2. *Demons in the World Today* by Merrill F. Unger
3. *Principalities and Powers* by John Warwich Montgomery
4. *Demons, Demons, Demons* by John Newport
5. *Biblical Demonology* by Merrill F. Unger
6. *Three Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare* by Clinton E. Arnold

18:24 Zedakah, the leader of the false prophets, would hide from Ahab's courtiers and family when it was obvious his prophecies were false!

18:27 "If indeed you return safely" This is an emphatic grammatical construction (i.e., an INFINITIVE ABSOLUTE and an IMPERFECT VERB from the same root, BDB 956, KB 1427).

"Listen, all you people" These are the exact words that start the book of Micah (which is a contraction for Micaiah) in Mic. 1:2. There is no historical link between these two prophets except their names.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 18:28-34

²⁸So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-gilead. ²⁹The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you put on your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into battle. ³⁰Now the king of Aram had commanded the captains of his chariots, saying, "Do not fight with small or great, but with the king of Israel alone." ³¹So when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It is the king of Israel," and they turned aside to fight against him. But Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him, and God diverted them from him. ³²When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him. ³³A certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel in a joint of the armor. So he said to the driver of the chariot, "Turn around and take me out of the fight, for I am severely wounded." ³⁴The battle raged that day, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot in front of the Arameans until the evening; and at sunset he died.

18:29 In light of Micaiah's words, King Ahab disguised himself but encouraged Jehoshaphat to wear his kingly armament and ride in his special chariot (i.e., let him be targeted).

"I will disguise myself and go into battle." This phrase has two INFINITIVE ABSOLUTES used as COHORTATIVE VERBS. His plan will not succeed. A "random" arrow, shot by a common soldier, fulfills Micaiah's prophecy (2 Chr. 18:33)!

"but you put on your robes" This IMPERATIVE (BDB 527, KB 519, *Qal*) clearly shows

1. Ahab's superior position in the alliance
2. Ahab's plan to use Jehoshaphat as "bait"
3. Ahab's fear of Micaiah's prophecy

18:30 The king of Syria had directed his commanders to identify the king of Israel and attack him directly.

18:31 At first they glance Jehoshaphat was Ahab. Notice the power of God (v. 31) and human volition (v. 32) work together to accomplish YHWH's prophecy (compare vv. 2,31 and vv. 19,20,21; two VERBS, one concept).

“Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him” This is a central theological theme of Chronicles, which obviously spoke clearly to the small post-exilic Judah. Covenant obedience and faith secure YHWH’s action.

“LORD. . .God” There is a play between YHWH and *Elohim* throughout the chapter. Sometimes a contrast (vv. 5-6) or a parallel, as here. See Special Topic: Names for Deity, C. and D.

18:33 A random arrow fulfills YHWH’s prediction and judgment of the *Ba’al* worshiping Ahab.

18:33b-34 These verses are difficult to coordinate.

1. turn around and take me out of the fight
2. the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot in front of the Syrians until evening (1 Kgs. 22:35 and the LXX have “he had to be propped up,” *Hophal* PARTICIPLE)
The king was the figurative head of the army; when he went down the battle was over (cf. 1 Kgs. 22:36).

18:36 “he died” The death of Ahab helps set an ANE chronology because it happened in the same year as the battle of Qarqar (i.e., 853 B.C.). Ahab was one of twelve kings who tried to stop the advance of the Assyrian Empire under Shalmaneser II, but was defeated. Possibly this defeat is why Ahab of Israel thought he could defeat Ben-hadad of Syria.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why would Jehoshaphat want to make an alliance with Ahab?
2. Was inquiring of God before a battle common in the ANE?
3. What is the symbolism of the iron horns in 2 Chr. 18:10?
4. Explain the oath of using “as the LORD lives.”
5. What is the heavenly council?
6. Does YHWH put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab’s prophets? What “spirit” is it?
7. What does 2 Chr. 18:29 say about the alliance between Israel and Judah?
8. Why is 2 Chr. 18:31 so theologically significant to the Chronicler?
9. Why are 2 Chr. 18:33 and 34 confusing?

2 CHRONICLES 19

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Jehu Rebukes Jehoshaphat		Jehoshaphat, Having Been Rebuked by a Prophet, Rules Wisely	A Prophet Reprimands Jehoshaphat	Jehoshaphat is Rebuked by a Prophet
19:1-3	The Reforms of Jehoshaphat	19:1-3	19:1-3	19:1-3
19:4	19:4-7	19:4-7	19:4-7	19:4-7
Reforms Instituted				
19:5-7				
19:8-11	19:8-11	19:8-11	19:8-11	19:8-11

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 19:1-3

¹Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem. ²Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD and *so bring* wrath on yourself from the LORD? ³But there is *some* good in you, for you have removed the Asheroth from the land and you have set your heart to seek God.”

19:1-11 This material is unique to Chronicles and, as usual, comes from a written prophetic source (i.e., 2 Chr. 21:34).

19:1 “returned” This VERB (BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* IMPERFECT with *waw*) is often used of repentance. One wonders if it functions both

1. physically – the king escaped the battle and came back to Jerusalem
2. spiritually – the king recognized his folly and came back to faith in YHWH

This same VERB occurs in verse 4, “brought them back to the LORD.”

19:2 “Jehu the son of Hanani” This prophet’s father, Hanani, had addressed King Asa earlier in 2 Chr. 16:7. Jehu’s written account of Jehoshaphat is the Chronicler’s written source (cf. 2 Chr. 20:34).

Jehu asks the king a series of ironical questions.

1. why help the wicked?
2. why love those who hate the Lord?
3. why bring YHWH’s wrath on yourself?

There is some confusion between Kings and Chronicles on the name of the prophet.

1. 1 Kgs. 16:1,7 – Jehu son of Hanani
2. 2 Chr. 16:7 – Hanani the seer

Possibly both father and son addressed Baasha; if so, he had moved from the northern kingdom to Judah.

“the seer” This is one of several names for prophets. See Special Topic: The Different Hebrew Words for Prophet.

“those who hate” This VERB (BDB 971, KB 1338, *Qal* ACTIVE PARTICIPLE) is used

1. in the “Ten Commandments” (cf. Exod. 20:5; Deut. 5:9)
2. of YHWH’s enemies in Num. 10:35; Ps. 68:1; 139:21
3. of false followers in Ps. 81:15; 83:2

4. in the powerful comparison of love and hate in Deut. 7:9-11; love is obedience and hate is disobedience (usually idolatry)

19:3 The spiritual condition of Jehoshaphat is so different between 1 Kings 22 (i.e., 1 Kgs. 22:4b) and 2 Chronicles 17-20 (i.e., 2 Chr. 19:3a, “there is *some* good in you”). The Chronicler used Jehoshaphat as an example of a godly king, with some faults and mistakes. Jehoshaphat is used to highlight some of the Chronicler’s theological themes directed to the post-exilic Judean community.

1. faith in YHWH (seek Him with all your heart)
2. obedience to His law
3. need for repentance
4. blessing for covenant obedience and cursing for disobedience (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy

28)

YHWH will restore Jehoshaphat because

1. he removed (or tried to remove) the local *Ba’al* sites called “high places”; those fertility worshipers sought a topologically high place (hill) or built a stone platform (cf. 2 Chr. 17:6)
2. he set his heart to seek YHWH (cf. 2 Chr. 17:6, which is the opposite of 2 Chr. 12:14); for “seek” see note at 2 Chr. 7:14

NASB, NKJV,

TEV, NJB,

LXX

“removed”

NRSV

“destroyed”

REB

“swept away”

JPSOA

“purged”

BDB lists only “burn” and “consume” (BDB 128, KB 145 I, *Piel* PERFECT) as possible translations (NRSV), but KB suggests a Ugaritic root (KB 146 II) which means “to sweep away” or “remove” (NASB, REB, JPSOA).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 19:4

⁴So Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem and went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim and brought them back to the LORD, the God of their fathers.

19:4-6 These verses describe the religious activities of Jehoshaphat in his attempt to improve the spiritual sensitivity of Judah.

1. he personally traveled his whole country promoting the worship of YHWH alone, 2 Chr. 19:4
2. he appointed judges who would only consider the revealed covenant guidelines from YHWH, 2 Chr. 19:6-7; this may be what is mentioned in 2 Chr. 17:7-9 (see NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 213-220)
3. he instructed the judges to fear the Lord
 - a. judge in righteousness
 - b. do not show favoritism
 - c. do not take a bribe (i.e., Deut. 1:17; Ps. 15:5)
 - d. his final admonition is in 2 Chr. 19:11 – “be strong and do” (two *Qal* IMPERATIVES)

These (i.e., a - d) reflect YHWH’s character (cf. Deut. 10:17-18; 32:4).

See Special Topic: Characteristics of Israel’s God (OT).

19:4 “to the hill country of Ephraim” This implies that Judah had influence far north of their border.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 19:5-7

⁵He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city. ⁶He said to the judges, “Consider what you are doing, for you do not judge for man but for the LORD who is with you when you render judgment. ⁷Now then let the fear of the LORD be upon you; be very careful

what you do, for the LORD our God will have no part in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of a bribe.”

19:7 “let the fear of the LORD be upon you” This is a JUSSIVE of the “to be” VERB (BDB 224, KB 243). There is a theological distinction between

1. the fear of YHWH’s people for their God (i.e., “awe,” “respect,” cf. 2 Chr. 19:9; see Special Topic: Fear)

2. “the dread” (BDB 808) is a “holy” term
- a. the exodus – Exod. 15:14-16; 23:27
 - b. the wilderness wanderings – Deut. 2:25
 - c. the conquest – Josh. 2:9
 - d. David – 1 Chr. 14:17
 - e. Asa – 2 Chr. 14:13
 - f. Jehoshaphat – 2 Chr. 17:10; 20:29

One wonders why Jehoshaphat instigated these judicial reforms.

1. he saw the corruption in the north
2. he recognized the corruption in areas of his kingdom
3. he wanted to show the priority of YHWH’s covenant and law
4. it was a way to show his repentance

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 19:8-11

⁸In Jerusalem also Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests, and some of the heads of the fathers’ households of Israel, for the judgment of the LORD and to judge disputes among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ⁹Then he charged them saying, “Thus you shall do in the fear of the LORD, faithfully and wholeheartedly. ¹⁰Whenever any dispute comes to you from your brethren who live in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and ordinances, you shall warn them so that they may not be guilty before the LORD, and wrath may *not* come on you and your brethren. Thus you shall do and you will not be guilty. ¹¹Behold, Amariah the chief priest will be over you in all that pertains to the LORD, and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah, in all that pertains to the king. Also the Levites shall be officers before you. Act resolutely, and the LORD be with the upright.”

19:8-11 Jehoshaphat also appointed judges in Jerusalem.

1. Levites
2. priests
3. heads of families

Some dealt with covenant issues, family issues (2 Chr. 19:10), and some more practical royal issues (v. 11).

As he gave guidelines for the judges throughout Judah, so too, for Jerusalem.

1. judge in fear/awe of the Lord, v. 9
2. judge faithfully (i.e., to the covenant guidelines), v. 9
3. judge wholeheartedly (i.e., with complete devotion to YHWH and His covenant), v. 9

Jehoshaphat’s action in appointing these “judges” may go back to Deut. 1:16-17; 16:18-20; 17:8-13 and set the precedent for the Sanhedrin in Ezra’s day.

If there was a difficult case somewhere in the nation that could not be decided, it should be brought to the higher court in Jerusalem.

Special Topic: Sanhedrin

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE SANHEDRIN

I. Sources of Information

- A. The New Testament itself

B. Flavius Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*

C. The Mishnah section of the Talmud (i.e., Tractate "Sanhedrin")

Unfortunately the NT and Josephus do not agree with the rabbinical writings, which seem to assert two Sanhedrins in Jerusalem, one priestly (i.e., Sadducean), controlled by the High Priest and dealing with civil and criminal justice and a second controlled by the Pharisees and scribes, concerned with religious and traditional issues. However, the rabbinical writings date from A.D. 200 and reflect the cultural situation after the fall of Jerusalem to the Roman general, Titus, in A.D. 70. The Jews (i.e., Pharisee leadership) reestablished a headquarters for their religious life at a city called Jamnia and later (i.e., A.D. 118) moved to Galilee.

II. Terminology

The problem with identifying this judicial body involves the different names by which it is known. There are several words used to describe judicial bodies within the Jewish community of Jerusalem.

A. *Gerousia* – "senate" or "council." This is the oldest term which was used toward the end of the Persian period (cf. Josephus' *Antiquities* 12.3.3 and *II Maccabees* 11:27). It is used by Luke in Acts 5:21 along with "Sanhedrin." It may have been a way of explaining the term to Greek speaking readers (cf. *I Macc.* 12:35).

B. *Synedrion* – "Sanhedrin." This is a compound from *syn* (together with) and *hedra* (seat). Surprisingly this term is used in Aramaic, but it reflects a Greek word. By the end of the Maccabean period this had become the accepted term to designate the supreme court of the Jews in Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 26:59; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66; John 11:47; Acts 5:27). The problem comes when the same terminology is used of local judicial councils outside Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 5:22; 10:17).

C. *Presbyterion* – "council of elders" (cf. Luke 22:66). This is an OT designation for tribal leaders. However, it came to refer to the supreme court in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 22:5).

D. *Boulē* – This term "council" is used by Josephus (i.e., *Wars* 2.16.2; 5.4.2, but not the NT) to describe several judicial bodies:

1. the Senate in Rome
2. local Roman courts
3. the Jewish supreme court in Jerusalem
4. local Jewish courts

Joseph of Arimathea is described as a member of the Sanhedrin by a form of this term (i.e., *bouleutēs*, which means "councilor," cf. Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50).

III. Historical Development

Originally Ezra is said to have set up the Great Synagogue (cf. Targum on Song of Songs 6:1) in the post-exilic period, which seems to have become the Sanhedrin of Jesus' day.

A. The Mishnah (i.e., Talmud) records that there were two major courts in Jerusalem (cf. Sanh. 7:1).

1. One made up of 70 (or 71) members (*Sand.* 1:6 even states that Moses set up the first Sanhedrin in Num. 11, cf. Num. 11:16-25).
2. One made up of 23 members (but this may refer to local synagogue courts).

3. Some Jewish scholars believe there were three 23-member Sanhedrins in Jerusalem. When the three got together they, along with the two leaders, constituted "the Great Sanhedrin" of 71 members (i.e., *Nasi* and *Av Bet Din*).

- a. one priestly (i.e., Sadducees)
- b. one legal (i.e., Pharisees)
- c. one aristocratic (i.e., elders)

B. In the post-exilic period, the returning Davidic seed was Zerubbabel and the returning Aaronic seed was Joshua. After Zerubbabel's death, no Davidic seed continued, so the judicial mantle passed exclusively to the priests (cf. *I Macc.* 12:6) and local elders (cf. Neh. 2:16; 5:7).

C. This priestly role in judicial decisions is documented by Diodorus 40:3:4-5 during the

Hellenistic period.

D. This priestly role in government continued during the Selucid period. Josephus quotes Antiochus “the Great” III (223-187 B.C.) in *Antiquities* 12.138-142.

E. This priestly power continued during the Maccabean period according to Josephus’ *Antiquities* 13.10.5-6; 13.15.5.

F. During the Roman period the governor of Syria (i.e., Gabinius from 57-55 B.C.) established five regional “Sanhedrins” (cf. Josephus’ *Antiquities* 14.5.4; and *Wars* 1.8.5), but this was later annulled by Rome (i.e., 47 B.C.).

G. The Sanhedrin had a political confrontation with Herod (i.e., *Antiquities* 14.9.3-5) who, in 37 B.C., retaliated and had most of the high court killed (cf. Josephus’ *Antiquities* 14.9.4; 15.1.2).

H. Under the Roman procurators (i.e., A.D. 6-66) Josephus tells us (cf. *Antiquities* 20.200,251) that the Sanhedrin again gained considerable power and influence (cf. Mark 14:55). There are three trials recorded in the NT where the Sanhedrin, under the leadership of the High Priest’s family, executes justice.

1. Jesus’ trial (cf. Mark 14:53-15:1; John 18:12-23,28-32)
2. Peter and John (cf. Acts 4:3-6)
3. Paul (cf. Acts 22:25-30)

I. When the Jews revolted in A.D. 66, the Romans subsequently destroyed Jewish society and Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The Sanhedrin was permanently dissolved, although the Pharisees at Jamnia tried to bring a supreme judicial court (i.e. *Beth Din*) back into Jewish religious (but not civil or political) life.

IV. Membership

A. The first biblical mention of a high court in Jerusalem is 2 Chr. 19:8-11. It was made up of (1) Levites; (2) priests; and (3) the heads of families (i.e., elders, cf. I Macc. 14:20; II Macc. 4:44).

B. During the Maccabean period it was dominated by (1) Sadducean priestly families and (2) local aristocracy (cf. I Macc. 7:33; 11:23; 14:28). Later in this period “scribes” (Mosaic lawyers, usually Pharisees) were added, apparently by Alexander Jannaeus’ wife, Salome (76-67 B.C.). She is even said to have made the Pharisees the predominant group (cf. Josephus’ *Wars of the Jews* 1.5.2).

- C. By Jesus’ day the court was made up of
1. the families of the High Priests
 2. local men of wealthy families
 3. scribes (cf. Luke 19:47)

V. Sources Consulted

- A. *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, IVP, pp. 728-732
- B. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 5, pp. 268-273
- C. *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 10, pp. 203-204
- D. *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 4, pp. 214-218
- E. *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 14, pp. 836-839

19:8 “Israel” In this context it refers to the descendants of Jacob who made up Judah.

Special Topic: Israel (the name).

SPECIAL TOPIC: ISRAEL (the name)

I. Surprisingly the Name’s meaning is uncertain (BDB 975, KB 442).

- A. *El* Persists
- B. Let *El* Persist (JUSSIVE)
- C. *El* Preserves
- D. Let *El* Contend

- E. *El Strives*
 - F. He who strives with God (word play, Gen. 32:28)
 - G. Reliable (IDB, vol. 2, p. 765)
 - H. Successful
 - I. Happy
- II. Usages in the OT
- A. Jacob's name (supplanter, heel grabber, BDB 784, KB 872, cf. Gen. 25:26) is changed after wrestling with the spiritual personage at the river Jabbok (cf. Gen. 32:22-32; Exod. 32:13). Often the meanings of Hebrew names are sound plays, not etymologies (cf. Gen. 32:28). "Israel" becomes his assigned name (e.g., Gen. 35:10).
 - B. It came to be used as a collective name for all of Jacob's twelve sons (e.g., Gen. 32:32; 49:16; Exod. 1:7; 4:22; 28:11; Deut. 3:18; 10:6).
 - C. It came to designate the nation formed by the twelve tribes before the exodus (cf. Gen. 47:27; Exod. 4:22; 5:2) and after (cf. Deut. 1:1; 18:6; 33:10).
 - D. After the united monarchy of Saul, David, and Solomon the tribes split under Rehoboam (cf. 1 Kings 12).
 - 1. the distinction starts even before the official split (e.g., 2 Sam. 3:10; 5:5; 20:1; 24:9; 1 Kgs. 1:35; 4:20)
 - 2. designates the northern tribes until the fall of Samaria to Assyria in 722 B.C. (cf. 2 Kings 17).
 - E. Used of Judah in a few places (e.g., Isaiah 1; Micah 1:15-16).
 - F. After the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles it became again the collective name for all of Jacob's descendants living in Palestine (e.g., Isa. 17:7,9; Jer. 2:4; 50:17,19).
 - G. Used of laity in contradistinction from priests (cf. 1 Chr. 9:2; Ezra 10:25; Neh. 11:3).

19:10 "law and commandment, statutes and ordinances" See Special Topic: Terms for God's Revelation

Notice the two things YHWH promises if the judges are faithful.

- 1. you will not be guilty (i.e., the "they" is ambiguous and could refer to the people or the judge, 2 Chr. 19:10)
- 2. the Lord will be with the upright (JUSSIVE)
 - a. individually (the judges and those who seek YHWH)
 - b. collectively Judah will be blessed (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

- 1. How long did Jehu prophesy and where?
- 2. List the ways Jehoshaphat showed allegiance to Ahab.
- 3. List the things Jehoshaphat did that were "good." (v. 3)
- 4. Why did Jehoshaphat appoint "new" judges?
- 5. List how they should judge.

6. Was there a supreme court in Jerusalem or a court of appeals?

2 CHRONICLES 20

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Judah Invaded	Ammon, Moab and Mt. Seir Defeated	The Great Victory Over Enemies of the True Faith; Jehoshaphat's Final Mistake and Consequent Punishment	War Against Edom	A Holy War
20:1-4	20:1-4	20:1-4	20:1-9	20:1-2
Jehoshaphat's Prayer				20:3-4
20:5-12	20:5-13	20:5-12		20:5-9
			20:10-12	20:10-12
20:13		20:13-17	20:13-17	20:13-17
Jahaziel Answers the Prayer				
20:14-17	20:14-19			
20:18-19		20:18-19	20:18-19	20:18-19
Enemies Destroy Themselves				
20:20-23	20:20-21 (21c)	20:20-23 (21c)	20:20-21	20:20-21 (21c)
	20:22-23		20:22-24	20:22-23
20:24-25	20:24-30	20:24-30		20:24-30
Triumphant Return to Jerusalem			20:25-30	
20:26-30	The End of Jehoshaphat's Reign		The End of Jehoshaphat's Reign	The End of the Reign of Jehoshaphat
20:31-33	20:31-34	20:31-33	20:31-33	20:31-34
20:34		20:34	20:34	
Alliance Displeases God				
20:35-37	20:35-37	20:35-21:1	20:35-21:1	20:35-21:1

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:1-4

¹Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat. ²Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat, saying, "A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi)." ³Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. ⁴So Judah gathered together to seek help from the LORD; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the LORD.

20:1 The MT implies there were two national groups,

1. Moab
2. Ammon

but the second use of Ammonites does not make sense in this context. So the LXX has "Minites" (Minaioi), while the Peshitta has "the mighty men of war."

The UBS Text Project, p. 465, suggests

1. מִינוּעִמָּה – Meunites
2. מִינוּמָעָה – Amonites

It gives option #1 "B" rating (some doubt).

The “Meunites” (JPSOA footnote) were

1. Arabian people from the city of “Ma’in.” They are mentioned in 1 Chr. 4:41; 2 Chr. 26:7; Ezra 2:50; Neh. 7:52; also Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.1.2.).
 2. inhabitants of the Palestinian city of “Maon,” southeast of En-gedi, about 15 miles
 3. somehow related to Nabateans or to Edomites (i.e., city of Meon, near Petra, “inhabitants of Mt. Seir,” cf. 2 Chr. 20:10,22-23)
 4. a people mentioned in Assyrian documents from Tiglath-pileser III’s time; a people group living between the northern border of Egypt and the southern border of Judah
- See AB, vol. 4, pp. 801-802.

20:2

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, NJB,

JPSOA “the sea”

TEV, REB “the Dead Sea”

Peshitta “the Red Sea”

This seems to refer to the Dead Sea. In the OT it is called “the Salt Sea” (cf. Gen. 14:3; Num. 34:3,12; Deut. 3:17; Josh. 3:16; 12:3; 15:2,5; 18:19), also known as “the sea of the Arabah” in Deut. 3:17; Josh. 3:16; 12:3. Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.1.2., calls it “Lake Asphaltitus.”

NASB, NKJV,

LXX “Syria”

NRSV, TEV,

NJB, REB “Edom”

JPSOA “Aram”

The MT has “from Aram” (BDB 74). This is apparently the common “d” – “r” confusion.

1. from Aram – מֵאַרָם

2. from Edom – מֵעֲדוֹם

The UBS Text Project, p. 465, gives option #2 a “C” rating (considerable doubt). Edom fits “beyond the sea” better and makes the alliance regional. See Special Topic: Edom and Israel.

SPECIAL TOPIC: EDOM AND ISRAEL

A. Edom, which came from Esau, Jacob’s brother, is the nation east of the Dead Sea (cf. Genesis 25-28; 32-33). Edom means “red” while Esau means “hairy” (cf. Gen 25:25, 30).

B. Israel was commanded to respect Edom because they were kinsmen (cf. Deut. 23:7).

C. Israel and Edom had continuing problems.

1. Num. 20:14-21

2. Jdgs. 11:16-17

3. 1 Sam. 14:47-48

4. 2 Sam. 8:14

5. 1 Kgs. 11:14-22

6. 2 Kgs. 14:22; 16:5-6

7. 2 Chr. 20:10-30; 21:8ff

8. Amos 1:6, 9

D. Prophecies against Edom.

1. Isa. 34:5ff; 63:1ff

2. Jer. 49:7-22

3. Lam. 4:21-22

4. Ezek. 25:12-14; 35:1-15; 36:2-6

5. Amos 1:11-12

- E. In Obadiah Edom was condemned because of
1. her pride, Obad. vv. 3-4
 - a. in geographical security
 - b. in political alliances and military power
 - c. in commercial wealth
 - d. in traditional wisdom
 2. her violation of Judah, her kinsman, Obad. vv. 10-14
 - a. rejoiced over the fall of Jerusalem (Lam. 2:15-17; 4:21)
 - b. refused to help (Obad. v. 11)
 - c. active support of enemy (Obad. v. 14)
 - d. took Judah's property (Jer. 13:19)
 3. her rejection and disdain of YHWH (Obad. v. 16)
- F. Edom may be a symbol (type) for all nations who rebelled against God and His people, Obad. vv. 15-21 (cf. Psalm 2).
- G. Possible historical fulfilment of this prophecy
1. destruction of Edom by Neo-Babylon about 5 years after the fall of Jerusalem, 580 B.C.
 2. displacement of Edom from Petra by Nabatean Arabs about 550-449 B.C. (cf. Mal. 1:2-5).
- Edom is not mentioned in Nehemiah's list of surrounding enemies, but is replaced by Arab tribes. Edom moved to the Negev.
3. defeat of Edom by Alexander's general, Antigonus, in 312 B.C. (recorded in Diodorus Seculus)
 4. defeat of Edom in the Negev by Judas Maccabaeus around 175 B.C. (cf. I Maccabees 5.3,15; II Maccabees 10.15; Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews* 12.8.1; 13.9.1)
 5. Edom forced to accept Judaism by John Hyrcanus in 125 B.C. They are now called Idumeans.
 6. The Roman General, Titus, completely destroyed the Idumean influence in A.D. 70.

20:3 “turned his attention” This is a Hebrew idiom “set his face.”

“to seek the LORD” This VERB (BDB 205, KB 233) is used many times in 2 Chronicles as an idiom for a person drawing near to YHWH. In the NIV it is translated

1. inquire (seek information) –
 - a. from YHWH – 2 Chr. 1:5; 18:4,6,7; 20:3,4; 34:21,26
 - b. from priests/Levites – 2 Chr. 24:6; 31:9
2. seek (seek YHWH Himself) – 2 Chr. 12:14; 14:4,7; 15:2,12,13; 17:4; 22:9; 26:5; 30:19; 31:21; 34:3
3. seek (seek help) – 2 Chr. 16:12; 20:4
4. seek (*Ba'al*) – 2 Chr. 17:3 (negated); 19:3; 25:15,20

A synonymous VERB (BDB 134, KB 152) appears in 2 Chr. 20:4 (twice); 7:14; 11:16; 15:4,15. Both VERBS express a human desire to know, obey, and worship the Holy One of Israel; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God of the Exodus, and Conquest!

“proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah” Corporate fasting was a means of spiritual preparation and a way to focus on God (i.e., 1 Sam. 7:6; Ezra 8:21; it even worked for pagans in Jonah 3:5-9; see *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, pp. 272-273).

SPECIAL TOPIC: FASTING

Fasting, though never commanded in the NT, was expected at the appropriate time for Jesus' disciples (cf. Matt. 6:16,17; 9:15; Mark 2:19; Luke 5:35). Proper fasting is described in Isaiah 58. Jesus set the precedent Himself (cf. Matt. 4:2). The early church fasted (cf. Acts 13:2-3; 14:23; 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27). The motive and manner are crucial; the timing, the length, and frequency are optional. OT

fasting is not a requirement for NT believers (cf. Acts 15:19-29). Fasting is not a way of showing off one's spirituality (cf. Isaiah 58; Matt. 6:16-18), but of drawing closer to God and seeking His guidance (i.e., Jesus, Matt. 4:2). It can be spiritually helpful.

The early church's tendencies toward asceticism caused scribes to insert "fasting" in several NT passages (i.e., Matt. 17:21; Mark 9:29; Acts 10:30; 1 Cor. 7:5). For further information on these questionable texts consult Bruce Metzger's *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, published by United Bible Societies.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:5-12

⁵Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD before the new court, ⁶and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You. ⁷Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? ⁸They have lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary there for Your name, saying, ⁹'Should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You (for Your name is in this house) and cry to You in our distress, and You will hear and deliver us.' ¹⁰Now behold, the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them), ¹¹see *how* they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from Your possession which You have given us as an inheritance. ¹²O our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You."

20:5 "the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem" Both the LXX and Peshitta have "in Jerusalem."

"the new court" I am uncertain what this means.

1. The New Oxford Annotated Bible, p. 557, suggests it refers to a new addition to the temple in the Chronicler's day.
2. The Jewish Study Bible, p. 1794, suggests it was
 - a. a third outer court
 - b. a new division within the second court (cf. 2 Chr. 4:9)
3. *Barnes' Notes*, p. 398, suggests that Solomon's temple had two courts but Asa remodeled one (cf. 2 Chr. 15:8) and it was now called "the new court."

20:6 "the God of our fathers" This refers to the Patriarchs (i.e., Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

"are You not God in the heavens" This question expects a "yes" answer. YHWH is the only true God. See Special Topic: Monotheism at 2 Chr. 2:5.

The term "heaven" (BDB 1029) is used in two related senses.

1. the atmosphere above this planet
Special Topic: Heaven at 2 Chr. 2:6
2. the abode of Deity
Special Topic: Heaven and the Third Heaven at 2 Chr. 2:6

"are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations" This is another rhetorical question which expects a "yes" answer. It seems to relate to Genesis 10 and Deut. 32:8 (LXX).

"Power and might. . .hand" These all refer to YHWH's ability to accomplish His will on earth. There are no other gods (*elohim*) that can do this!

20:7 This refers to YHWH's promise to Abraham and his descendants.

Special Topic: Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs.

“the inhabitants of this land” This refers to the pre-conquest inhabitants of Canaan.
Special Topic: Pre-Israelite Inhabitants of Palestine

“Abraham Your friend” Wow! What a powerful way to characterize Abraham (cf. Isa. 41:8; James 2:23). YHWH is not just a transcendent God but an immanent friend. This probably reflects Gen. 18:17-33 and the comment about this in Exod. 33:11.

Jesus used this same phrase for

1. His hearers – Luke 12:4
2. His Apostles – John 15:14-15

The faith is a family! Heaven is a personal fellowship more than a place! It will be a family reunion! Prayer clearly shows one’s belief that YHWH is personal and available.

“forever” See Special Topic: Forever (‘*olam*).

20:9 This is a list of the problems caused by covenant disobedience (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28).

1. the sword (i.e., war, invasion; MT, “the sword of judgment”)
2. judgment, usually just #1,3,4 summarize YHWH’s judgment; the NEB, REB, emend this to “flood”; following the LXX (L).
3. pestilence
4. famine (often #1,3,4 are used together as a summary of God’s judgment (this is one of the specific predictions of “the curses” in Lev. 26:25-26 and also Deut. 28:17,21-24,25-26; it appears often in
 - a. Jeremiah – Jer. 14:12; 21:9; 24:10; 27:8,13; 29:17-18; 32:24,36; 34:17; 38:2; 42:17,22; 44:13
 - b. Ezekiel – Ezek. 5:12; 6:11-12; 7:15; 12:6)

Repentance would bring forgiveness and release (i.e., 1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles 6).

“(for Your Name is in this house)” The “name” stood for the person (cf. 2 Chr. 6:20).
Special Topic: “The Name” of YHWH

20:10 “Mount Seir” This is identified with Edom, which supports the emendation of “Edom” in 2 Chr. 20:2; also note vv. 22-23.

“whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt” This is an allusion to Num. 20:17-21. It heightens the shock and appalling nature of this unprovoked invasion (2 Chr. 20:11).

20:12 This is an acknowledgment of Israel’s dependance on YHWH.

1. We are powerless.
2. We do not know what to do.
3. So we look to You (i.e., Ps. 25:15; 121:1-2).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:13

¹³All Judah was standing before the LORD, with their infants, their wives and their children.

20:13 It would be unusual for the whole family to be before the new court of the temple (2 Chr. 20:5). This illustrates the intensity of the request and need!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:14-17

¹⁴Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph; ¹⁵and he said, “Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the LORD to you, ‘Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God’s. ¹⁶Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the

ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.’ Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the LORD is with you.”

20:14 YHWH chose and empowered a spokesperson (a Levite) to encourage His people and reveal His plan for victory. Chronicles often highlights the ministry of the Levites.

Special Topic: Spirit in the Bible

20:15-17 The Levite makes several emphatic statements in YHWH’s name (much like Exod. 14:13-14).

1. listen, 2 Chr. 20:15 – BDB 904, KB 1151, *Hiphil* IMPERATIVE
2. do not fear, 2 Chr. 20:15,17 – BDB 431, KB 432, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
3. do not be dismayed, 2 Chr. 20:15,17 – BDB 369, KB 365, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
4. go down against them, 2 Chr. 20:16 – BDB 432, KB 434, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
5. station yourselves, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB426, KB 427, *Hithpael* IMPERATIVE
6. stand, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB 763, KB 840, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
7. see, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB 906, KB 1157, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
8. go out to face them, 2 Chr. 20:17 – BDB 422, KB 425, *Qal* IMPERATIVE

YHWH’s people will clearly see His deliverance (cf. Joshua 8:1; 2 Chr. 32:7).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:18-19

¹⁸Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. ¹⁹The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:20-23

²⁰They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the LORD your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed.” ²¹When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the LORD and those who praised Him in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, “Give thanks to the LORD, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.” ²²When they began singing and praising, the LORD set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed. ²³For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying them completely; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

20:20 The king admonishes his people to obey and trust YHWH.

1. listen – BDB 1033, KB 1570, *Qal* IMPERATIVE (different word from 2 Chr. 20:15)
2. put your trust in the LORD your God – BDB 52, KB 63; *Hiphil* IMPERATIVE, see Special Topic: Believe, Trust, Faith, and Faithfulness (OT)
3. (if you do) you will be established – this is the same root as #2, but in the *Niphal* IMPERFECT form
4. put your trust in His prophets – this is the same root as #2
5. (if you do) you will succeed – BDB 852, KB 1026, *Hiphil* IMPERATIVE; this VERB is used often in 2 Chronicles
 - a. Abijah’s message to Jeroboam I, 2 Chr. 13:12
 - b. YHWH gave Asa rest, 2 Chr. 14:6
 - c. Joash abandons YHWH and goes after the Ba’als; this disobedience causes a lack of success, 2 Chr. 24:20
 - d. used of Hezekiah in 2 Chr. 31:21 and 32:30

e. success is dependant on covenant obedience, cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28

20:21 “When he had consulted with the people” This theme of shared decision-making reappears in 2 Chr. 1:2; 30:2; 32:3. It must be related to the truth of Exod. 19:5-6. Israel was a holy people.

NASB “*Him* in holy attire”

NKJV “the beauty of holiness”

NRSV “him in holy splendor”

NJB “in sacred vestments”

JPSOA “the One majestic in holiness”

REB “the splendor of his holiness”

LXX “the holy things”

Peshitta “the excellency of his holiness”

The MT has “in holy array” (BDB 214 CONSTRUCT BDB 871), which refers to

1. YHWH Himself – NKJV, NRSV, JPSOA, REB, Peshitta, cf. Ps. 96:7-9; this is supported by NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 1015 #3

2. the sacred clothing of the priest in public worship – NASB, NJB

3. the ark of the covenant and the trumpets going before the army into battle – LXX

4. the place of sacrifice/worship – 1 Chr. 16:27-29

“lovingkindness” The phrase “His lovingkindness is everlasting” is a theological mantra (cf. 1 Chr. 16:34,41; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3,6; 20:21; Ezra 3:11; Ps. 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 118:1; Jer. 33:11).

Special Topic: Lovingkindness (*hesed*)

“everlasting” YHWH is faithful; His people are not! Believers give thanks (BDB 392, KB 389, *Hiphil* IMPERATIVE) because of His unchanging, merciful character. See:

Special Topic: Forever (*‘olam*)

Characteristics of Israel’s God (OT)

20:22 “When they began singing and praising” Normally this was reserved until the victory but here it precedes the victory (cf. 2 Chr. 20:21). By faith YHWH’s covenant people knew He would do what He promised (i.e., vv. 14-19). This is their act of faith! The priests and Levites

1. call on Judah to trust YHWH (2 Chr. 20:20)

2. proclaimed the covenant theology (20:21; v. 6, Jehoshaphat’s faith affirmation)

3. sang and praised YHWH for His promised victory (2 Chr. 20:20,22)

“the LORD set ambushes” This is “holy war” imagery and YHWH as “the divine warrior” (i.e., Isa. 42:13; 49:24-26; 52:10; 59:16-17; also allusions in Eph. 6:14). As in the exodus, conquest, and judges periods, YHWH causes confusion within the enemy camp and often they destroy themselves (i.e., Jdgs. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:20).

C. D. Ginsburg, *Introduction tot eh Masoretic-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible*, suggested that “LORD” be changed to “Judah,” but this is followed by no ancient version.

The NET Bible, p. 689, suggests that the VERB “set ambushes” (BDB 70, KB 83, *Piel* PARTICIPLE) is idiomatic for “a surprise attack.”

20:23 “destroying them completely” This is the Hebrew root *hrm* (BDB 356, KB 353), which is a common element in Holy War, where some land, city, people, thing is given to YHWH and becomes “too holy” for human use. Therefore, it must be destroyed. Sometimes this “given to” is positive (sacrificial system) or negative (destruction).

1. a country – 2 Kgs. 19:1; Isa. 11:15; 34:5; 48:28; Jer. 50:21,26; 51:3

2. a people (often #1 and #2 are synonymous) – Josh. 6:21; 8:26; 10:28,35,37,39,40; 11:11,12,20,21; Jdgs. 21:11; 1 Chr. 4:41; Isa. 15:3,8,20; 34:2; Jer. 25:9

3. a city – Num. 21:2,3; Deut. 2:34; 3:6; 13:15; 20:17; Josh. 6:17,18; 7:1,11,12,13,15; 10:1,28; 22:20
 4. things given to YHWH – Lev. 27:21,28,29; Num. 18:14; Deut. 13:17; Josh. 6:18
 5. idols destroyed – Deut. 7:26; 2 Chr. 32:14
- Special Topic: Curse.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CURSE (*anathema*)

I. OT

There are several words in Hebrew for “curse.” *Herem* (BDB 356, KB 353) was used of something given to God (cf. LXX translates it as *anathema* (BAGD 54, Lev. 27:28). It usually involved destruction of the item (because it was too holy for human’s use (cf. Deut. 7:26; Jos. 6:17-18; 17:12). It was a term used in the concept of “holy war.” God told Joshua to destroy the Canaanites. Jericho was the first opportunity, the “first fruits” of this holy destruction/cleansing.

II. NT

In the NT *anathema* and its related forms were used in several different senses:

- A. as a gift or offering to God (cf. Luke 21:5)
- B. as a death oath (cf. Acts 23:14)
- C. to curse and swear (cf. Mark 14:71)
- D. a curse formula related to Jesus (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3)
- E. a giving of someone or something to the judgment or destruction by God (cf. Rom. 9:3; 1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8-9).

Number D above is very controversial. I have included my notes from 1 Cor. 12:3.

“Jesus is accursed” is a shocking statement. Why would anyone (except traditional Jews) who claims to speak for God say this? The term (i.e., *anathema*) itself had an OT background (i.e., Hebrew, *herem*). It related to the concept of Holy War, where a city was devoted to God and, therefore, it became holy. This meant that everything in it that breathed, human or animal, had to die (cf. Jos. 6:17; 7:12).”

See Gal. 3:13 for Paul’s use of this phrase. Paul saw the substitutionary death of Jesus as taking on Himself the curse of the Mosaic law. Originally this curse was related to proper burial procedures in the holy land.

The theories of how this term was used in Corinth are

1. that it has a Jewish setting relating to the synagogue oaths (cf. Acts 26:11, i.e., later, rabbinical curse formulas were used to remove Christians from the synagogue). To remain a member one had to reject or curse Jesus of Nazareth.
2. that it has a Roman setting relating to Emperor worship where only Caesar could be called “Lord”
3. that it has a pagan worship setting where the curses were called on people by the use of a god’s name. This could then be translated, “May Jesus curse _____” (cf. 1 Cor. 16:22).
4. that someone related the phrase to the theological concept of Jesus bearing the OT curse for us (cf. Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13).

5. Recent studies from Corinth (cf. footnote #1 p. 164 in Bruce Winter’s *After Paul Left Corinth*) document the curse tablets found on the ancient acropolis at Corinth. Biblical scholars have assumed that a linking VERB “is” should be provided in the phrase, “Jesus is accursed,” but this archaeological evidence clearly shows that these first century Roman period curses from Corinth lack the VERB (as do some of the curses in the LXX of Deut. 22:15-20), as does 1 Cor. 12:3. There is further archaeological evidence that Christians in first century Roman Corinth used curse formulas in burial procedures (i.e., Byzantine period), found on Christian graves (J. H. Kent, *The Inscriptions*, 1926-50. Princeton: American School of Classical Studies, 1966, vol. 8:3, no. 644).

Some segments of the church at Corinth were reverting to pagan curses in Jesus’ name against other members of the church. Not only is the method a problem, but also the hateful motive. This is another example of the tension within this church. Paul wants them to build up the church, edify the church. They want to curse part of the church!

NASB, NKJV,
 NRSV, JPSOA “they helped”
 TEV, LXX “they turned on each other”
 NJB “set to work”
 REB “they savagely attacked”
 Peshitta “every one helped”

This VERB (BDB 740, KB 810, *Qal* PERFECT) normally means “to help” or “to aid.” But this does not fit this context, so a second root (KB 811 II) is supposed. The same root is used in Ugaritic for a “warrior” and, therefore, may denote not “help” but “an attack” (REB).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:24-25

²⁴When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold, they *were* corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped. ²⁵When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found much among them, *including* goods, garments and valuable things which they took for themselves, more than they could carry. And they were three days taking the spoil because there was so much.

20:25 “take their spoil” Usually in Holy War all the spoils belonged to YHWH, but here it was given to the Judean soldiers who watched YHWH’s victory. These spoils included

1. goods (BDB 940)
2. garments (MT, JPSOA “corpses” (BDB 308)/“garments” comes from Vulgate [BDB 93 II], while LXX has “baggage” or “armor”)
 - a. corpses – מִרְגָּפִים
 - b. garments – מִיָּרְגָבִים
3. valuable things (BDB 479 CONSTRUCT BDB 326; probably weights of precious metals and gemstones, since clothes appear in #2)
4. the UBS Text Project, p. 466, suggests that “among them” of the MT should be emended to “live stock”
 - a. מִהֶבֶ – “among them” (NASB, NKJV, JPSOA, Peshitta)
 - b. הַמְּהֵבִים – beasts (BDB 96, KB 111, NRSV, TEV, NJB, REB, LXX)
 It gives option “b” a “C” rating (considerable doubt).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:26-30

²⁶Then on the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the LORD. Therefore they have named that place “The Valley of Beracah” until today. ²⁷Every man of Judah and Jerusalem returned with Jehoshaphat at their head, returning to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies. ²⁸They came to Jerusalem with harps, lyres and trumpets to the house of the LORD. ²⁹And the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. ³⁰So the kingdom of Jehoshaphat was at peace, for his God gave him rest on all sides.

20:26 Often, place names were labeled because of historical events that occurred there.

“until today” This shows the presence of a later editor or compiler, probably Ezra. See note at 2 Chr. 5:9.

20:28 YHWH’s people worship

1. with singing (cf. 2 Chr. 20:27; Exod. 15:1; Jdgs. 5:3; Ps. 66:2,4; 71:22-23)
2. with musical instruments (cf. Exod. 15:20; Jdgs. 11:34; 21:21; Ps. 71:22; 98:4-6; 150:3-5)
3. with dancing (cf. 1 Sam. 21:11; 29:5; 2 Sam. 6:14; 1 Chr. 15:29; Ps. 149:3; 150:4)

The OT worship was a combination of

1. joy and exuberance

- a. praise, 2 Chr. 20:21
 - b. singing, 2 Chr. 20:22
 - c. blessing, 2 Chr. 20:26
 - d. joy, 2 Chr. 20:27
 - e. instruments, 2 Chr. 20:28
2. awe and respect
 - a. a called fast, 2 Chr. 20:3
 - b. prayer and affirmation, 2 Chr. 20:6-7
 - c. whole families standing in His presence, 2 Chr. 20:13
 - d. bowing to the ground, 2 Chr. 20:18

All of Israel's worship days and feasts were joyous occasions, except the Day of Atonement.

Special Topic: Feasts of Israel

20:29 “the dread of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands” This is also “holy war” terminology (i.e., Exod. 15:16; 23:27; Deut. 2:25; 11:25; Josh. 2:9).

1. dread of YHWH – 1 Sam. 11:7; 2 Chr. 14:14; 19:7; 20:29
2. dread of *Elohim* – Ps. 36:1; Isa. 2:10,19,21

20:30 Jehoshaphat had peace and rest (cf. 2 Chr. 14:6-7; 15:15) because of

1. YHWH's covenant commitment
2. Judah's covenant obedience

Special Topic: Covenant

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:31-33

³¹Now Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He *was* thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. ³²He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not depart from it, doing right in the sight of the LORD. ³³The high places, however, were not removed; the people had not yet directed their hearts to the God of their fathers.

20:31-34 This is a typical summary of a king of Judah's life. Most of this information would come from prophetic writings (cf. 2 Chr. 20:34).

It is surprising that the written document is called “the Book of the Kings of Israel” instead of “Judah” (cf. 1 Kgs. 22:45). Several times in 2 Chronicles “Israel” is used of Judah (i.e., 2 Chr. 11:13,16; 12:6; 21:2; 23:2). The Chronicler saw Judah as the only legitimate line of David.

20:31 This number can be verified by 2 Kgs. 3:1 and 8:16 plus a three year co-reign with his father, Asa. See Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. 35,38.

Special Topic: Kings of the Divided Kingdom

20:32 This is a surprising overstatement. Asa was not always faithful and Jehoshaphat, although the author of Chronicles uses him as an example of a godly king, also had his problems.

1. alliance with Ahab, king of Israel (2 Chronicles 18)
2. alliance with Ahaziah, king of Israel (cf. 2 Chr. 20:35-37); this is very different from the parallel in 1 Kgs. 22:48-49

“doing right in the sight of the LORD” NIDOTTE, vol. 2, p. 566, mentions that this is a standard phrase referring to godly kings who acted like David (i.e., 1 Kgs. 11:13,38; 14:8; 15:15), as one who kept and revered YHWH's law (cf. Deut. 6:18; 12:8,25,28; 13:18; 21:9; 1 Kgs. 11:38).

1. Asa – 1 Kgs. 15:11; 2 Chr. 14:2
2. Jehoshaphat – 1 Kgs. 22:43; 2 Chr. 20:32
3. Jehu – 2 Kgs. 10:30

4. Jehoash – 2 Kgs. 12:2; 2 Chr. 24:2
5. Joash – 2 Kgs. 14:3; 2 Chr. 24:2
6. Amaziah – 2 Chr. 25:2
7. Azariah – 2 Kgs. 15:3; 2 Chr. 26:4 (Uzziah)
8. Jotham – 2 Kgs. 15:34; 2 Chr. 27:2
9. Hezekiah – 2 Kgs. 18:3; 2 Chr. 29:2; 31:20
10. Josiah – 2 Kgs. 22:2; 2 Chr. 34:2

20:33 Several kings of Judah tried to remove/outlaw the local worship of *Ba'al* and *Asherah*, but the people of Judah would not let it happen (cf. 1 Kgs. 22:43).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:34

³⁴Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first to last, behold, they are written in the annals of Jehu the son of Hanani, which is recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 20:35-37

³⁵After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel. He acted wickedly in so doing. ³⁶So he allied himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish, and they made the ships in Ezion-geber. ³⁷Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat saying, “Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD has destroyed your works.” So the ships were broken and could not go to Tarshish.

20:35 “Ahaziah king of Israel” See the record of his reign in 1 Kgs. 22:51 – 2 Kgs. 1:16.

20:36

NASB, NKJV,

REB “allied”

NRSV, NJB,

JPSOA, Peshitta “joined”

TEV “made an alliance”

LXX “he acted and went to”

The VERB (BDB 287, KB 287, *Piel* IMPERFECT with *waw*) is used of joining sacred things in the tabernacle/temple. This union is condemned either

1. because it was an alliance with an idolatrous king
2. because the term has idolatrous implications (BDB suggests it denotes “tie a magic knot” or “spell/charm”)

This is used only here in the *Piel* stem of an agreement between nations.

“Tarshish” This is both

1. a type of ocean going ship
2. a far away port (literal)
3. a far away port (of myth and legend)

Special Topic: Tarshish.

“Ezion-geber” This is also known as Elath. It was on the northern most part of the Red Sea. Earlier it was the headquarters for Solomon’s fleet (cf. 2 Chr. 8:17).

Since this is not the Mediterranean “Tarshish” (above), it may refer to a type of ocean going command ship.

“Eliezer” This prophet is mentioned only here. What a contrast occurs in this chapter between the encouraging words of Jahaziel, the Levite, in vv. 14-19 and the discouraging words of Eliezer here. Sin has an effect on leaders and their nations!

20:37 “the LORD had destroyed your works” The method of this destruction of the finished ships is not stated. It could have been

1. a violent storm
2. an attack by other traders
3. an attack by a local group

The OT gives all causality to God. It was a way to express His sovereignty (i.e., Eccl. 7:14; Isa. 14:24-27; 45:7; Amos 3:6b).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why does the Chronicler give so much emphasis to Jehoshaphat?
2. What does it mean “to seek the LORD”?
3. Why is 2 Chr. 20:6-7 so theologically significant?
4. Why is 2 Chr. 20:13 unusual? What does it imply?
5. What does “the Spirit of the LORD came upon. . .” mean?
6. List the aspect of Holy War in this chapter. What aspects are different?
7. What does “the LORD set ambushes” mean?
8. Why is 2 Chr. 20:32 an overstatement?
9. What were “high places”?

2 CHRONICLES 21

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Jehoram Succeeds Jehoshaphat in Judah	Jehoram Reigns in Judah	Jehoram's Wicked Reign and His Punishment		
21:1-3	21:1-3	21:1-7	King Jehoram of Judah	Accession of Jehoram; He Massacres His Brothers
			21:2-4	21:2-4
21:4-7	21:4-7		21:5-7	21:5-7
Revolt Against Judah				The Disasters of His Reign
21:8-11	21:8-11	21:8-10 21:11-15	21:8-11	21:8-11
21:12-15	21:12-15		21:12-15	21:12-15
21:16-17	21:16-17	21:16-17	21:16-17	21:16-19
21:18-20	21:18-20	21:28-10	21:18-19 21:20	21:20

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 21:1-3

¹Then Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Jehoram his son became king in his place. ²He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azaryahu, Michael and Shephatiah. All these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel. ³Their father gave them many gifts of silver, gold and precious things, with fortified cities in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the firstborn.

21:1 "slept with his fathers" This is not literal. It is a Hebraic idiom for burial. There was a royal tomb where most of the kings were buried (cf. 2 Chr. 21:20). See:

1. Special Topics: Where Are The Dead?
2. Special Topic: Burial Practices.

SPECIAL TOPIC: BURIAL PRACTICES

- I. Mesopotamia
 - II. Proper burial was very important to a happy afterlife.
 - III. An example of a Mesopotamian curse is, "May the earth not receive your corpses."
- II. Old Testament
 - A. Proper burial was very important (cf. Eccl. 6:3).
 - B. It was done very quickly (cf. Sarah in Genesis 23 and Rachel in Gen. 35:19 and notice Deut. 21:23).
 - C. Improper burial was a sign of rejection and sin.
 1. Deuteronomy 28:26
 2. Isaiah 14:20
 3. Jeremiah 8:2; 22:19
 - D. Burial was done, if possible, in family vaults in the home area.
 - E. There was no embalming, as in Egypt. Mankind came from dust and must return to dust

(ex. Gen. 3:19; Ps. 103:14; 104:29).

- F. In rabbinical Judaism it was difficult to balance a proper respect and handling of the body with the concept of ceremonial defilement connected to dead bodies.

III. New Testament

- A. Burial quickly followed death, usually within twenty-four hours. The Jews often watched the grave for three days, believing that the soul could return to the body within that time frame (cf. John 11:39).
- B. Burial involved cleaning and wrapping of the body with spices (cf. John 11:44; 19:39-40).
- C. There were no distinctive Jewish or Christian burial procedures (or items placed in the grave) in first century Palestine.

“the city of David” This designation could, depending on the context, refer to

1. Bethlehem, the place of David’s birth and childhood
2. Jerusalem, the place where David built his palace, the capital of his kingdom

21:2-3 Jehoshaphat’s sons (LXX adds “six”) are named. They were given some governmental responsibilities (i.e., control of some fortified cities), as well as much wealth. Their firstborn brother will feel threatened by them and have them killed (cf. 2 Chr. 21:4).

This would have damaged the Messianic line and required a son from Jehoram (cf. v. 17, “Jehoahaz,” also called “Ahaziah”).

Jehoshaphat was blessed by God with seven sons but Jehoram was not, having only one son! This fact would have been quickly recognized by ANE hearers/readers.

The name Jehoram for a king in Judah shows the influence of Israel. Jehoram was the name of an earlier king of Israel. The abbreviated form is “Joram.”

Special Topic: Satanic Attempts to Thwart the Messianic Line

Special Topic: Kings of the Divided Kingdom

SPECIAL TOPIC: SATANIC ATTEMPTS TO THWART THE MESSIANIC LINE IN GENESIS

- A. Cain’s rebellion, Genesis 4
- B. Mixing of human and angelic lines, Genesis 6
- C. Tower of Babel rebellion, Genesis 11
- D. Abram giving Sarai to Pharaoh, Genesis 12
- E. Birth of Ishmael to Hagar (Sarah’s servant), Genesis 16
- F. Abram giving Sarah to Abimelech, Genesis 20
- G. Sacrifice of Isaac, Genesis 22
- H. Rivalry between Esau and Jacob, Genesis 25, 32
- I. Isaac giving his wife to Abimelech, Genesis 26
- J. Trickery and rivalry of Laban, Genesis 29-31

- K. Jacob merging with Shechem, Genesis 34
- L. Rivalry between Jacob’s children, Genesis 37
- M. Judah’s faithlessness and promiscuity related to Tamar, Genesis 38

21:2 “the king of Israel” Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah but for the Chronicler he was the only true king of YHWH’s covenant people. Judah was the true “Israel” (cf. 2 Chr. 12:6; 23:2; 28:19,27).

The NRSV and REB, following the LXX and Peshitta, change “Israel” to “Judah” but the UBS Text Project, p. 466, gives “Israel” a “B” rating (some doubt).

21:3 “firstborn” See Special Topic: Firstborn.

SPECIAL TOPIC: FIRSTBORN

This word “firstborn” (*prōtotokos*) is used in the Bible in several distinct senses.

1. its OT background refers to
 - a. the firstborn belongs to YHWH (BDB 114, KB 131, cf. Exod. 13:2,12; 22:29; 34:19; Num. 3:13)
 - b. the pre-imminence of the firstborn son of the family (cf. Deut. 21:17; Ps. 89:27; Luke 2:7; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 11:28)
2. its use in Col. 1:15 speaks of Jesus as the first of creation which is a possible OT allusion to Pro. 8:22-31, or God’s agent of creation (cf. John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-16; Heb. 1:2)
3. its use in Col. 1:15,18; 1 Cor. 15:20,23; Rev. 1:5 refers to Jesus as the firstborn from the dead
4. it is an OT title used of the Messiah (cf. Ps. 89:27; Heb. 1:6; 12:23); it is a title which combines several aspects of the primacy and centrality of Jesus.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 21:4-7

⁴Now when Jehoram had taken over the kingdom of his father and made himself secure, he killed all his brothers with the sword, and some of the rulers of Israel also. ⁵Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. ⁶He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, just as the house of Ahab did (for Ahab’s daughter was his wife), and he did evil in the sight of the LORD. ⁷Yet the LORD was not willing to destroy the house of David because of the covenant which He had made with David, and since He had promised to give a lamp to him and his sons forever.

21:4 “some of the rulers of Israel also” This must refer to leaders in Judah who opposed his deviation of YHWH’s law (cf. 2 Chr. 21:6). See note at 21:2.

Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.5.1., says they were governors appointed by his father Jehoshaphat.

21:6 Judah became idolatrous like Israel. Jehoram was influenced by his wife Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab (cf. 2 Kgs. 8:18,26; 2 Chr. 18:1), the king of Israel. Apparently Judah returned to the worship of *Ba’al* and *Asherah*. See Special Topic: Fertility Worship of the ANE.

“(for Ahab’s daughter was his wife)” There is some confusion about Athaliah’s parents. The NIDOTTE, vol. 4, p. 420, has a good paragraph.

“According to 2 Kgs 8:18, Athaliah was the daughter of Jezebel and Ahab, but according to 2 Kgs 8:26 and 2 Chron 22:2 (BHS) she was the daughter of Omri. Katzenstein (78) thinks she was orphaned when Omri died and was raised by Ahab and Jezebel. For this reason she was also called the daughter of Ahab (2 Kgs 8:18; 2 Chron 21:6). Her marriage to Joram, king of Judah, sealed an alliance with the southern neighbor (Bright, 238). Unfortunately this eventually led to the introduction of the Baal cult in Jerusalem.”

“he did evil in the sight of the LORD” This is a recurrent phrase. It does not specify the offense but here it is idolatry (cf. 2 Kgs. 8:16-24).

21:7 YHWH’s promises to David (i.e., 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17) were remembered and honored even during the reign of an evil king.

Special Topic: Covenant

“to give a lamp” The *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, p. 442, has a good suggestion for the meaning of this imagery.

“Lamps were often used metaphorically in Israel to symbolize life and prosperity. They were often placed in tombs for this reason. The expression “his lamp” is often used in Scripture to symbolize life. As an eternal flame is a symbol of endurance and remembrance, so the reign of a descendant of David in Jerusalem provides a link to God’s promise to David’s

dynasty (2 Sam 7:8-16). Similar uses of the word in Ugaritic and Akkadian are tied to perpetuation of rule or divine presence. Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III is referred to as the light of all mankind. An Old Babylonian idiom expresses a family having no descendants by the image of its brazier going out.”

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 21:8-11

⁸In his days Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and set up a king over themselves. ⁹Then Jehoram crossed over with his commanders and all his chariots with him. And he arose by night and struck down the Edomites who were surrounding him and the commanders of the chariots. ¹⁰So Edom revolted against Judah to this day. Then Libnah revolted at the same time against his rule, because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers. ¹¹Moreover, he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot and led Judah astray.

21:8 “Edom revolted” This was just one of several rebellions and invasions.

1. Edom – 2 Chr. 21:8-10
 2. Libnah, 2 Chr. 21:10
 3. Philistines – 2 Chr. 21:16
 4. the Arabs who were allied with the Ethiopians – 2 Chr. 17:11
- Special Topic: Edom and Israel

21:9 Apparently Jehoram initially defeated Edom but the resentment remained (Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.5.1.). However, the REB and NET Bible translate this as a defeat by Edom.

“Joram, with his commanders and all his chariots, pushed on into Edom. When the Edomites encircled him and his chariot-commanders he made a sortie by night and broke out.”

The UBS Text Project, p. 467, suggests that verse 9 is about a Judean victory, not defeat. It gives the NASB/MT version an “A” rating (high probability).

Edom was defeated by Jehoshaphat, a godly king. It fits OT theology much better for Jehoram, a wicked king, to be defeated by Edom!

NASB, NRSV,

NJB, REB,

LXX “commanders”

NKJV, TEV,

JPSOA, “officers”

Peshitta “princes”

The term “commanders” (BDB 978) appears twice.

There is some confusion as to whose “commanders” (cf. 2 Kgs. 8:21),

1. Edom’s
2. Judah’s

and who went to their tents (2 Kgs. 8:21).

1. Edom (defeated)
2. Judah (defeated)

The parallel account in 2 Kgs. 8:21 seems to replace the initial use of “commanders” with a place name, “Zair” (BDB 859 II).

21:10 “to this day” See full note at 2 Chr. 5:9.

21:11 This is the restoration of the legal status of idolatry.

There have been two ways to translate.

1. in the mountains of Judah (most translations), “mountains” – ירהב
2. in the cities of Judah (LXX, Vulgate), “cities” – ירעב

Both options would fit *Ba'al* worship, which was worshiped

1. on natural high places
2. manmade rock platforms which were in every village

NASB, NKJV “led Judah astray”

NRSV “made Judah go astray”

JPSOA “made Judah wayward”

REB “seduced”

LXX “perverted Judah”

The MT has the VERB (BDB 623, KB 673, *Hiphil* IMPERFECT with *waw*), which here denotes forcing them into idolatry (cf. 2 Chr. 21:13).

“to play the harlot” This phrase was both literal and literary.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 21:12-15

¹²Then a letter came to him from Elijah the prophet saying, “Thus says the LORD God of your father David, ‘Because you have not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat your father and the ways of Asa king of Judah, ¹³but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have caused Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to play the harlot as the house of Ahab played the harlot, and you have also killed your brothers, your own family, who were better than you, ¹⁴behold, the LORD is going to strike your people, your sons, your wives and all your possessions with a great calamity; ¹⁵and you will suffer severe sickness, a disease of your bowels, until your bowels come out because of the sickness, day by day.’”

21:12 “Elijah the prophet” The ministry of the prophet is covered much more intensively in 1 Kings 17 – 2 Kgs. 2:14. This is the only mention of

1. Elijah in all of Chronicles. He is used to intensify God’s message.
2. There is no record in Kings of Elijah dealing with Judean kings.

The footnote in Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.5.2, suggests there is a textual confusion and it should be Elisha. No Hebrew MSS support this.

For a good brief discussion of Elijah’s letter, see *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 226-227.

This letter from Elijah fits the pattern of written prophetic sources used by the Chronicler.

21:15 “you will suffer severe sickness” The PRONOUN is SINGULAR, thereby referring to Jehoram and not “your people” of 2 Chr. 21:14, who will also suffer.

The NOUN (BDB 318) and ADJECTIVE (BDB 912 I) are both PLURAL. This is an example of the PLURAL OF MAJESTY, which would intensify the concept (i.e., “severs sickness”).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 21:16-17

¹⁶Then the LORD stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabs who bordered the Ethiopians; ¹⁷and they came against Judah and invaded it, and carried away all the possessions found in the king’s house together with his sons and his wives, so that no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

21:16 “the spirit of. . .” See Special Topic: Spirit in the Bible

“the Arabs” This refers to nomadic tribes on the southern border of Palestine who were controlled by the Ethiopian rulers of Egypt (cf. 2 Chr. 14:9-15).

21:17 “wives” The LXX has “daughters” to match “sons.”

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 21:18-20

¹⁸So after all this the LORD smote him in his bowels with an incurable sickness. ¹⁹Now it came about in the course of time, at the end of two years, that his bowels came out because of his sickness and he died in great pain. And his people made no fire for him like the fire for his fathers. ²⁰He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years; and he departed with no one's regret, and they buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

21:18 The exact disease is not specified but it had to do with his bowels protruding. It is described as very painful and protracted.

There are several Judean kings who suffered physical ailments because of their covenant disobedience.

1. Asa – 2 Chr. 16:12-14
2. Jehoram – here
3. Uzziah – 2 Chr. 26:16-23

Disobedience has consequences (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). YHWH is no respecter of persons. Sin affects all.

21:19-20 “his people made no fire for him” This seems to refer to a special honorary bonfire, not cremation (cf. 2 Chr. 16:14).

2 Chronicles 21:20 clearly shows how unpopular he was as king.

1. no fire (i.e., Jer. 34:5)
2. no friends
3. no royal burial (cf. 2 Chr. 24:25; 26:23; 28:27; 33:20)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Who were “the rulers of Israel” mentioned in 2 Chr. 21:4?
2. What was the covenant of David?
3. Explain the phrase, “played the harlot.”
4. Was Jehoram the only king who was struck with a physical disease for disobedience?
5. List the items that show Jehoram’s unpopularity (i.e., vv. 18-20).

2 CHRONICLES 22

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Ahaziah Succeeds Jehoram in Judah	Ahaziah Reigns in Judah	The Brief but Wicked Reign of Ahaziah; the Usurpation of Athaliah	King Ahaziah of Judah	Reign of Ahaziah (MT versing)
22:1-4	22:1-9	22:1-6	22:1-6	22:1-9a
Ahaziah Allies with Jehoram of Israel				
21:5-7				
Jehu Murders Princes of Judah		22:7-9	22:7-9a	
22:8-9				
	Athaliah Reigns in Judah		22:9b	22:9b
			Queen Athaliah of Judah	Athaliah Massacres the Royal Family
22:10-12	22:10-12	22:10-12	22:10-12	22:10-12

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 22:1-4

¹Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his place, for the band of men who came with the Arabs to the camp had slain all the older *sons*. So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah began to reign. ²Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah, the granddaughter of Omri. ³He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly. ⁴He did evil in the sight of the LORD like the house of Ahab, for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction.

22:1 "Ahaziah" This same person is called "Jehoahaz" in 2 Chr. 1:17. It is hard in this chapter to identify persons because of the same name.

"for the band of men who came with the Arabs to the camp had slain all the older *sons*" These are the Arabs who were allied with the Ethiopian rulers of Egypt (cf. 2 Chr. 14:9-15; 17:11). This is apparently related to 2 Chr. 21:16-17.

Irony—two royal children saved; one is evil, Ahaziah and one is godly, Joash. The Messianic line from David continues!

22:2

NASB, TEV "twenty-two"

NKJV, NRSV,

NJB "forty-two"

The MT has "forty two" but the text is so in doubt that the UBS Text Project cannot choose between the two forms. 2 Kings 8:26 has "twenty two." Some LXX MSS have "twenty" and some have "twenty two." Chronology strongly suggests the lower number (42 would make him older than his father).

The AB, p. 125, suggests that the two versions of the LXX were combined to get "42," in an effort by the Chronicler to preserve both LXX text traditions.

"the granddaughter of Omri" See full note at 2 Chr. 21:6.

22:3-6 What a tragedy! Israel and Judah had reunited, not around YHWH but around *Ba'al*. The judgment of YHWH (i.e., Jehu) on Ahab's house (including later, Athaliah) fell on Jehoram, the short-lived king of Judah.

22:3 “walked in the ways of the house of Ahab” This northern king was the one who popularized *Ba'al* worship because of the encouragement of his Phoenician wife, Jezebel (cf. 1 Kgs. 16:29-22:40).

See Special Topic: Fertility Worship of the ANE

22:4 “He did evil in the sight of the LORD” This is theologically parallel to “walked in the ways of the house of Ahab.” It denotes idolatry and covenant disobedience.

YHWH is described in anthropomorphic language. Humans use earthly, time-oriented language to describe an eternal, spiritual Being! Special Topic: God Described As Human

“his counselors” The ones we listen to and seek advice from are crucial people in our spiritual lives! Be careful!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 22:5-7

⁵He also walked according to their counsel, and went with Jehoram the son of Ahab king of Israel to wage war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth-gilead. But the Arameans wounded Joram. ⁶So he returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which they had inflicted on him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. And Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick. ⁷Now the destruction of Ahaziah was from God, in that he went to Joram. For when he came, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

22:5 Notice the two different spellings of the same name.

1. Jehoram – ׀ררר
2. Joram – ׀רר

NKJV, TEV,

LXX

“Syrians wounded”

NASB, NRSV,

REB, NJB,

JPSOA, Peshitta “Arameans wounded”

The MT has ׀מרר, which seems to be the root for “archers,” ׀מר (BDB 941), not “Aram,” ׀רר (BDB 74), which is used earlier in 2 Chr. 22:5. 2 Kings 8:28 has “the Syrians wounded/smote Joram.” The UBS Text Project does not address the possible variant.

22:6 “Ramah” This is not the city in Naphtali (cf. Josh. 19:29,36) but a reference to the battle in Ramoth-gilead. *Young's Analytical Concordance* lists it as a contradict of “Ramoth-gilead” (here and in 2 Kgs. 8:29).

“Ahaziah” The MT has “Azariah” (BDB 741, JPSOA) but 2 Kgs. 8:29 has “Ahaziah” (BDB 28, cf. 2 Kgs. 9:16; NRSV, REV, NJB, LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate). The UBS Text Project, p. 465, gives “Ahaziah” a “C” rating (considerable doubt).

22:7 Ahaziah's (Jehoahaz) demise is attributed to a direct influence by YHWH because of his disobedience (cf. 2 Chr. 21:14-15). This is characteristic of the Chronicler! He saw YHWH's hand in all

of Judah/Israel's affairs.

“Jehu” He is characterized as “whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab” (cf. 2 Kgs. 9:6,7). This was a prophetic anointing by Elisha! The full account of Jehu is found in 2 Kgs. 9:1-10:31.

See Special Topic: Anointing in the Bible

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 22:8-9

⁸It came about when Jehu was executing judgment on the house of Ahab, he found the princes of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers ministering to Ahaziah, and slew them. ⁹He also sought Ahaziah, and they caught him while he was hiding in Samaria; they brought him to Jehu, put him to death and buried him. For they said, “He is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart.” So there was no one of the house of Ahaziah to retain the power of the kingdom.

22:8-9 The leaders of Judah are also affected by YHWH's judgment on Ahab's house. This is paralleled in 2 Kgs. 10:12-14.

22:9 The account of Jehu's assassination of Ahaziah is recorded differently in 2 Kgs. 9:27. Kings and Chronicles used different sources.

“Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart” This theological statement is a key to Chronicles. It is the way kings are evaluated.

1. Rehoboam – did not, 2 Chr. 12:14
2. Asa – did, 2 Chr. 14:7; did not, 2 Chr. 16:12
3. Jehoshaphat – did, 2 Chr. 19:3; 22:9
4. Uzziah – did, 2 Chr. 26:5
5. Hezekiah – did, 2 Chr. 31:12
6. Josiah – did, 2 Chr. 34:3

Because they did, the blessings of Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28 are given to them and their people (cf. 2 Chr. 14:7; 17:5,11-12; 26:5; 31:21).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 22:10-12

¹⁰Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she rose and destroyed all the royal offspring of the house of Judah. ¹¹But Jehoshabeath the king's daughter took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons who were being put to death, and placed him and his nurse in the *bedroom*. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah so that she would not put him to death. ¹²He was hidden with them in the house of God six years while Athaliah reigned over the land.

22:10-12 Athaliah saw the power vacuum and acted so she could reign.

However, one child was spared (2 Chr. 22:11). There were still godly, faithful people in Judah.

Jehoshabeath is

1. King Jehoram of Judah's daughter
2. wife of Jehoida the priest
3. sister of King Ahaziah
4. Athaliah's daughter or the daughter of another wife/concubine of Jehoram

YHWH is acting to preserve the Messianic line of David (cf. 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17).

22:10 “she rose and destroyed” The MT has “she rose and commanded” with the implication of “kill” the other royal children (lit. “seed”).

The LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate emend “said” (רָבַד, BDB 180, KB 210, *Piel* IMPERFECT with *waw*) to the similar root, רָבַד, BDB 1, “destroy” (cf. 2 Kgs. 11:1).

A good brief discussion of scribal errors is in R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 254-257.

22:11 “Jehoshabeath” 2 Kings 11:2 called her “Jehosheba.” Oh how different the lives of Athaliah and Jehoshabeath. One of sin and self, one of faith and selflessness! YHWH directed one; Satan directed the other..

“**in the *bedroom***” I do not know why NASB puts the word “bedroom” (BDB 641) in italics. It is in the MT here and 2 Kgs. 11:2. This term can mean

1. where one sleeps – Exod. 8:3; 2 Sam. 4:7; 2 Kgs. 6:12
2. where extra bedding is stored – 2 Kgs. 11:2; 2 Chr. 22:11

Later the boy was kept in the temple chambers reserved for the priests (or possibly High Priest only). This is why Athaliah could not find him.

22:12 “Athaliah reigned” See parallel in 2 Kings 11.

“**six years**” This was probably the length of Athaliah’s reign (cf. Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 104, #18).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why is the house of Ahab condemned?
2. Explain the theological statement at the beginning of 2 Chr. 22:7.
3. Why was Jehu anointed?
4. How is 2 Chr. 21:4 related to 22:10?
5. How does 2 Chr. 22:11 show that faith and faithlessness run in the same family?

2 CHRONICLES 23

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Jehoiada Sets Joash on the Throne of Judah	Joash Crowned King in Judah	The Revolt Against Athaliah; Her Punishment by Death and the Enthronement of Joash	The Revolt Against Athaliah	Accession of Joash and Death of Athaliah (MT versing)
23:1-7	23:1-7	23:1-7	23:1-2 23:3-7	23:1-7
23:8-11 Athaliah Murdered	23:8-11 Death of Athaliah	23:8-11	23:8-11	23:8-11
23:12-15	23:12-13 23:14-15	23:12-15	23:12-13 23:14 23:15	23:12-15
Reforms Carried Out			Jehoiada's Reforms	Jehoiada's Reign
23:16-21	23:16-21	23:16-21	23:16-19 23:20-21	23:16-19 23:20-24:3

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 23:1-7

¹Now in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took captains of hundreds: Azariah the son of Jeroham, Ishmael the son of Johanan, Azariah the son of Obed, Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Zichri, *and they entered* into a covenant with him. ²They went throughout Judah and gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the heads of the fathers' *households* of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. ³Then all the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And Jehoiada said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has spoken concerning the sons of David. ⁴This is the thing which you shall do: one third of you, of the priests and Levites who come in on the sabbath, *shall be* gatekeepers, ⁵and one third *shall be* at the king's house, and a third at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the people *shall be* in the courts of the house of the LORD. ⁶But let no one enter the house of the LORD except the priests and the ministering Levites; they may enter, for they are holy. And let all the people keep the charge of the LORD. ⁷The Levites will surround the king, each man with his weapons in his hand; and whoever enters the house, let him be killed. Thus be with the king when he comes in and when he goes out."

23:1 "Jehoiada" This is the High Priest married to Jehoshapbeath in 2 Chr. 22:11, who helped hide Joash in the temple chambers for six years.

The five men listed must also be of the tribe of Levi.

"captains of hundreds" From 2 Kgs. 11:4 this includes some foreign mercenaries (cf. 1 Chr. 18:17). This may be the meaning of 2 Chr. 23:6, not just lay people (i.e., non-Levite), but not covenant people (i.e., Carites or Cherethites).

"covenant" See Special Topic: Covenant.

23:2 Jehoiada assembled a Levite army to protect the rightful Davidic heir (cf. 2 Kgs. 11:4-20). This is not mentioned in the 2 Kings parallel. The Chronicler is always promoting the Levites!

“Israel” This is used of Judah being the true “Israel” of YHWH. See notes at 2 Chr. 11:13-17; 12:6; 21:2.

23:3 This is an allusion to 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17. There was a private, Levitical commitment to service the new Davidic child king (cf. 2 Kgs. 11:4) in the temple before the events of 2 Chr. 23:9-11.

23:6 “let no one enter” This (BDB 97, KB 112) is an IMPERFECT used as a JUSSIVE. I think there is another one at the end of the verse, “let all the people keep the charge of the LORD” (also note 2 Chr. 23:7).

This limiting of access was for two purposes.

1. It renewed the sanctity of the temple courts (i.e., Num. 1:15; 3:10,38; 18:7).
2. It excluded any followers of Athaliah to enter.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 23:8-11

⁸So the Levites and all Judah did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded. And each one of them took his men who were to come in on the sabbath, with those who were to go out on the sabbath, for Jehoiada the priest did not dismiss *any of* the divisions. ⁹Then Jehoiada the priest gave to the captains of hundreds the spears and the large and small shields which had been King David’s, which *were* in the house of God. ¹⁰He stationed all the people, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, by the altar and by the house, around the king. ¹¹Then they brought out the king’s son and put the crown on him, and *gave him* the testimony and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and said, “*Long live the king!*”

23:8 “did not dismiss *any of* the divisions” This accumulation of Levites in the temple area had to be done secretly over time, so as not to cause Athaliah or her guards to notice.

23:9 Jehoiada passed out the weapons that were kept in the temple.

1. David’s shields of gold – 2 Sam. 8:7
2. Solomon’s shields of gold – 1Kgs. 10:16-17; 14:26-27; 2 Chr. 9:16
3. Shishak of Egypt took Solomon’s shields of gold and Rehoboam replaced them with bronze ones, 2 Chr. 12:9-10

23:10 “the altar” See Special Topic: Altar of Sacrifice.

23:11 “the testimony” This was a copy of the Ten Commandments or larger parts of the Law of Moses (i.e., Deut. 17:18).

Some scholars think it was a document that outlined the responsibilities of the king (AB, p. 130), but I think the books of Exodus or Deuteronomy would do this.

“anointed” See Special Topic: Anointing in the Bible.

“Long live the king” This was a political affirmation (lit. “may the king live,” BDB 310, KB 309, *Qal* JUSSIVE, cf. 2 Sam. 10:24; 1 Kgs. 1:25,34,39).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 23:12-15

¹²When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came into the house of the LORD to the people. ¹³She looked, and behold, the king was standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the captains and the trumpeters *were* beside the king. And all the people of the land rejoiced and blew trumpets, the singers with *their* musical instruments leading the praise. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and said, “*Treason! Treason!*” ¹⁴Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds who were appointed over the army and said to them, “Bring her out between

the ranks; and whoever follows her, put to death with the sword.” For the priest said, “Let her not be put to death in the house of the LORD.” ¹⁵So they seized her, and when she arrived at the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king’s house, they put her to death there.

23:13 “tore her clothes” See Special Topic: Grieving Rites.

SPECIAL TOPIC: GRIEVING RITES

The Israelites expressed sorrow for the death of a loved one and for personal repentance, as well as corporate crimes, in several ways:

1. tear outer robe, Gen. 37:29,34; 44:13; Jdgs. 11:35; 2 Sam. 1:11; 3:31; 1 Kgs. 21:27; Job 1:20
2. put on sackcloth, Gen. 37:34; 2 Sam. 3:31; 1 Kgs. 21:27; Jer. 48:37
3. take off shoes, 2 Sam. 15:30; Isa. 20:3
4. put hands on head, 2 Sam. 13:19; Jer. 2:37
5. put dust on head, Jos. 7:6; 1 Sam. 4:12; Neh. 9:1
6. sit on the ground, Lam. 2:10; Ezek. 26:16 (lie on the ground, 2 Sam. 12:16); Isa. 47:1
7. beat the breast, 1 Sam. 25:1; 2 Sam. 11:26; Nah. 2:7
8. cut the body, Deut. 14:1; Jer. 16:6; 48:37
9. fast, 2 Sam. 1:12; 12:16,21; 1 Kgs. 21:27; 1 Chr. 10:12; Neh. 1:4
10. chant a lament, 2 Sam. 1:17; 3:31; 2 Chr. 35:25
11. baldness (hair pulled out or shaved), Jer. 48:37
12. cut beards short, Jer. 48:37
13. cover head or face, 2 Sam. 15:30; 19:4

These were outward signs of inner feelings.

“Treason! Treason!” This (BDB 905) is repeated for emphasis (cf. 2 Kgs.9:23; 11:14). What she considered “treason” was YHWH’s justice!

23:14

NASB, NRSV,

NJB “Bring her out between the ranks”

NKJV “take her outside under guard”

TEV “take her out between the rows of guards”

REB “bring her outside the precincts”

LXX “remove her from the house”

The term “ranks” (BDB 690, KB 1310) can mean

1. a line of soldiers (KB #2)
2. a row of pillars (Egyptian root) or planks (KB, #1, cf. 1 Kgs. 6:9)

“Let her be not put to death in the house of the LORD” This (BDB 562, *Hiphil*) is an IMPERFECT used as a JUSSIVE (cf. 2 Chr. 23:6,7).

23:15 Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.7.3., says Athaliah came with her royal guard whom she ordered to kill the crowned child, but she was stopped and she and her supporters killed.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 23:16-21

¹⁶Then Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king, that they would be the LORD’s people. ¹⁷And all the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down, and they broke in pieces his altars and his images, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. ¹⁸Moreover, Jehoiada placed the offices of the house of the LORD under the authority of the Levitical priests, whom David had assigned over the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses—with rejoicing and singing according to the order of David. ¹⁹He stationed the gatekeepers of the house of the LORD, so that no one would enter *who*

was in any way unclean. ²⁰He took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the rulers of the people and all the people of the land, and brought the king down from the house of the LORD, and came through the upper gate to the king's house. And they placed the king upon the royal throne. ²¹So all of the people of the land rejoiced and the city was quiet. For they had put Athaliah to death with the sword.

23:17 The fact there was a temple and priesthood of *Ba'al* in Jerusalem shows the level of idolatry that "the house of Ahab" had caused in Judah (especially Jezebel and Athaliah).

Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.7.4., says Athaliah ran to the temple of *Ba'al* which she and her husband had built in Jerusalem.

23:18 Jehoiada was returning to the organization of David's tabernacle (cf. 1 Chronicles 9).

23:20 Notice the different groups of Judean society.

1. captains (BDB 987) – military
2. nobles (BDB 12) – wealthy
3. rulers of the people (BDB 766 I) – common people
4. people of the land (BDB 481 CONSTRUCT BDB 766 I) – poor people or parallel to #3

The whole point is that all Judean society supported the coup and the Davidic child king.

23:21 "the city was quiet" This was a sign of YHWH's presence and pleasure.

The NASB Study Bible, p. 612, shows the outline of Joash's reign.

1. his anointing – 2 Chronicles 23
2. his good years with Jehoiada as counselor – 2 Chr. 24:1-16
3. his bad years without Jehoiada – 2 Chr. 24:17-27

This initial godliness followed by evil acts is a recurrent pattern in Chronicles.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Who was Jehoiada?
2. How does 2 Chr. 23:1 relate to 2 Kgs. 11:4?
3. What previous Scripture is 2 Chr. 23:3 referring to?
4. Does 2 Chr. 23:6-7 relate to 2 Kgs. 11:4 or laypersons?
5. What does 2 Chr. 23:17 say about the spiritual condition of Jerusalem under Athaliah?

2 CHRONICLES 24

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Young Joash Influenced by Jehoiada	Joash Repairs the Temple	The Good Beginning of Joash; His Later Apostasy and Subsequent Punishment	King Joash of Judah	(MT versing)
24:1-3	24:1-3	24:1-3	24:1-3	
Faithless Priests				Joash Repairs the Temple
24:4-7	24:4-7	24:4-7	24:4-6	24:4-10
Temple Repaired			24:7	
24:8-14	24:8-14	24:8-14	24:8-11	

				24:11-14
			24:12-14a	
	Apostasy of Joash		Jehoiada's Policies are Reversed	
			24:14b-16	
24:15-16	24:15-16	24:15-16		24:15-16
				Joash's Decline and Death
24:17-19	24:17-22	24:17-19	24:17-22	24:17-22
Joash Murders Son of Jehoiada				
24:20-22		24:20-22		
Aram Invades and Defeats Judah	Death of Joash		The End of Joash's Reign	
24:23-24	24:23-25	24:23-24	24:23-27	24:23-24a
				24:24b-27
24:25-27		24:25-27		
	24:26-27			

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:1-3

¹Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name *was* Zibiah from Beersheba. ²Joash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. ³Jehoiada took two wives for him, and he became the father of sons and daughters.

24:1 "Joash" In 2 Kgs. 11:21; 12:1-21, he is called "Jehoash." Both mean "YHWH supports (BDB 219).

"he reigned forty years in Jerusalem" This is one of the longest reigns besides Manasseh. The tragic pattern of initial godliness (2 Chr. 24:2) followed by end-of-life rebellion continues. As long as Jehoiada the priest was alive things went well (i.e., v. 12).

24:2 "did what was right in the sight of the LORD" This is an idiomatic expression for the kings of Judah (and possibly of Israel, i.e., Jeroboam I) who acted faithfully, like David (1 Kgs. 15:3) in keeping and promoting obedience to the Mosaic Law (cf. Deut. 6:16-18; 12:28; 13:18).

1. Jeroboam I of Israel – condition of YHWH's blessing: obedience to His covenant – 1 Kgs. 11:33,38; 14:8, but he did not
2. Asa (initially) – 1 Kgs. 15:11; 2 Chr. 14:2
3. Jehoshaphat (mostly) – 1 Kgs. 22:43; 2 Chr. 20:32
4. Jehu – 2 Kgs. 10:30
5. Jehoash (initially) – 2 Kgs. 12:2
6. Joash (initially) – 2 Chr. 24:2
7. Amaziah – 2 Kgs. 14:2; 2 Chr. 25:2
8. Jotham – 2 Kgs. 15:33; 2 Chr. 27:2
9. Ahaz – 2 Kgs. 16:2; 2 Chr. 28:1 (negative)
10. Hezekiah – 2 Kgs. 18:3; 2 Chr. 29:2; 31:20
11. Josiah – 2 Kgs. 22:2

24:3 The godly High Priest, Jehoiada (cf. 2 Chr. 24:6, i.e., “head”) chose wives for the young king. Although the text does not give any details, one assumes

1. they were not of the line of Ahab (i.e., Jezebel and Athaliah)
2. they were worshipers of YHWH from Judah
3. the text does not mention additional wives or concubines

One of the two wives is named in 2 Chr. 25:1.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:4-7

⁴Now it came about after this that Joash decided to restore the house of the LORD. ⁵He gathered the priests and Levites and said to them, “Go out to the cities of Judah and collect money from all Israel to repair the house of your God annually, and you shall do the matter quickly.” But the Levites did not act quickly. ⁶So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief *priest* and said to him, “Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and from Jerusalem the levy *fixed by Moses the servant of the LORD on the congregation of Israel for the tent of the testimony?” ⁷For the sons of the wicked Athaliah had broken into the house of God and even used the holy things of the house of the LORD for the Baals.*

24:4 YHWH’s temple had deteriorated from non-use and the ransacking and theft by Athaliah’s people (cf. 2 Chr. 24:7).

The purpose of restoration was the restart of YHWH’s worship in its Mosaic form (i.e., 2 Chr. 24:5,6,9).

24:5 “cities of Judah. . .all Israel” It is obvious that the Chronicler considered Judah to be the true covenant people, “Israel” (cf. vv. 9,16).

The NASB Study Bible, p. 613, mentions that

1. this verse only mentions one source of revenue (i.e., the census tax, cf. Exod. 30:14; 38:26)
2. 2 Kgs. 12:4-5 lists three sources
 - a. a census tax (i.e., “each man’s assessment”)
 - b. freewill offering (i.e., “which any man’s heart prompts him,” cf. Exod. 35:5,22,29)
 - c. payments from personal vows (cf. Lev. 27:1-8; Num. 18:15-16)

“But the Levites did not act quickly” The reason for the delay is not stated but from the context, one wonders if they, too, had become followers of *Ba’al*. They had allowed YHWH’s temple to be ransacked and looted.

The other option is the parallel in 2 Kgs. 12:6-8 which mentions the date of the request, which may denote a time when Jehoiada had little influence (NASB Study Bible, p. 613).

A third option is expressed by Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.8.2., “but the high priest did not do this, as concluding that no one would willingly pay the money.”

24:6 Joash wants to restore Mosaic guidelines for the sacrificial system.

Special Topic: Sacrifices in Mesopotamia and Israel and Their Significance.

SPECIAL TOPIC: SACRIFICIAL SYSTEMS OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

(These notes are part of my OT Survey notes online.

Also note the chart in NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1020-1021.)

I. Ritual laws in Mesopotamia

A. Sacrifice was primarily a meal offered to a god. The altar was the table of the god where the meal was placed. Beside the altar was the incense brazier which was to attract the god’s attention. There was no ritual

implication in the blood. The sword bearer cut the throat of the animal. The food was shared

between the gods, the priest-king, and the attendants. The offerer received nothing.

B. There was no expiatory sacrifice.

C. Sickness or pain was punishment from the gods. An animal was brought and destroyed; this acted as a substitute for the offerer.

D. Israel's ritual was different and distinct. It seems to have originated in a person giving back to God part of the results of his labor for necessary food (cf. Gen. 4:1-4; 8:20-22).

II. Ritual laws in Canaan (very similar to Israel's)

A. Sources

1. biblical accounts

2. Phoenician literature

3. Ras Shamra Tablets from Ugarit concerning Canaanite deities and mythology from about 1400 B.C.

B. Israel's and Canaan's sacrifices are very much alike. However, there is no emphasis placed on the blood of the victim in Canaanite sacrifices.

III. Ritual Laws in Egypt

A. Sacrifices were offered but not emphasized.

B. The sacrifice was not important but the attitude of the sacrificer was.

C. Sacrifices were made to stop the wrath of the gods.

D. The offerer hoped for deliverance or forgiveness.

IV. Israel's Sacrificial System – Israel's sacrifices were closer to Canaan's although not necessarily related to them at all.

A. Descriptive Phrases

1. Sacrifice was a spontaneous expression of mankind's need for God.

2. The OT laws which regulate sacrifice cannot be said to initiate sacrifice (cf. Gen. 7:8; 8:20).

3. Sacrifice was an offering (animal or vegetable).

4. Must be an offering that was wholly or partially destroyed upon an altar in homage to God.

5. The altar was the place of sacrifice and symbolized the divine presence.

6. Sacrifice was an act of external worship (a prayer which was acted out).

7. The definition of sacrifice is "acted prayers" or "ritualized prayers." The significance of ritual and our cultural bias against it is revealed in Gordon J. Wenham (Tyndale, *Numbers*, p. 25-39). Leviticus and Numbers both contain large amounts of this type of material, which shows its importance to Moses and Israel.

B. Sacrifice Involved

1. Gifts to God

a. involve acknowledgment that all of the earth is the Lord's

b. all that a person has, he owes to God

c. therefore, it is right that people bring tribute to God

d. it was a special kind of tribute or gift. It was something that the man needed to sustain his own existence. It was more than just giving something, it was something he needed. It was giving a part of himself to God.

e. by destroying the gift it cannot be reclaimed

f. a burnt offering becomes invisible and goes up to God's realm

g. earlier altars were erected in places where God appeared. The altar came to be looked upon as a holy place, therefore, the offering was brought there.

2. Expressing consecration of one's entire life to God

a. The burnt offering was one of three voluntary sacrifices.

b. The entire animal was burnt to express to God deep-felt homage.

c. This was a very expressive gift to God.

3. Fellowship with God

- a. communion aspect of sacrifice
 - b. an example would be the peace offering which symbolized God and man in fellowship
 - c. sacrifice was made to obtain or regain this fellowship
 - 4. Expiation of sin
 - a. when man sinned he had to ask God to restore the relationship (covenant) which man had broken
 - b. there was no communal meal with the sin offering because of the broken relationship
 - c. the significance of blood
 - VI. placed on altar for man
 - 1. placed on veil for priest
 - 2. placed on mercy seat for High Priest and the nation (Leviticus 16)
 - d. there were two types of sin offerings. The second is called the guilt offering or trespass offering. In it the offender was to restore to his fellow Israelite that which was taken or damaged, along with the animal sacrifice.
 - e. there was no sacrifice for premeditated or intentional sin, Lev. 4:2, 22, 27; 5:15-18; 22:14
- V. Procedures from Leviticus for the Different Sacrifices
 - A. Leviticus 1, burnt offering
 - 1. Introductory Formula, "The Lord spoke to Moses," Lev. 1:1-2; 4:1; 5:14; 6:1,19; 7:22, 28
 - a. From the herd or flock
 - b. "When," Lev. 1:2, shows that this was not mandatory but voluntary
 - 2. Burnt Offering, Lev. 1:3-17 (6:8-13)
 - a. Altar
 - (1) the brazen altar, also called altar of burnt offering, altar by door of Tabernacle, or altar of shittim wood, covered with bronze (cf. Exodus 27)
 - (2) this distinguished it from the incense altar (golden altar) in the Holy Place (cf. Exodus 30)
 - (3) coals from brazen altar were taken to incense altar
 - (4) brazen altar was right in the middle of the entrance of the Tabernacle
 - (5) altar had horns which were its most sacred part; the blood was applied to the horns (cf. Exod. 30:10)
 - (6) The horns were possibly for:
 - (a) symbol of hands to hold up the offering
 - (b) symbol of strength or prevailing power (Deut. 33:17; 2 Sam. 22:3.)
 - (c) later, anyone who grabbed the horns of the altar was safe until his case was decided by the court (1 Kgs. 1:50-51; 2:28)
 - b. The Offering
 - (1) bullock without blemish which was mentioned first because of its importance and cost, Lev. 1:3
 - (2) male goat or sheep, Lev. 1:10
 - (3) turtle doves or young pigeons, Lev. 1:14 (provision for the poor)
 - c. Place of Burnt Offering was at the door of the Tent of Meeting
 - d. Laying on of the Hands – this was only for the bulls, not for goats, sheep or birds, Lev. 1:4
 - (1) the offerer did this himself (not the priest)
 - (2) many feel it was a symbolic action of the transferring of guilt
 - (3) some believe it meant that
 - (a) this animal comes from this particular individual
 - (b) the sacrifice was to be presented in the offerer's name
 - (c) the fruit of this sacrifice belongs to the one who placed his hands on the

animal

e. Slaughtering

(1) bull – “before the Lord” by the man making the sacrifice. The offerer had to kill, skin, and cut up the animal. The priest’s role (except in case of public sacrifices) began when the man brought the animal to the altar.

(2) sheep or goat, Lev. 1:11 – “on north side of altar before the Lord.” This designated a specific place for these lesser animals.

(3) bird – The priest killed and offered this sacrifice. The offerer had to remove the bird’s crop.

f. Handling of the Blood

(1) animals

(a) The priest threw blood against the altar, and sprinkled it round about the altar.

(b) The life of the animal was in the blood (cf. Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:11). Life already belonged to God, therefore, the blood represented no part of the gift of the man.

(c) The bird’s blood was drained on the side of the altar and not consumed in fire.

g. Handling of the Flesh

(1) bull, Lev. 1:6

(a) The offerer skinned the offering; the priest could keep the skin (cf. Lev. 7:8)

(b) The offerer cut it into pieces

(c) The priest placed the offering on the altar in an arrangement as it was when alive

(d) The legs and entrails were washed with water from the laver

(e) The priest burned the whole animal on altar

3. Occasion of Burnt Offerings

a. Feast of Tabernacles, Booths

b. Day of Atonement

d. Feast of Weeks, First Fruits, or Pentecost

e. Feast of Trumpets

e. Wave Sheaf (Leviticus 23)

f. Feast of Unleavened Bread, Passover

g. Beginning of months, New Moon

h. Sabbath

4. Significance of Burnt Offering

a. A gift to God

b. Seen as the most valuable kind of sacrifice

c. It seems to deal with the concept of sin in general or thanksgiving

d. Most perfect representation of sacrificial idea

e. Symbolic offering of one’s life

f. Represents complete consecration of the life of an individual to the service of God

g. Graded value of offering

(1) bull

(2) sheep – goat

(3) birds

h. This shows that anyone conscious of spiritual need could approach God. God made provision for all men.

5. Special Instructions for Priest, Lev. 6:8-12

a. Burnt offering remained all night on hearth of the altar

b. Fire was to be kept burning continually under a burnt offering

- c. Instructions involving the Priest's dress
 - d. Instructions involving the removal of the ashes
- B. Leviticus 2:1-16 (6:14-23), grain offering

1. Introduction

- a. This chapter deals with the grain offering

- b. Grain offering was from the root meaning "gift." It became a technical term for non-animal, or vegetable gifts.

- c. After the Exile the grain offering appears as a supplement to the burnt offering and peace offering and the rabbis say it could be offered alone by the very poor.

- d. Salt covenant was also mentioned in Num. 18:19 and 2 Chr. 13:5. Salt was the opposite of leaven. It was used as a symbol of the covenant of God because it was non-corruptible and lasting.

2. The Grain Offering involved one's labor being given to God.

- a. It was a gift to God from the daily food of the people.

- b. It was generally a supplement (especially in post-exile days) to the burnt or peace offering.

- c. Sacrifice was God's provision for the priest. Only a small part was burnt as a memorial of the whole.

- d. The word "memorial" describes the offered portion, or that part which brings the whole before the Lord.

- e. New Testament concept of the Lord's Supper as "memorial" expresses this Old Testament concept.

- f. The distinction between the terms "holy" and "most holy" are:

- (1) "holy" – priest and family could eat it at any clean place

- (2) "most holy" – could only be eaten by the priests and in the court of the Tent of

Meeting

3. Types

- a. Unbaked flour (for the rich), Lev. 2:1-3

- b. Baked loaves or cake, Lev. 2:4-11

- c. Green ears of corn or wheat (for the poor), Lev. 2:12-16

- (1) Unbaked flour was the highest offering. It was the very best of wheat flour.

- (2) Baked cakes

- (a) oil was an ingredient

- (b) prepared in oven, Lev. 2:4.

- (c) on a baking iron, Lev. 2:5.

- (d) in an earthen frying pan, Lev. 2:7.

3. Green ears of corn or wheat

- (a) must be parched

- (b) broken into coarse grits

- (c) arranged like a meal set before guests.

4. Ingredients

- a. Fine flour corresponded to an animal without blemish

- b. Oil was a symbol of prosperity and, therefore, a symbol of God's presence

- (1) used for food, sacrificing, medicine, and anointing

- (2) possibly use of oil was to replace offering of oil

- c. Frankincense was from India or Arabia

- (1) seen as a very pure thing with a wonderful fragrance

- (2) symbolized prayer and praise

- d. Salt

- (1) life-giving as well as preserving qualities
- (2) possibly more for table fellowship than for preserving
- e. Elements excluded
 - (1) Leaven excluded, Lev. 2:11
 - (a) possibly because of fermentation
 - (b) leaven associated with corruption
 - (c) could be offered with first fruits and to priest
 - (2) Honey excluded
 - (a) syrup was from fruit not honey bee
 - (b) possibly because of its use in Canaanite ritual

5. Ritual of Offering

- a. It was brought to the priest. He handled the whole ceremony (Lev. 2:2, 9,16).
- b. Part of the offering was to be eaten by priest in the sanctuary. It was most holy.

6. Significance

- a. Present from inferior to superior
- b. Burning of a portion of it represented the consecration of a portion of one's labor to

God

- c. Apparent meaning
 - (1) Burnt offering – consecration of one's life
 - (2) Meal offering – dedication of one's daily labor

7. Special Instructions for Grain Offering, Lev. 6:14-23

- a. Offering in front of altar
- b. Labor offered the gift to God, but in reality it supported the priesthood

C. Leviticus 3:1-17 (7:13-34), Peace Offering

1. Introduction

- a. Why
 - (1) communion offering
 - (2) covenant sacrifice
 - (3) corporate offering
 - (4) concluding sacrifice
- b. It expressed thankfulness to God because of fellowship with God, family, and friends.
- c. It was usually the final act in a series of sacrifices in which reconciliation had been established.
- d. The burnt offering expressed the costliness of obedience, while the peace offering expressed the joy and happiness of fellowship with God.
- e. Male or female but without blemish
- f. Varieties of offering
 - (1) from herd; male or female
 - (2) the distinction that was made between the sheep and the goat was because of

the fat of the tail of the sheep

- (a) lamb of flock – male or female
- (b) goat of flock – male or female

2. Ritual

- a. Presentation of offering
 - (1) Laid hands on offering
 - (2) Killed it at door of the Tent of meeting
 - (3) Identification of sacrifice was the same as the burnt offering
 - (4) Sprinkling of blood around altar
 - (5) Burning of choice parts on altar to God

- (a) fat (sheep-fatty tail) symbolized prosperity
- (b) kidneys, lobe of liver symbolized the seat of the will and emotions
- (c) fatty portions placed on offerer's burnt offering or on morning lamb

offering

- b. Thanksgiving offering included (Lev. 7:11-14)
 - (1) unleavened cake mixed with oil
 - (2) unleavened wafers spread with oil
 - (3) fine flour mixed with oil
- 3. Priest's Portion, Lev. 7:28-34
 - a. Breast belonged to priest as a wave offering
 - b. Waving involves the placing of the offering upon the offerer's hands and the priest's hands. It showed the offering offered by the offerer to God, and then its reception back by the priest.
 - c. Right thigh belonged to officiating priest
 - d. Heave offering was lifted to God and received back by the priest
- 4. Offerer's Portion, Lev. 7:15-18
 - a. A Thanksgiving Offering shall be eaten on day of giving, Lev. 7:15
 - b. A Votive (vow) or Freewill Offering shall be eaten on day of offering or on the next day, Lev. 7:16
 - c. This portion was all that was not given to God and by God to the priest
 - d. God symbolically eats with the offerer and his family and friends in this offering
 - e. This offering stresses that fellowship relationships have been restored
- D. Leviticus 4:1-5:13 (6:24-30), sin offering
 - 1. Introduction
 - a. This is the first offering in which atonement was the dominant element.
 - b. This sacrifice re-establishes the covenant between man and God. It restores fellowship.
 - c. This offering involves:
 - (1) Sins of ignorance
 - (2) Sins of inadvertence
 - (3) Sins of passion
 - (4) Sins of omission
 - (5) It did not atone for sins committed intentionally in haughty rebellion against God. There was no sacrifice for intentional, high handed, premeditated sin (cf. Num. 15:27-31).
 - 2. Meaning
 - a. This offering expiated the guilt and punishment for sins.
 - b. This involved grace on God's part and faith on man's part.
 - c. No sacrifice achieves anything by mere ritual offering. It was the offerer's faith behind the act.
 - d. Yet, sacrifice was more than the mere expression of the offerer. It did something for him. It re-established the relationship with God.
 - e. Ritual was a God-given means of restitution, not a substitute for personal faith.
 - f. God hates any religious action without accompanying faith, Isa. 1:10-20; Amos 5:21-24; Mic. 6:6-8.
 - 3. Ritual
 - a. For the High Priest, Lev. 4:3-12
 - (1) High priest – anointed priest
 - (a) Sin, in leading people wrongly
 - (b) Sin, in a personal nature
 - (c) The high priest, being the spiritual representative of the community; if he sins, all sinned in him. This was the Jewish understanding of corporality (cf. Joshua 7; Romans 5:12ff).
 - (2) Procedures

- (a) The High Priest brought a young bullock without blemish to altar
- (b) He laid hands on its head
- (c) The High Priest slaughtered animal
- (d) The High Priest sprinkled the blood before the veil 7 times
 - i. this cleansed the Tabernacle
 - ii. symbolically opened the way to God
 - iii. blood placed on horns of incense altar
 - iv. remaining blood poured out at base of altar of burnt offering
- (e) He placed all the fat on the altar to be burned
- (f) All the rest of the animal will be taken outside the camp to a clean place, Lev. 4:12, where the ashes are poured out from altar. There, the remainder of the animal is burned.

b. For the Nation, Lev. 4:13-21

(1) They sinned when commands of the law were not met, Lev. 4:13-21

(2) Procedures

- (a) The Elders brought a young bullock without blemish to altar
- (b) The Elders laid hands on head
- (c) The Elders slaughtered the animal
- (d) The High Priest sprinkled the blood before veil 7 times
 - i. this cleansed Tabernacle
 - ii. symbolically opened the way to God
 - iii. blood placed on horns of incense altar
 - iv. rest poured out at base of altar of sacrifice
- (e) All of it offered on the altar
- (f) All the rest of the animal was taken outside the camp to a clean place,

Lev. 4:12, where the ashes were poured out from the altar. There the remainder of the animal was burned.

c. For leader, Lev. 4:22-26

(1) Leader (ruler), Lev. 4:22-26

- (a) Leader of tribe
- (b) Responsible person in community
- (c) Elder

(2) Procedures

- (a) The leader brought a male goat (old, shaggy goat) to altar.
- (b) The leader laid hands on its head.
- (c) The leader slaughtered the animal.
- (d) A High Priest placed blood on horns of altar of burnt offering—the rest of

blood poured out at base of altar of sacrifice.

- (e) All fat is burned on the altar.
- (f) Priests ate the rest of the flesh.

d. For individual, Lev. 4:27-35

(1) For individual – when he learned he had sinned he was to make this offering

(2) Procedures

- (a) The individual brought a female goat or female lamb.
- (b) The individual laid hands on its head.
- (c) The individual slaughtered the animal.
- (d) A priest placed blood on horns of altar of sacrifice—rest poured out at

base of altar.

- (e) All fat placed on altar and burned.
- (f) Priests ate the rest of the flesh.

e. Special cases involving the sin offering, Lev. 5:1-13 (These seem to involve intentional sin against a covenant partner)

(1) If a witness doesn't come forward and testify (failure to give information), Lev. 5:1

(2) Touching unclean animal, Lev. 5:2

(3) Touching unclean human, Lev. 5:3

(4) Speaking thoughtlessly with an oath, Lev. 5:4

(5) Offering for the above sins:

(a) Female goat or sheep

(b) Two turtledoves or two pigeons

(c) 1/10 ephah of fine flour

f. Sin offering ritual, Lev. 6:24-30

(1) Priest could eat what was left.

(2) If blood got on clothes, clothes must be washed.

(3) If blood got on earthen vessel, vessel was broken.

(4) If blood got on brass vessel, vessel was washed.

(5) If burnt offering's blood was brought into Holy Place, then the flesh must be burnt and not eaten by priest.

g. Significance of the sin offering

(1) There is no offering for premeditated sin—only for inadvertent sin or sins of ignorance, Lev. 5:15, 18.

(2) What does forgiveness involve:

(a) Man's part is faith

(b) God's part is mercy

E. Leviticus 5:14-19, guilt or trespass offering

1. Introduction

a. While the Sin Offering dealt with sin committed, the Guilt Offering had to do with the damage that was done to a covenant partner and what restitution was possible.

b. The sin and trespass offerings were very similar.

c. The rights of the individual were expressed in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5).

(1) home

(2) accumulation of good

(3) life

d. This offering emphasizes the harm done to a brother in sinning, and the restitution of the cost of that which was damaged plus 1/5 more.

2. Sins Requiring an Offering

a. Against God or that which belongs to Him

(1) first fruits

(2) firstborn, Lev. 5:14-16

(3) tithe

(4) offering given incorrectly

(5) gifts of inferior value

b. "If a person sins and does any of the things which the LORD has commanded not to be done, though he was unaware, still he is guilty, and shall bear his punishment."

F. Ancient sacrifices were offered to

1. appease an angry deity

2. feed a deity

3. communicate with a deity

4. praise a deity

5. foster a sense of forgiveness or reconciliation

“**the levy fixed by Moses**” See Exod. 30:12-16.

“**the servant of the LORD**” In 2 Chr. 24:9 this is changed to “the servant of God.” The Chronicler must have viewed these as synonymous statements. See Special Topic: My Servant.

“**the tent of testimony**” This is one of several titles for the tabernacle of the wilderness (i.e., Num. 1:50).

The “testimony” would be the two tablets of stone commandments given to Moses by God on Mt. Sinai/Horeb.

24:7 This verse reveals the people’s continuing worship of *Ba’al* and *Asherah*. Notice the recurrent elements.

1. There was a temple and priesthood to *Ba’al* in Jerusalem, 2 Chr. 23:17.
2. Followers (lit. “sons”) of Athaliah invaded the temple of YHWH and took some holy things to *Ba’al’s* temple, 2 Chr. 24:7.
3. The people returned to *Ba’al* worship even after the temple of YHWH was restored, 2 Chr. 24:18.

“**the Baals**” The reason *Ba’al* is PLURAL is because every village and high place (naturally raised place) had its own *Ba’al* and *Asherah* shrine. *Ba’al* was symbolized by an uplifted, elongated stone and *Asherah* by a live tree or carved stake, symbolizing the tree of life.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:8-14

⁸So the king commanded, and they made a chest and set it outside by the gate of the house of the LORD. ⁹They made a proclamation in Judah and Jerusalem to bring to the LORD the levy fixed by Moses the servant of God on Israel in the wilderness. ¹⁰All the officers and all the people rejoiced and brought in their levies and dropped them into the chest until they had finished. ¹¹It came about whenever the chest was brought in to the king’s officer by the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, then the king’s scribe and the chief priest’s officer would come, empty the chest, take it, and return it to its place. Thus they did daily and collected much money. ¹²The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who did the work of the service of the house of the LORD; and they hired masons and carpenters to restore the house of the LORD, and also workers in iron and bronze to repair the house of the LORD. ¹³So the workmen labored, and the repair work progressed in their hands, and they restored the house of God according to its specifications and strengthened it. ¹⁴When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada; and it was made into utensils for the house of the LORD, utensils for the service and the burnt offering, and pans and utensils of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD continually all the days of Jehoiada.

24:8 “set it outside by the gate of the house of the LORD” This would be where all the Judeans could place their offerings. 2 Kings 12:9 says it was placed next to the altar of sacrifice, which would limit access to the priest and Levites. 2 Chronicles makes more sense. Obviously Kings and Chronicles have their own unique sources.

24:10 This verse is surprising because in 2 Chr. 24:18 the people revert to *Ba’al* worship. Either there was a group of faithful followers all along or the whole population was religiously fickle.

“**the people rejoiced. . .dropped**” Here is a good example of how context determines meaning. Words have meaning only in a context (i.e., sentence, paragraph). The VERB (BDB 1020, KB 1527, *Hiphil* IMPERFECT with *waw*) usually means “throw,” but here, “dropped” fits best. Their giving was a joy not a burden to be resented.

24:11 The large amount of money collected in the chest was not tallied nor dispensed by the Levites but by several special leaders only.

1. King's scribe
2. High Priest's officer

The reason is never stated. It may relate to

1. 2 Chr. 24:5, "they did not act quickly"
2. 2 Chr. 24:17-18, bad counselors and a return to *Ba'al* worship

"the king's scribe" Kings uses royal documents often but Chronicles uses prophetic writings more often. Special Topic: Scribes.

SPECIAL TOPIC: SCRIBES

The title comes from the Hebrew NOUN (BDB 706, KB 767) which means "a spoken message," "a written document/decreed" (KB 766). The Greek translation *grammateus* (LXX) usually refers to a written message. It can denote

1. educator (Nehemiah 8)
2. governmental official (2 Kgs. 22:3-13)
3. recorder/secretary (1 Chr. 24:6; 2 Chr. 34:13; Jer. 36:22)
4. military muster officer (cf. Jdgs. 5:14)
5. religious leader (i.e., Ezra, Ezra 7:6; Neh. 12:12-13)

In the NT they are often associated with the Pharisees (see Special Topic: Pharisees). In a sense they were people who were educated in the OT and the Oral Traditions (i.e., Talmud). They helped interpret and apply the Jewish traditions to everyday life (cf. Sirah 39:6). Apparently the scribes were also called "lawyers" (cf. Mark 12:28; Luke 7:30; 10:25; 11:45; 14:3). However, their righteousness (i.e., Jewish legalism and ritual) could not bring peace with God (cf. Matt. 5:20; Rom. 3:19-20; 9:1-5,30-32; 10:1-6; Col. 2:20-22).

They were often depicted in the Synoptic gospels (John never mentions them, 8:3 not original), as opposed to Jesus, and apparently coming as officials from Jerusalem (cf. Mark 3:22; 7:1). Some did respond to Him (cf. Matt. 8:19; 13:52; 23:34).

1. conflict over eating with sinners and tax-collectors, Mark 2:16; Matt. 9:9-13
2. conflict over the source of Jesus' authority in exorcisms, Mark 3:22
3. conflict over Jesus forgiving sin, Matt. 9:3; Luke 5:21
4. demand for a spectacular sign, Matt. 12:38
5. conflict over hand washing (i.e., ceremonial washings), Matt. 15:1-2; Mark 7:1-5
6. conflict over the crowds' affirmation at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Matt. 21:15
7. Jesus' accusation of their motives (i.e., seeking honor and preeminence), Mark 12:38-40
8. Jesus' accusing them of being hypocrites and blind guides in Moses' seat, Matt. 23:1-36

Because of their knowledge of Scripture, they should have been the first to recognize and embrace Jesus, but their traditions (cf. Isa. 29:13; 6:9-10) had blinded them! When light becomes darkness, how great is the darkness!

24:13 "according to its specifications" This meant the guidelines from King David and King Solomon.

24:12-14 Notice the different metals used. See parallel in 2 Kgs. 12:13.

1. iron, 2 Chr. 24:12 (probably for support, i.e., "strengthened it," v. 13)
2. bronze, 2 Chr. 24:12 (for the sacrificial altar)
3. gold, 2 Chr. 24:14 (for the Holy of Holies and Holy Place)
4. silver, 2 Chr. 24:14 (for the Holy Place)

24:14 "utensils" "Apparently most of the sacred utensils had been stolen and taken to the temple of *Ba'al* in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Chr. 23:17; 24:7).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:15-16

¹⁵Now when Jehoiada reached a ripe old age he died; he was one hundred and thirty years old at his death. ¹⁶They buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done well in Israel and to God and His house.

24:15 Death was not seen as an enemy. The time of death was the concern. Life taken early, violently or by sickness, was seen as the problem.

24:16 This priest was buried among the kings in Jerusalem because of his faithful, life-long service.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:17-19

¹⁷But after the death of Jehoiada the officials of Judah came and bowed down to the king, and the king listened to them. ¹⁸They abandoned the house of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherim and the idols; so wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their guilt. ¹⁹Yet He sent prophets to them to bring them back to the LORD; though they testified against them, they would not listen.

24:17 This shows

1. the problem of faithless counselors
2. the people's devotion to *Ba'al* (cf. 2 Kgs. 12:3)

Joash listened to them, as he had previously listened to Jehoiada. It shows his weak personality.

24:18 Again, the Chronicler asserts that judgment came because of disobedience to YHWH's covenant.

YHWH wanted to bless His people as a witness to the world but because of the curses involved in "the two ways" (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; 30; Psalm 1; Proverbs 1), only judgment was seen.

The Chronicler saw all history in YHWH's hand. Judgment (temporal) was meant to turn His people back to Him (cf. 2 Chr. 24:19). See Special Topic: Apostasy.

24:19 "He sent prophets" Prophets, their message, and their writings were very important to the Chronicler!

YHWH had not abandoned His people. They just would not listen (cf. Isa. 6:9-13).

See Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, pp. 184-189.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:20-22

²⁰Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest; and he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God has said, 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, He has also forsaken you.'" ²¹So they conspired against him and at the command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the LORD. ²²Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which his father Jehoiada had shown him, but he murdered his son. And as he died he said, "May the LORD see and avenge!"

24:20 "the Spirit of God came on" This is literally "clothed" (BDB 527, KB 519, *Qal* PERFECT, cf. Jdgs. 6:34; 1 Chr. 12:18). See full note at 2 Chr. 20:14.

See Special Topic: Predestination vs. Human Free Will

24:21-22 This is so shocking. Resistance to God's word blinded their minds to the service of Jehoiada and his family. They

1. conspired (BDB 905, KB 1153, *Qal* IMPERFECT with *waw*; "plot to kill," cf. 1 Sam. 22:8,13; 1 Kgs. 15:27; 16:9; 2 Kgs. 10:9; 15:10,25; 21:23,24; 2 Chr. 33:24-25)
 2. stoned him
 3. in the court of the Lord (i.e., a holy place, cf. 2 Chr. 23:14)
- Special Topic: Death Penalty in Israel

24:21 This murder is mentioned by Jesus in Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:51.

There is some confusion over the name of the father.

1. Zechariah of 2 Chronicles, father is Jehoiada
2. Zechariah, the writer of canonical book, Zechariah's father is Berechiah

Luke 11:51 does not give the father's name.

If "Abel" was the first, then the second reference should be the last. This does not fit 2 Chronicles 24 well. We do not know how, where, or when Zechariah, son of Berechiah, died, but he is a better option for a late death. See Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 337-338.

24:22 "May the LORD see and avenge!" The "he" must refer to Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada.

This phrase has two IMPERFECTS used as JUSSIVES. They are a prayer to YHWH. The VERB (BDB 205, KB 233, *Qal* IMPERFECT) is "seek" with no stated OBJECT. Instead of YHWH's people "seeking" Him, He will seek them for judgment!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:23-24

²³Now it happened at the turn of the year that the army of the Arameans came up against him; and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, destroyed all the officials of the people from among the people, and sent all their spoil to the king of Damascus. ²⁴Indeed the army of the Arameans came with a small number of men; yet the LORD delivered a very great army into their hands, because they had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers. Thus they executed judgment on Joash.

24:23-26 These verses record how the curse of 2 Chr. 24:22 was fulfilled.

1. the Syrians invaded with a small force
 - a. killed all officials (same title as 2 Chr. 24:17)
 - b. took all the spoil of Jerusalem to Damascus (cf. 2 Kgs. 12:18)
2. Joash was sickened or wounded (NIDOTTE, vol. 2, p. 142, #6)
3. Joash's foreign servants (2 Chr. 24:26; names different in 2 Kgs. 12:21) "conspired" against him and killed him ("beware of foreigners" was surely a concern of the small post-exilic Judah of the Chronicler's day)
4. he was not buried in the royal tombs

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 24:25-27

²⁵When they had departed from him (for they left him very sick), his own servants conspired against him because of the blood of the son of Jehoiada the priest, and murdered him on his bed. So he died, and they buried him in the city of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. ²⁶Now these are those who conspired against him: Zabad the son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith the Moabitess. ²⁷As to his sons and the many oracles against him and the rebuilding of the house of God, behold, they are written in the treatise of the Book of the Kings. Then Amaziah his son became king in his place.

24:25 Again, the Chronicler explains historical events in light of the "two ways" (see note at 2 Chr. 24:18).

"sons" The MT is PLURAL (also Peshitta). Possibly the people tried to wipe out the whole family. The LXX has "son," followed by the Vulgate.

"murdered him on his bed" It is hard to reconcile the account here with the parallel in 2 Kgs. 12:20. See John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture*, which documents how oral cultures passed down their traditions. Here, it seems to be two written sources which differ.

24:27 Usually the written records used by the Chronicler are prophetic writings (i.e., 2 Chr. 13:22), but

here, royal archives. See Introduction, IV. Authorship, #2.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why did the Levites not act quickly to repair the temple?
2. Why did the temple need repair?
3. Why is 2 Chr. 24:18 so shocking?
4. What does “the Spirit clothed Zechariah” mean?
5. How was Joash killed?

2 CHRONICLES 25

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Amaziah Succeeds Joash in Judah 25:1-4	Amaziah Reigns in Judah 25:1-2 25:3-4	Amaziah Acts Wrongfully and Suffers Punishment 25:1-4	King Amaziah of Judah 25:1-4	Accession of Amaziah (MT versing) 25:1-4
Amaziah Defeats Edomites 25:5-10	The War Against Edom 25:5-10	25:5-10	War Against Edom 25:5-8 25:9a 25:9b-10	His Victorious Campaign Against Edom 25:5-10
Amaziah Rebuked for Idolatry 25:11-13	25:11-12 25:13	25:11-13	25:11-12 25:13	25:11-13
25:14-16	25:14-16	25:14-16	25:14-15 25:16a 25:16b	25:14-16
Amaziah Defeated by Joash of Israel 25:17-19 25:20-24	Israel Defeats Judah 25:17-24 Death of Amaziah	25:17-19 25:20-24	War Against Israel 25:17-19 25:20-24	His Disastrous Campaign Against Israel 25:17-19 25:20-24 His Death
25:25-28	25:25-28	25:25-28	25:25-28	25:25 25:26-28

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 25:1-4

¹Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. ²He did right in the sight of the LORD, yet not with a whole heart. ³Now it came about as soon as the kingdom was firmly in his grasp, that he killed his servants who had slain his father the king. ⁴However, he did not put their children to death, but *did* as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, which the LORD commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for sons, nor sons be put to death for fathers, but each shall be put to death for his own sin."

25:1 "Amaziah" See Special Topic: Kings of the Divided Kingdom.

2 Chronicles 25:1 is a typical introduction to a king's reign.

1. age at ascension
2. length of reign
3. mother's name

"twenty-five years old. . .reigned twenty-nine years" For a good brief discussion, see Martin Selman, *Tyndale OT Commentaries, 2 Chronicles*, p. 489.

"The date of Amaziah's reign is a seemingly intractable problem, and his *twenty-nine years* (v. 1) has been reduced to varying lengths such as thirteen, sixteen, or nineteen years.¹

One solution regards Amaziah as sole ruler for only five years before being taken hostage by Jehoash of Israel (vv. 23-24), with his son Uzziah being co-regent for the remaining twenty-four years. This rather surprising conclusion has found support in the unique comment that Amaziah *lived for fifteen years* after Jehoash's death (v. 25) and in the participation of the people at Uzziah's accession, perhaps indicating some kind of crisis (26:1; cf. 22:1).² If this is correct, the two wars belong to Amaziah's first five years, though the whole reign has been dated between 801-773 (Begrich) and 796-767 (Thiele)."

The *IVP Bible Background Commentary* p. 446, mentions that Amaziah was a contemporary

1. in Israel, of
 - a. Joash
 - b. Jeroboam II
2. in Assyria, of
 - a. Adad-Nirari III
 - b. Shalmaneser IV
 - c. Ashur-Dan III

Special Topic: Kings of Assyria.

SPECIAL TOPIC: KINGS OF ASSYRIA

Tentative list of rulers and approximate dates:

1. 1354-1318 Asshur-Uballit I:
 - a. conquered the Hittite city of Carchemish
 - b. began to remove Hittite influence and allowed Assyria to develop
2. 1297-1266 Adad-Nirari I (powerful king)
3. 1265-1235 Shalmaneser I (powerful king)
4. 1234-1197 Tukulti-Ninurta I
 - first conquest of Babylonian empire to the south
5. 1118-1078 Tiglath-Pileser I
 - Assyria becomes a major power in Mesopotamia
6. 1012- 972 Ashur-Rabi II
7. 972- 967 Ashur-Resh-Isui II
8. 966- 934 Tiglath-Pileser II
9. 934- 912 Ashur-Dan II
10. 912- 890 Adad-Nirari II
11. 890- 884 Tukulti-Ninurta II
12. 883- 859 Asshur-Nasir-Apal II
13. 859- 824 Shalmaneser III
 - Battle of Qarqar in 853
14. 824-811 Shamashi-Adad V
15. 811-783 Adad-Nirari III

16. 781-772 Shalmaneser IV

17. 772-754 Ashur-Dan III

18. 754-745 Ashur-Nirari V

19. 745-727 Tiglath-Pileser III:

a. called by his Babylonian throne name, *Pul*, in 2 Kings 15:19

b. very powerful king

c. started the policy of deporting conquered peoples

d. In 735 B.C. there was the formation of the "Syro-Ephramatic League," which was an attempt to unify all the available military resources of the trans-Jordan nations from the head waters of the Euphrates to Egypt for the purpose of neutralizing the rising military power of Assyria. King Ahaz of Judah refused to join and was invaded by Israel and Syria. He wrote to Tiglath-Pileser III for help

against the advise of Isaiah (cf. 2 Kings 16; Isaiah 7-12).

e. In 732 Tiglath-Pileser III invades and conquers Syria and Israel and places a vassal king on the throne of Israel, Hoshea (732-722). Thousands of Jews from the Northern Kingdom were exiled to Media (cf. 2 Kings 15).

20. 727-722 Shalmaneser V

a. Hoshea forms an alliance with Egypt and is invaded by Assyria (cf. 2 Kings 17)

b. besieged Samaria in 724 B.C.

21. 722-705 Sargon II:

a. After a three year siege started by Shalmaneser V, his successor Sargon II conquers the capital of Israel, Samaria. Over 27,000 are deported to Media.

b. The Hittite empire is also conquered.

c. In 714-711 another coalition of trans-Jordan nations and Egypt rebelled against Assyria. This coalition is known as “the Ashdod Rebellion.” Even Hezekiah of Judah originally was involved. Assyria invaded and destroyed several Philistine cities.

22. 705-681 Sennacherib:

a. In 705 another coalition of trans-Jordan nations and Egypt rebelled after the death of Sargon II. Hezekiah fully supported this rebellion. Sennacherib invaded in 701. The rebellion was crushed but Jerusalem was spared by an act of God (cf. Isaiah 36-39 and 2 Kings 18-19).

b. Sennacherib also put down the rebellion in Elam and Babylon.

23. 681-669 Esarhaddon:

a. first Assyrian ruler to attack and conquer Egypt

b. had great sympathy with Babylon and rebuilt its capital city

24. 669-663 Ashurbanipal:

a. also called Osnappar in Ezra 4:10

b. His brother Shamash-shum-ukin was made king of Babylon. This brought several years of peace between Assyria and Babylon but there was an undercurrent of independence which broke out in 652 led by his brother.

c. fall of Thebes, 663 B.C.

d. defeated Elam, 653, 645 B.C.

25. 633-629 Asshur-Etil-Ilani

26. 629-612 Sin-Shar-Ishkun

27. 612-609 Asshur-Uballit II:

– enthroned king in exile in Haran after the fall of Asshur in 614 b.c. and Ninevah in 612 B.C.

25:2 This is “good news; bad news.” Amaziah did right in the sight of the Lord. See full note at 2 Chr. 24:2. However, like his predecessors, he started well (i.e., listened to God’s messengers, cf. vv. 5-10) but later did not (i.e., vv. 14-16,20; 2 Kgs. 14:4 mentions the high places).

David, the ideal king, had a “whole heart” but not all his descendants did.

1. Solomon – 1 Kgs. 11:4

2. Abijam – 1 Kgs. 15:3

David admonishes Solomon about this in 1 Chr. 28:8-9 and prays for him in 1 Chr. 29:19. Attitude is crucial!

25:4 This shows a knowledge of Deuteronomy (i.e., Deut. 24:16) before Josiah found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. The Chronicler’s writing shows he knew many OT books (see Introduction to 2 Chronicles, III., G.).

The parallel shows this same allusion (cf. 2 Kgs. 14:6) and, like the Chronicler, simply quoted him. Kings is written earlier but still after the

1. conquest of Jerusalem and the temple by Nebuchadnezzar

2. the murder of Gedaliah the Babylonian appointed governor of Judah

Just a theological note, this verse focuses on the spiritual responsibility of each individual (cf. Jer. 31:29,30; Ezekiel 18), but later in this chapter, several cities of Judah and 3,000 people are killed (2 Chr. 25:13) because of the sin of Amaziah. It is hard to balance these concepts (i.e., Deut. 5:9 vs. 7:9)!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 25:5-10

⁵Moreover, Amaziah assembled Judah and appointed them according to *their* fathers' households under commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds throughout Judah and Benjamin; and he took a census of those from twenty years old and upward and found them to be 300,000 choice men, *able* to go to war *and* handle spear and shield. ⁶He hired also 100,000 valiant warriors out of Israel for one hundred talents of silver. ⁷But a man of God came to him saying, "O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD is not with Israel *nor with* any of the sons of Ephraim. ⁸But if you do go, do *it*, be strong for the battle; *yet* God will bring you down before the enemy, for God has power to help and to bring down." ⁹Amaziah said to the man of God, "But what *shall we* do for the hundred talents which I have given to the troops of Israel?" And the man of God answered, "The LORD has much more to give you than this." ¹⁰Then Amaziah dismissed them, the troops which came to him from Ephraim, to go home; so their anger burned against Judah and they returned home in fierce anger.

25:5 This is a census for military purposes of war (i.e., 2 Chr. 14:8; 17:14-18; 26:11-13) against Edom.

Josephus, *Antiq* 9.1.1., says the battle was against three nations, "Amalekites, Edomites, and Gebalites." The inclusion of "Amalekites" might be a way to explain/excuse the slaughter of 2 Chr. 25:12. All Amalekites were to be killed.

Special Topic: Edom and Israel

"300,000" As always in Kings and Chronicles, one wonders about the meaning of "thousand."

Special Topic: Thousand (*eleph*)

"spear and shield" It was the king's responsibility to produce, store, and distribute arms in this period. Often lists of weaponry are mentioned.

1. 2 Chr. 25:5; 11:12
 - a. shields (i.e., large shield, BDB 857 III, KB 1037)
 - b. spears or lance (BDB 942)
2. 2 Chr. 14:8
 - a. large shields (BDB 857 III)
 - b. spears or lances (BDB 942)
 - c. shields (BDB 171)
 - d. bows (BDB 905)
3. 2 Chr. 23:5
 - a. spears (BDB 333)
 - b. large shields (BDB 171)
 - c. bows (BDB 1020, KB 1522)
4. 2 Chr. 26:14
 - a. shields (BDB 171, KB 545)
 - b. spears (BDB 942)
 - c. helmets (BDB 464)
 - d. body armor (BDB 1056)
 - e. bows (BDB 905)
 - f. sling stones (BDB 6 CONSTRUCT BDB 887)
5. Neh. 4:13
 - a. swords (BDB 352)
 - b. spears (BDB 942)
 - c. bows (BDB 905)

See Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, "Armaments," pp. 241-246.

25:6 Amaziah hired mercenaries from Ephraim (2 Chr. 25:10).

“talents of silver” Apparently (i.e., from their actions in 2 Chr. 25:13) these Ephraimitic mercenaries were promised part of the spoils of the defeated army.

Special Topic: ANE Weights and Volumes

25:7 Amaziah is confronted with a prophetic message which he obeyed (2 Chr. 25:7-10). This obedience brings victory. The king’s idolatry will bring defeat. Both are from YHWH, not human forces!

The post-exilic Chronicler (probably Ezra) is nervous of all foreign alliances. He chooses aspects of history to emphasize his theological concern.

25:8 There is an introductory series of three *Qal* IMPERATIVES.

1. if you go – BDB 97, KB 112
2. act – BDB 793, KB 889
3. be strong – BDB 304, KB 302

This is a warning (v. 8, “do not let the army of Israel go with you,” IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense, same as #1). It is also a promise of YHWH’s presence, power, and assured victory (cf. 2 Chr. 14:11; 20:6) if they are obedient.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 25:11-13

¹¹Now Amaziah strengthened himself and led his people forth, and went to the Valley of Salt and struck down 10,000 of the sons of Seir. ¹²The sons of Judah also captured 10,000 alive and brought them to the top of the cliff and threw them down from the top of the cliff, so that they were all dashed to pieces. ¹³But the troops whom Amaziah sent back from going with him to battle, raided the cities of Judah, from Samaria to Beth-horon, and struck down 3,000 of them and plundered much spoil.

25:11-13 These are shocking verses of death and brutality. Ancient warfare was honorable (esp. against Edom, cf. 1 Kgs. 11:15).

25:11 “the Valley of Salt” This same location is mentioned in 2 Sam. 8:13; 1 Chr. 18:12. Its location is uncertain.

1. east of Beersheba (wadi el-Ceba)
2. south of the Dead Sea (wadi el-Milch)

25:13 “the troops” This refers to the mercenaries from Ephraim (2 Chr. 25:6). The phrase “the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon” is unusual. Beth-horon is about fifteen miles NW of Jerusalem but “Samaria” is the capital of Israel, much farther north; both are in Israel, not Judah.

This does explain v. 10 but the geography is uncertain. There is no “Samaria” near the border of Judah and Ephraim. Perhaps this verse means they left from Samaria and traveled to Beth-horon, where they destroyed and plundered villages while Amaziah was battling Edom.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 25:14-16

¹⁴Now after Amaziah came from slaughtering the Edomites, he brought the gods of the sons of Seir, set them up as his gods, bowed down before them and burned incense to them. ¹⁵Then the anger of the LORD burned against Amaziah, and He sent him a prophet who said to him, “Why have you sought the gods of the people who have not delivered their own people from your hand?” ¹⁶As he was talking with him, the king said to him, “Have we appointed you a royal counselor? Stop! Why should you be struck down?” Then the prophet stopped and said, “I know that God has planned to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my counsel.”

25:14 This is so shocking! How could a king who just responded positively to a prophet be led so quickly into idolatry with the obviously impotent gods of Edom (cf. 15b)?

Notice what Amaziah did.

1. collected the idols of Edom
2. brought them to Jerusalem
3. bowed down to them
4. burned incense to them

1 Chronicles 25:15 is a powerfully logical statement! Why, Why, Why?

25:15 After the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17 (i.e., 1 Kgs. 8:25), several ways of forgiveness or restoration of fellowship with YHWH are mentioned.

1. the possibility of repentance (i.e., 1 Kgs. 8:29-53)
2. there is a prophetic warning (in this chapter alone there are two unnamed prophets and even a revelation from an idolatrous king)

25:16 The king's rebellion is clearly revealed in this verse. His mind and heart were set on a course of idolatry! But there will be consequences, as there always are!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 25:17-19

¹⁷Then Amaziah king of Judah took counsel and sent to Joash the son of Jehoahaz the son of Jehu, the king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us face each other." ¹⁸Joash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "The thorn bush which was in Lebanon sent to the cedar which was in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son in marriage.' But there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon and trampled the thorn bush. ¹⁹You said, 'Behold, you have defeated Edom.' And your heart has become proud in boasting. Now stay at home; for why should you provoke trouble so that you, even you, would fall and Judah with you?"

25:17 "took counsel" What counsel?

1. he had rejected prophetic counsel, v. 16
2. was this from
 - a. his political leaders
 - b. his military leaders
 - c. his new gods and their priests

The counsel probably encouraged Amaziah to attack Israel because of what the Ephraimitic mercenaries did in v. 13.

25:18-19 Agricultural analogies or fables were common in the ANE (i.e., Samson). Judah thought she was a tree but she was a bush!

What is surprising is Israel's humility and patience. YHWH was speaking through Israel's pagan king, warning the Davidic seed. YHWH tries to sway human volition but He allows its choices and consequences. Life is not a pre-written script. Foreknowledge must not be confused with determinism.

Apparently there was friendship between Judah and Israel.

1. ability to hire mercenaries, 2 Chr. 25:6
2. marriage proposal (i.e., even if rejected), 2 Chr. 25:18
3. the king of Israel's attempt not to go to war, 2 Chr. 25:17-19

25:18 "the wild beast" This may be the 100,000 soldiers who were furious (cf. 2 Chr. 25:10).

25:19 King Amaziah was overconfident because of his defeat of a smaller Edomite army (i.e., 20,000 casualties), but Israel was a much larger army.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 25:20-24

²⁰But Amaziah would not listen, for it was from God, that He might deliver them into the hand of Joash because they had sought the gods of Edom. ²¹So Joash king of Israel went up, and he and Amaziah king of Judah faced each other at Beth-shemesh, which belonged to Judah. ²²Judah was defeated by Israel, and they fled each to his tent. ²³Then Joash king of Israel captured Amaziah

king of Judah, the son of Joash the son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh, and brought him to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner Gate, 400 cubits. ²⁴He took all the gold and silver and all the utensils which were found in the house of God with Obed-edom, and the treasures of the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

25:20 This is another theological comment by the Chronicler. YHWH is behind all history. Amaziah's idolatry will have consequences, not only for him but for Judah.

25:21 "Beth-shemesh" This (BDB 112) meant "house of the sun," which denoted astral worship in Judah at some point.

25:23 Jerusalem's wall was the major means of her protection. Here, its destruction showed that YHWH's protection had departed!

There are several items that show YHWH's judgment.

1. a large portion (i.e., 600 feet) of the city's wall that faced north was destroyed
2. the treasure and utensils of the temple were taken to Damascus
3. members of the special temple Levites were taken (hostages, literally, "sons of pledges," cf. 2 Kgs. 14:14)
4. the treasures of the king's palace were taken
5. some time later his own servants conspired against him and slew him (same thing happened to Amaziah's father in 2 Chr. 24:25-26)

"cubits" See Special Topic: Cubit.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 25:25-28

²⁵And Amaziah, the son of Joash king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Joash, son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. ²⁶Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, from first to last, behold, are they not written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel? ²⁷From the time that Amaziah turned away from following the LORD they conspired against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there. ²⁸Then they brought him on horses and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

25:26 "the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel" This book did not survive. In other places this book is mentioned as

1. the Book of the Kings of Judah
2. the Book of the Kings of Israel

but here, they are combined into one book. These records must be compilations of royal scribes through the history of Israel and Judah. Therefore, they were finally combined sometime during the post-exilic period.

25:27 This is the second Judean king who was assassinated.

25:28 This implies that he was buried in the royal tombs. His reign, like so many of his predecessors' reigns, was a mixture of faith and faithlessness!

"the city of Judah" Usually it says, "the city of David" (see LXX, Peshitta, Vulgate, cf. 2 Kgs. 14:20), which, in this context, is Jerusalem, not Bethlehem.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority

in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why is 2 Chr. 25:1 a chronological problem?
2. What does “yet not with a whole heart” mean? (2 Chr. 25:2)
3. Did Amaziah know Deuteronomy?
4. What are the two problems with an Ephramitic mercenary force?
5. Why were the mercenaries mad? What did they do? What did this cause?
6. Why is 2 Chr. 25:14 so shocking?
7. What two possible reasons are there for war with Israel?
8. Explain how the extra 15 year life of Amaziah is problematic. Was Uzziah co-regent during this time?

2 CHRONICLES 26

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Uzziah Succeeds Amaziah in Judah	Uzziah Reigns in Judah	Uzziah's Good Beginning and Consequent Prosperity	King Uzziah of Judah	Accession of Uzziah (MT versing)
26:1-5	26:1-5	26:1-5	26:1-2	26:1-5
Uzziah Succeeds in War			26:3-5	His Military Strength
26:6-15	26:6-10	26:6-15	26:6-8	26:6-8
			26:9-10	26:9-10
	26:11-15		26:11-15	26:11-15
Pride Is Uzziah's Undoing	The Penalty for Uzziah's Pride	Uzziah's Subsequent Sin and Consequent Punishment	Uzziah Is Punished for His Pride	He Is Struck with a Virulent Skin Disease for His Pride
26:16-21	26:16-21	26:16-21	26:16-18	26:16-20
			26:19-20	
			26:21	26:21
26:22-23	26:22-23	26:22-23	26:22-23	26:22-23

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 26:1-5

¹And all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king in the place of his father Amaziah. ²He built Eloth and restored it to Judah after the king slept with his fathers. ³Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Jechiliah of Jerusalem. ⁴He did right in the sight of the LORD according to all that his father Amaziah had done. ⁵He continued to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding through the vision of God; and as long as he sought the LORD, God prospered him.

26:1 "Uzziah" In 2 Kgs. 15:1 he is called Azariah (also note 1 Chr. 3:12). It is possible that the Chronicler uses Uzziah because of the possible confusion with the name of the High Priest, Azariah (cf. 2 Chr. 26:17,20; so named only in Chronicles).

Almost everything we know about Uzziah (BDB 739) is from Chronicles.

26:2 "Eloth" This is an alternate name for Elath, a city at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqaba, close to Ezion-geber. Solomon had started a commercial fleet in this area (1 Kgs. 9:26-28) and Jehoshaphat tried to restart it, but failed (2 Chr. 20:35-37). Apparently Uzziah was also attempting to restart these lucrative trade routes. Edom had earlier captured this area but Amaziah defeated Edom and his son recaptured the area.

"after the king slept with his fathers" This would refer to the king of Edom.

The term "slept" is a Hebraic idiom for burial, not a comment on the state of the dead.

26:3 The phrase "who *was* sixteen years old" is repeated and looks like a hint at the combination of two historical documents.

2 Chronicles 26:2 is typical introductory pattern.

1. age at ascension
2. length of reign

3. mother's name

“he reigned fifty-two years” However, the number includes

1. co-reign with his father Amaziah
2. co-reign with his son, Jotham

26:4 “He did right in the sight of the LORD” See full note at 2 Chr. 25:2.

Uzziah's life, like his father Amaziah, can be seen as an early faithful period and a later faithless period. This is characteristic of how the Chronicler deals with the Judean kings of this period.

26:5 “He continued to seek God” See full note at 2 Chronicles 7:14.

“in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding through the vision of God” YHWH spoke to Uzziah, both by prophet and by priest (cf. 2 Chr. 26:17). Initially he listened to Zechariah but later rejected the message of Azariah, the High Priest (v. 19).

“as long as he sought the LORD, God prospered him” This is a central theme of Chronicles. It expresses the performance-based Mosaic covenant (i.e., the two ways, cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; 30:15,19; Psalm 1). Notice the “blessings” are conditional through time (cf. 2 Chr. 15:2).

Notice how the two most common names for Deity are paralleled.

1. YHWH – see Special Topic: Names for Deity, D
2. *Elohim* – see Special Topic: Names for Deity, C

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 26:6-15

⁶Now he went out and warred against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities in *the area of* Ashdod and among the Philistines. ⁷God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians who lived in Gur-baal, and the Meunites. ⁸The Ammonites also gave tribute to Uzziah, and his fame extended to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong. ⁹Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate and at the Valley Gate and at the corner buttress and fortified them. ¹⁰He built towers in the wilderness and hewed many cisterns, for he had much livestock, both in the lowland and in the plain. *He also had* plowmen and vinedressers in the hill country and the fertile fields, for he loved the soil. ¹¹Moreover, Uzziah had an army ready for battle, which entered combat by divisions according to the number of their muster, prepared by Jeiel the scribe and Maaseiah the official, under the direction of Hananiah, one of the king's officers. ¹²The total number of the heads of the *households*, of valiant warriors, was 2,600. ¹³Under their direction was an elite army of 307,500, who could wage war with great power, to help the king against the enemy. ¹⁴Moreover, Uzziah prepared for all the army shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows and sling stones. ¹⁵In Jerusalem he made engines *of war* invented by skillful men to be on the towers and on the corners for the purpose of shooting arrows and great stones. Hence his fame spread afar, for he was marvelously helped until he *was* strong.

26:6 The list of Uzziah's successes demonstrates YHWH's blessings.

1. defeated the Philistines, 2 Chr. 26:6
2. built Judean cities in the Philistine area, 2 Chr. 26:6
3. defeated other groups in the same area
 - a. the Arabs in Gur-baal, v. 7
 - b. the Meunites, v. 7 (cf. 2 Chr. 20:1)
 - c. the Ammonites, v. 8 (see note at v. 8)
4. fortified the walls of Jerusalem, v. 9 (possibly repairs from 2 Chr. 25:23)
5. had extensive agricultural enterprise
 - a. livestock

- b. crops
- c. vineyards
- 6. developed a large and effective army, vv. 11-13
- 7. armed his army well, v. 14 (see full note at 2 Chr. 25:5)
- 8. designed and manufactured war machines, v. 15
 - a. arrows
 - b. stones (the NASB Study Bible, p. 617, mentions that since catapults were not invented until 300 years later, this may refer to defensive structures that protected those shooting arrows and throwing stones)

26:8

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, TEV,

JPSOA, REB

“Ammonites”

NJB, LXX

“Meunites”

Peshitta

– omit –

The UBS Text Project, p. 476, gives “Meunites” a “C” rating (considerable doubt). Notice how close the names are in Hebrew.

1. Ammonites – מִיְנוֹמְעָה
2. Meunites – מִיְנוֹעֲמָה

Josephus has “Ammonites,” cf. *Antiq.* 9.10.3.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 26:16-21

¹⁶But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense. ¹⁷Then Azariah the priest entered after him and with him eighty priests of the LORD, valiant men. ¹⁸They opposed Uzziah the king and said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful and will have no honor from the LORD God.” ¹⁹But Uzziah, with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense. ²⁰Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and behold, he *was* leprous on his forehead; and they hurried him out of there, and he himself also hastened to get out because the LORD had smitten him. ²¹King Uzziah was a leper to the day of his death; and he lived in a separate house, being a leper, for he was cut off from the house of the LORD. And Jotham his son was over the king’s house judging the people of the land.

26:16 Uzziah’s successes caused his heart to be proud (also note 2 Chr. 25:19; 32:25), which means he did not recognize YHWH’s benefits (i.e., Deut. 8:11-20). He thought his successes were of his doing.

It is possible that he attempted to join the office of priest and king (i.e., Psalm 110; Zechariah 3-4). Melchizedek is an example of a Canaanite priest/king. He later became a type of the Messiah (i.e., Hebrews 7).

“**he acted corruptly**” This unfaithful act is described in 2 Chr. 26:16-23. It involved his attempting to offer incense in YHWH’s temple, which was the job of the priests (v. 18). Saul did this same type of violation (i.e., 1 Sam. 13:9).

“**the altar of incense**” See Special Topic: Altar of Incense.

26:17 “valiant men” This is literally “sons of strength” (BDB CONSTRUCT BDB 298, used of the army in 2 Chr. 26:11). The JPSOA translation calls them “brave.” They were willing to confront an arrogant king with unlimited power. They were to

1. support Azariah the High Priest

2. protect the sacred precincts
3. try to keep Uzziah from sinning

26:18 Azariah the High Priest had a stern message for arrogant Uzziah.

1. “Get out” – BDB 422, KB 425, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
2. “for you have been unfaithful” – BDB 591, KB 612, *Qal* PERFECT

It is used of

- a. Moses – Deut. 32:51
- b. trans-Jordan tribes – 1 Chr. 5:25
- c. Rehoboam – 2 Chr. 12:2
- d. Ahaz of Judah – 2 Chr. 28:22
- e. Hezekiah, in a warning – 2 Chr. 30:7

All involved disobedience to YHWH or His law.

26:19 Uzziah was “enraged” (BDB 277, KB 277), used twice in v. 19 (*Qal* IMPERFECT with *waw* and *Qal* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT). This same anger against YHWH’s spokesman is seen in 2 Chr. 16:10. Proverbs 19:3 expresses the folly of withstanding the Lord.

Uzziah was warned but still intended to follow his own thoughts/plans. But YHWH steps in (cf. 2 Chr. 26:20)! Uzziah became a leper. From this historical account, later Judaism saw leprosy (cf. Leviticus 13-14) as a divinely given disease (cf. Num. 12:10).

Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.10.4., adds an interesting note:

“Accordingly, when a remarkable day was come, and a general festival was to be celebrated, he put on the holy garment, and went into the temple to offer incense to God upon the golden altar, which he was prohibited to do by Azariah the high priest, who had fourscore priests with him, and who told him that it was not lawful for him to offer sacrifice, and that ‘none besides the posterity of Aaron were permitted so to do.’ And when they cried out, that he must go out of the temple, and not transgress against God, he was wroth at them, and threatened to kill them, unless they would hold their peace. In the meantime, a great earthquake shook the ground, and a rent was made in the temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king’s face, insomuch that the leprosy seized upon him immediately; and before the city, at a place called Eroge, half the mountain broke off from the rest on the west, and rolled itself four furlongs, and stood still at the east mountain, till the roads, as well as the king’s gardens, were spoiled by the obstruction. Now, as soon as the priests saw that the king’s face was infected with the leprosy, they told him of the calamity he was under, and commanded that he should go out of the city as a polluted person.”

It is based on

1. both Amos (i.e., 1:1) and Zechariah (i.e., 14:5) mention an earthquake at this time
2. the term “leprosy” (BDB 280) can also refer to the sun shining; this is how Josephus took the

word

“on his forehead” This would be visible to all. No way to hide it.

26:21 Uzziah’s disobedience in the temple caused him to be forever excluded from the temple (i.e., Num. 5:2). Even after death he was excluded from the royal tombs (2 Chr. 26:23).

“lived in a separate house” This term (BDB 345) may be from Ugaritic literature, “house of pollution” (AB, p. 151).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 26:22-23

²²Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first to last, the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, has written. ²³So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the grave which belonged to the kings, for they said, “He is a leper.” And Jotham his son became king in his place.

26:22 “the prophet Isaiah” This is surprising since Uzziah is mentioned only as a way to date something else (cf. Isa. 1:1; 7:1). Isaiah surely does not record Uzziah’s life “first to last.”

Both the Jewish Study Bible and the NASB Study Bible suggest that this refers, not to the canonical book of Isaiah, but another written source available to the Chronicler.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How are the names “Uzziah” and “Azariah” related? Why does the Chronicler use “Uzziah”?
2. Who was Zechariah?
3. List the ways God blessed him.
4. What did Uzziah do to be called “unfaithful”? Why was this such a problem?
5. How is 2 Chr. 26:19 related to Korah (Numbers 16)?

2 CHRONICLES 27

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Jotham Succeeds Uzziah in Judah	Jotham Reigns in Judah	Jotham's Goodness and Consequent Prosperity	King Jotham of Judah	The Reign of Jotham
27:1-9	27:1-9	27:1-9	27:1-2 27:3-9	27:1-2 27:3-4 27:5-6 27:7-9

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 27:1-9

¹Jotham was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jerushah the daughter of Zadok. ²He did right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Uzziah had done; however he did not enter the temple of the LORD. But the people continued acting corruptly. ³He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD, and he built extensively the wall of Ophel. ⁴Moreover, he built cities in the hill country of Judah, and he built fortresses and towers on the wooded hills. ⁵He fought also with the king of the Ammonites and prevailed over them so that the Ammonites gave him during that year one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand kors of wheat and ten thousand of barley. The Ammonites also paid him this amount in the second and in the third year. ⁶So Jotham became mighty because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God. ⁷Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, even all his wars and his acts, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. ⁸He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. ⁹And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Ahaz his son became king in his place.

27:1 "Jotham" 2 Chronicles 27 is paralleled by 2 Kgs. 15:33-38. It is surprising that nothing negative is said about this king. He was faithful from the first to the last. The only negative item (2 Chr. 27:2) is attributed to "the people." Because of this it is surprising he does not receive more attention from the Chronicler.

Also note that he

1. did not have a godly counselor
2. did not receive a prophetic warning
3. did not receive a priestly warning

"the daughter of Zadok" One wonders if his mother was of the tribe of Levi. There are several priests with the name Zadok, which means "righteous" (BDB 843).

27:2 "He did right in the sight of the LORD" See note at 2 Chronicles 24:2.

"he did not enter the temple" The fact this is mentioned shows how shocking Uzziah's actions were to the people of Judah.

"But the people continued acting corruptly" I assume this refers to fertility worship. None of the kings of Judah, so far, were successful at removing the local *Ba'al* worship sites (i.e., 2 Kgs. 14:4; 15:35).

Special Topic: Fertility Worship of the ANE

27:3 “the upper gate” It was an entrance to the temple court on the north (cf. 2 Kgs. 15:35; 2 Chr. 23:20). It is unsure if Jotham built it or refurbished it. Apparently Jotham was very conscious of the sacredness of the temple.

Later in Jehoiakim’s time this gate was renamed “the New Gate.” It was the location of the positioning of a large number of temple guards (i.e., 2 Kgs. 11:6).

“the wall of Ophel” This term (BDB 779 I) refers to a filled area on the east between Mt. Zion and Mt. Moriah (cf. 2 Chr. 27:3; 33:14; Isa. 32:14; Micah 4:8).

27:5 “the Ammonites gave him” This may support the reading “Ammonites” in 2 Chr. 26:8.

“talents. . .kors” See Special Topic: ANE Weights and Volumes

27:6 Here again, the Chronicler makes a theological statement related to “the two ways.” Obedience to the Mosaic covenant brings prosperity and blessing, but disobedience brings judgment (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; 30:15,19; Psalm 1).

“the LORD his God” See note at 2 Chr. 26:16.

27:9 This is the typical summary of Judah’s kings.

1. age at ascension
2. years of reign
3. place of burial

27:7 “the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah” See Introduction to 2 Chronicles, IV. Authorship.

27:9 Apparently Jotham, unlike Uzziah, was buried in the royal tombs in Jerusalem.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How is Jotham different from the other Judean kings?
2. What did the people do to make them corrupt (v. 2)?
3. How is 2 Chr. 27:6 unique?
4. Why does the Chronicler not focus more on Jotham’s faithful life?

2 CHRONICLES 28

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Ahaz Succeeds Jotham in Judah	Ahaz Reigns in Judah	The Enormous Iniquity of Ahaz and the Appropriate Punishment	King Ahaz of Judah	Accession of Ahaz: His Idolatry
28:5-7	28:1-4	28:1-4	28:1-4	28:1-4
Judah Is Invaded	Syria and Israel Defeat Judah		War With Syria and Israel	The Syro-Ephraimite War
28:5-7	28:5-8	28:5-7	28:5-8	28:5-8
28:8-15	Israel Returns the Captives	28:8-15	The Prophet Oded	The Israelites Obey the Prophet Oded
	28:9-15		28:9-11	28:9-11
			28:12-15	28:12-15
Compromise with Assyria	Assyria Refuses to Help Judah		Ahaz Asks Assyria for Help	Ahaz Appeals to Assyria; His Apostasy
28:16-21	28:16-21	28:16-21	28:16-21	28:16
	Apostasy and Death of Ahaz		The Sins of Ahaz	28:17-21
28:22-27	28:22-25	28:22-27	28:22-25	28:22-23
				28:24-25
	28:26-27		28:26-27	28:26-27

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 28:1-4

¹Ahaz *was* twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do right in the sight of the LORD as David his father *had done*. ²But he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; he also made molten images for the Baals. ³Moreover, he burned incense in the valley of Ben-hinnom and burned his sons in fire, according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD had driven out before the sons of Israel. ⁴He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills and under every green tree.

28:1 “Ahaz” Isaiah 7-11 deals with this period of faithlessness but add the Messianic hope! Also see 2 Kings 16.

“he reigned sixteen years” The number of years do not fit well. There are several possibilities.

1. the two different calendars used to count the reigns
2. the co-reigns are not always listed (see Edwin Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 133

Notice the different dates given by three good authors.

1. John Bright (also Thiele) – 735-715 B.C.

1. John Bright (also Thiele) – 735-715 B.C.

2. E. J. Young – 736-728 B.C.

3. R. K. Harrison – 732/731-716/715 B.C.

“he did not do right in the sight of the LORD” Most of the Judean kings in the earlier chapters of 2 Chronicles had an early good period and a later bad period. The last king, Jotham, had a life of consistent faithfulness but Ahaz, his son, had a life of consistent faithlessness.

“as David his father *had done*” David’s life, although a mixture of faith and faithlessness, became the

“relational” standard. Even in his sin, he still had a heart for YHWH. David became the “ideal” king, the eschatological model. YHWH had a special covenant with David (cf. 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17; 2 Chr. 6:16; 7:18; 13:5; 21:7; 23:3).

28:2-4 Ahaz made a radical shift from his father Jotham. He turned Israel back to the idolatry of the house of Ahab, king of Israel.

1. walked in the ways of the kings of Israel
2. made molten images for the *Ba'als*
3. burned incense to *Molech*
4. sacrificed his sons to *Molech*
5. sacrificed and burned incense
 - a. on the high places (manmade)
 - b. on the hills (natural)
 - c. under every green tree (cf. Deut. 12:2; 1 Kgs. 14:23; 2 Kgs. 16:4; 17:10; Isa. 57:5; Jer. 2:20; 3:6,13; Ezek. 6:13; the female Canaanite fertility goddess' name, *Asherah*, means “a grove of trees”)
6. from 2 Kgs. 23:16 it seems Ahaz also worshiped the astral deities (2 Kings 23 lists the reforms of Josiah. Many of the things he destroyed were from Ahaz).

28:3 “the valley of Ben-hinnom” See Special Topic: Where Are the Dead?

“burned his sons in fire” This refers to *Molech* worship (cf. Lev. 18:21; 2 Chr. 33:2).

Special Topic: *Molech*.

SPECIAL TOPIC: MOLECH

The Term (BDB 574, KB 592) is uncertain. There have been several theories.

1. associated with a deity of the underworld
 - a. “*Malik*” from the Ebla Tablets (\pm 2,300 B.C from northern Syria)
 - b. “*Maliku*” or “*Muluk*” from the Mari Tablets (\pm 1800-1750 B.C. from a Sumerian city located on the Euphrates River)
2. associated with a type of sacrifice from one of the Punic terms, “*molc*,” from a North African stele from the 4th to 1st century B.C. It may have involved a substitute lamb being burned in place of a child (Eissfeldt). N. H. Snaith theorizes it means that children were given for cultic prostitution based on
 - a. Lev. 18:19-23 is about sexual sins so verse 18 might be also
 - b. this is the way the Talmud sees it also
3. possibly a confusion with *Milcom* (cf. *Molech* in 1 Kgs. 11:7, but note that *Milcom* is mentioned in 1 Kgs. 11:5,33; however, both gods are referred to in Ps. 106:35-39)
4. the word is a Hebrew word play from the consonants for “King” (*mlk*, BDB 591) combined with the vowels from “shame” (BDB 101 or 102). But even if this is true it does not identify the god or the cult.

The cult of *Molech* is described as a human sacrifice of children, by fire (whether burned alive or offered as a burnt offering after they were killed another way is uncertain). If this is true, it was

1. a type of fertility cult
2. a cult that worshiped the god of the underworld

This god was worshiped in Jerusalem in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, which became known as “Topheth” (cf. Isa. 30:33; 57:5; Jer. 7:31; 32:35). The worship is characterized by causing ones sons and daughters to pass through the fire (cf. Deut. 12:31; 18:10; 2 Kgs. 16:3; 17:17,31; 21:6; Ps. 106:37; Jer. 7:31; 19:5; Ezek. 16:20-21). The word itself appears in Lev. 18:21; 20:2,3,4,5; 1 Kgs. 11:7; 2 Kgs. 23:10; Jer. 32:35; possibly Amos 5:26; Acts 7:43. The cult is most associated by Judean Kings, Ahab and Manasseh, though it appears earlier in Jewish contacts with surrounding pagan fertility worship.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 28:5-7

⁵Wherefore, the LORD his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Aram; and they

defeated him and carried away from him a great number of captives and brought *them* to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who inflicted him with heavy casualties. ⁶For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah 120,000 in one day, all valiant men, because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers. ⁷And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son and Azrikam the ruler of the house and Elkanah the second to the king.

28:5-7 YHWH reacts to Ahaz's idolatry and sends enemies (i.e., 2 Chr. 28:19).

1. Syria, 2 Chr. 28:5 (this is called the Syro-Ephraimitic War, see NIDOTTE, vol. 4, pp. 1244-1245)
2. Israel, 2 Chr. 28:5 (#1,2 besieged Jerusalem but it did not fall, cf. 2 Kgs. 16:5; Isa. 7:1)
3. Edomites, 2 Chr. 28:17
4. Philistines, 2 Chr. 28:18
5. Assyria, 2 Chr. 28:29-21

Ahaz reacts by sacrificing to the gods of these nations (2 Chr. 28:23,25)!

28:5 Notice how "Israel" is used in two senses.

1. the northern tribes, 2 Chr. 28:5,13,26
2. Judah, the true Israel of God, 2 Chr. 28:29,23,27

28:6 "because they had forsaken the LORD God of their fathers" Again, the Chronicler states the theological reason behind historical events.

28:7 Ahaz loses people close to him.

1. his son (possibly a title or another son of Jotham because Ahaz was not old enough to have a son of fighting age, i.e., 20 years old), Maaseiah
2. the ruler of his house, Azrikam
3. his second in command, Elkanah

Josephus has a different account, cf. *Antiq.* 9.12.1.

Number 2 above (BDB 108) is used in several senses in Chronicles (NIDOTTE, vol. 3, p. 20).

1. tribal leader – 1 Chr. 12:27; 2 Chr. 19:11
2. military leader – 1 Chr. 13:1; 27:4
3. palace official – 2 Chr. 28:7
4. temple officials – 1 Chr. 9:20; 26:24; 2 Chr. 31:12
5. High Priest – 1 Chr. 9:11 (possibly Dan. 11:22, if it refers to Onias III; the use in Dan. 9:25 could be priestly or royal)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 28:8-15

⁸The sons of Israel carried away captive of their brethren 200,000 women, sons and daughters; and they took also a great deal of spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria. ⁹But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name *was* Oded; and he went out to meet the army which came to Samaria and said to them, "Behold, because the LORD, the God of your fathers, was angry with Judah, He has delivered them into your hand, and you have slain them in a rage *which* has even reached heaven. ¹⁰Now you are proposing to subjugate for yourselves the people of Judah and Jerusalem for male and female slaves. Surely, *do* you not *have* transgressions of your own against the LORD your God? ¹¹Now therefore, listen to me and return the captives whom you captured from your brothers, for the burning anger of the LORD is against you." ¹²Then some of the heads of the sons of Ephraim—Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai—arose against those who were coming from the battle, ¹³and said to them, "You must not bring the captives in here, for you are proposing *to bring* upon us guilt against the LORD adding to our sins and our guilt; for our guilt is great so that *His* burning anger is against Israel." ¹⁴So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the officers and all the assembly. ¹⁵Then the men who were designated by name arose, took the

captives, and they clothed all their naked ones from the spoil; and they gave them clothes and sandals, fed them and gave them drink, anointed them *with oil*, led all their feeble ones on donkeys, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brothers; then they returned to Samaria.

28:8-15 Again, God uses a prophet. This time a northern prophet to support Judah and her future.

The paragraph shows that there was still true faith in YHWH in the north.

1. they listened to the prophet and obeyed
2. they cared for the captives
 - a. clothed them
 - b. gave them shoes
 - c. gave them food
 - d. gave them drink
 - e. anointed their wounds (see Special Topic: Anointing in the Bible)
 - f. helped the weak to ride home on donkeys

28:12 This list of godly people surely supports the historicity of the account. It is true that the writers of Kings and Chronicles used both the same and yet sometimes different sources. They are, therefore, sometimes hard to reconcile. This seems to be an Ephraimic source. See Special Topics:

1. Special Topic: OT Historical Narrative
2. Special Topic: OT Historiography Compared with Near Eastern Cultures

“the sons of Ephraim” The northern tribes went by three names.

1. Israel (their collective name)
2. Samaria (their capital)
3. Ephraim (their largest tribe)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 28:16-21

¹⁶At that time King Ahaz sent to the kings of Assyria for help. ¹⁷For again the Edomites had come and attacked Judah and carried away captives. ¹⁸The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland and of the Negev of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, and Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages, and they settled there. ¹⁹For the LORD humbled Judah because of Ahaz king of Israel, for he had brought about a lack of restraint in Judah and was very unfaithful to the LORD. ²⁰So Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him. ²¹Although Ahaz took a portion out of the house of the LORD and out of the palace of the king and of the princes, and gave *it* to the king of Assyria, it did not help him.

28:16-21 This paragraph is also discussed in Isaiah 7-11. King Ahaz was under divinely sent attacks from all sides (see note at 2 Chr. 28:5). Instead of repentance and faith, he chose political alliance with Assyria (i.e., Tilgath-pilneser III, cf. 2 Kgs. 15:29; 16:5-9, where he is called “Tiglath-pileser”; he is also known as “Pul,” cf. 2 Kgs. 15:19; 1 Chr. 5:26).

Special Topic: Kings of Assyria

28:16 “the kings of Assyria” Note the PLURAL. The LXX, Peshitta, and Vulgate have the SINGULAR, referring to Tilgath-pilneser III of 2 Chr. 28:20). The PLURAL may reflect

1. the PLURAL OF MAJESTY, the great king
2. all the kings as a unit of royal Assyrian power

28:19 This is another reminder (cf. 2 Chr. 28:6) that historical events are a direct result of faith or faithlessness in YHWH (cf. 2 Chr. 28:23).

Notice the threefold emphasis from the MT.

1. YHWH had brought Judah low because (BDB 488, KB 484, *Hiphil* PERFECT)

1. Ahaz had dealt wantonly (BDB 828, KB 970, *Hiphil* PERFECT)
2. Ahaz had been very faithless (i.e., INFINITIVE ABSOLUTE, BDB 591, KB 612)

28:20-21 Note the irony! This is not mentioned in the parallel of 2 Kings 16:9.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 28:22-27

²²Now in the time of his distress this same King Ahaz became yet more unfaithful to the LORD. ²³For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, and said, “Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me.” But they became the downfall of him and all Israel. ²⁴Moreover, when Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, he cut the utensils of the house of God in pieces; and he closed the doors of the house of the LORD and made altars for himself in every corner of Jerusalem. ²⁵In every city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and provoked the LORD, the God of his fathers, to anger. ²⁶Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷So Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem, for they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel; and Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.

28:22-27 The idolatry of Ahaz continues as he sacrifices to the gods of Damascus (2 Chr. 28:23). This assumes a knowledge of 2 Kgs. 16:10-16. He took the treasure of the temple and closed its doors to priests, Levites, and worshipers. He built altars to foreign gods on every street corner in Jerusalem (2 Chr. 28:24).

28:23 In the ANE a military defeat showed which national god was more powerful. Ahaz was a religious pragmatist. He was willing to try any god (cf. 2 Chr. 28:3,4,25) but YHWH! Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.12.3., says he also sacrificed to the gods of Assyria because it was victorious over Syria.

“**he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus**” From 2 Kgs. 16:10-16, we learn that Ahaz replaced the bronze sacrificial altar of Solomon with a copy of one he had seen in Damascus. Probably this was the altar to Rimmon, whose temple is mentioned in 2 Kgs. 5:18. This deity would be analogous to *Ba'al* the storm god of the Canaanite pantheon. This god was also called *Hadad*.

28:26 “**written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel**” Thiele has an interesting note, p. 204.

“When the chronicler did his work toward the end of the fifth century, the combined volume of the Kings of Israel and Judah was in existence. This is known from the fact that the sources there cited are no longer the separate journals of days of the kings of Israel or those of Judah as cited in Kings, but a combined ‘book of kings of Judah and Israel’ (2 Chron. 16:11; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 35:27; 36:8).”

28:17 His evil is seen by the fact that he was not buried in the royal tombs.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. List the ways Ahaz was disobedient to the laws of Moses.
2. List the foreign gods that Ahaz worshiped.

3. List the enemies YHWH sent against Judah. Why did He do this?
4. How does 2 Chr. 28:8-15 depict faith in Israel?
5. What is the Syro-Ephraimitic War? How was it affected by Assyria?

2 CHRONICLES 29

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
Hezekiah's Good Reign	Hezekiah Reigns in Judah	Hezekiah Begins His Good Reign by Cleansing the Temple	King Hezekiah of Judah	Accession of Hezekiah
29:1-2	29:1-2	29:1-2	29:1-2	29:1-2
	Hezekiah Cleanses the Temple		The Purification of the Temple	The Purification of the Temple
29:3-4	29:3-11	29:3-11	29:3-9	29:3-4a
Reforms Begin				29:4b-11
29:5-11			29:10-11	
29:12-19	29:12-19	29:12-19	29:12-14	29:12-15
			29:15-16	
			29:17	
			The Temple is Rededicated	The Sacrifice of Expiation
Hezekiah Restores Temple Worship	Hezekiah Restores Temple Worship		29:18-19	29:18-19
29:20-24	29:20-24	29:20-24	29:20-24	29:20-24
29:25-28	29:25-30	29:25-30	29:25-30	29:25-28
				The Cult Begins Again
29:29-30				29:29-30
29:31-36	29:31-36	29:31-36	29:31-35a	29:31-35a
			29:35b-36	29:35b-36

READING CYCLE THREE (from "[A Guide to Good Bible Reading](#)")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 29:1-2

¹Hezekiah became king *when he was twenty-five years old; and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah.* ²He did right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

29:1 "Hezekiah" The Chronicler presents him as one of the godly kings of Judah (i.e., chapters 29-32). In this chapter, after his coronation year he immediately (i.e., first year, first month, cf. 2 Chr. 29:17) started the restoration of temple worship. The sacred calendar begins with Nisan. The Passover of chapter 30 was on the 14th.

2 Chronicles 29:1 is a typical introduction but this was not a typical king. He was, in the Chronicler's opinion, the most spiritual king since David (cf. 2 Kgs. 18:5).

It is surprising that some Hebrew names (i.e., like Joshua) are spelled in different ways.

1. in Kings it is spelled
 - a. והיקוזח (i.e., 2 Kgs. 16:20; 18:9; 19:1)
 - b. היקוזח (i.e., 2 Kgs. 18:1)
2. in Chronicles – והיקוזחי

The Jewish Study Bible, p. 1808, suggests that the Kings form of the name is older. The name for Israel's covenant Deity, YHWH, is added to names in two ways.

1. a “y” at the beginning
2. “iah” at the end

Form #2 has both.

The root קָיָה (BDB 304) means “strong,” therefore, the Jewish Study Bible differentiates the meaning as

- #1 “YHWH is my strength”
- #2 “YHWH is strong”

29:2 Hezekiah followed in the footsteps of his ancestor David. See full note at 2 Chr. 24:2.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 29:3-4

³In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. ⁴He brought in the priests and the Levites and gathered them into the square on the east.

29:3 The temple had been desecrated and closed by Ahaz (cf. 2 Chr. 28:24). It is surprising how the kings of Judah vacillated between

1. godly king – Jotham, Hezekiah, Josiah
2. evil king – Ahaz, Manessah, Amon

29:4 These priests and Levites would have been out of work. They had to find other jobs to support their families.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 29:5-11

⁵Then he said to them, “Listen to me, O Levites. Consecrate yourselves now, and consecrate the house of the LORD, the God of your fathers, and carry the uncleanness out from the holy place. ⁶For our fathers have been unfaithful and have done evil in the sight of the LORD our God, and have forsaken Him and turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD, and have turned *their* backs. ⁷They have also shut the doors of the porch and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. ⁸Therefore the wrath of the LORD was against Judah and Jerusalem, and He has made them an object of terror, of horror, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes. ⁹For behold, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this. ¹⁰Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His burning anger may turn away from us. ¹¹My sons, do not be negligent now, for the LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, to minister to Him, and to be His ministers and burn incense.”

29:5 Hezekiah issues several orders.

1. listen to me – BDB 1033, KB 1570, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
2. consecrate yourselves – BDB 872, KB 1073, *Hithpael* IMPERATIVE
3. consecrate the house of the LORD – BDB 872, KB 1073, *Piel* IMPERATIVE
4. carry uncleanness out from the holy place – BDB 422, KB 425, *Hiphil* IMPERATIVE

“Consecrate” The writings of Moses give some procedures for this, mostly from the original ordination of Aaron and his sons.

1. Exod. 19:10,14 – washed their clothes
2. Exod. 28:41; 29:7; 30:30; Lev. 8:12 – anoint them with oil
3. Exod. 29:1-3,10-18; Lev. 8:20 – sacrifice animals
4. Exod. 29:5-6; 40:13 – put on holy garments
5. Exod. 29:19 – lay hands on sacrifice
6. Exod. 29:20-21 – place blood in special places on the High Priest’s body and altar
7. Exod. 29:24-28 – special wave offering ceremony

The OT records the call to consecration of people and priests often but does not give the specific elements that are required. God’s people must be holy because YHWH is holy. This holiness had several

components.

1. ceremonial purification
2. obedience to Mosaic Law
3. willingness to seek YHWH

29:6-7 These verses spell out the sins of the fathers (esp. Ahaz).

1. they have been unfaithful – BDB 591, KB 612, *QAL* PERFECT, cf. 2 Chr. 26:16,18; 28:19,22; 36:14
2. they have done evil in the sight of the LORD our God – 2 Chr. 28:2-3,22-25
3. they have forsaken Him – BDB 736 I, KB 806, *Qal* IMPERFECT with *waw*; this is the opposite of “seek.” cf. Deut. 28:20; 2 Chr. 15:2; 24:18,20; 28:6; Jdgs. 10:10; Jer. 1:16
4. they turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the Lord (i.e., abandoned temple worship (cf. 2 Chr. 28:22-25)
5. they turned their backs to YHWH – this is an idiom, “stiff-necked,” which denotes someone who is obstinate and unchanging, cf. Exod. 32:8-9; 33:3,5; 34:9; Deut. 9:6; 31:27; 2 Kgs. 17:14; 2 Chr. 30:8; Neh. 9:16,17; Jer. 7:26; 17:23; 19:15; this rebellious stubbornness was a characteristic of YHWH’s people from the very beginning
6. they shut the doors of the porch (Ahaz in 2 Chr. 28:24)
7. they put out the lamps (see Special Topic: Lampstand at 2 Chr. 4:7)
8. they had not burned incense (see Special Topic: Altar of Incense at 2 Chr. 4:19)
9. they had not offered burnt offerings (cf. Leviticus 1)

29:7 “in the holy place” This designation could refer to

1. the whole temple area
2. the shrine/tent

Usually the outer part of the inner tent is called “the holy place”; both priests and Levites could minister there. However, the inner part was the “holy of holies,” where only the High Priest could go on the Day of Atonement. In this context, Solomon’s temple was defiled and had to be cleaned, so this holy designation was altered until it was reconsecrated.

29:8 This is a theological comment, so common in Chronicles, that relates historical events to disobedience to the covenant (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28).

1. YHWH made them an object of terror (lit. “trembling,” BDB 266, cf. Deut. 28:25; Jer. 15:4; 24:9; 29:18; 34:17; Ezek. 23:46)
 2. YHWH made them an object of horror (lit. “astonishment” or “desolation,” BDB 1031 I, cf. Deut. 28:37; 2 Kgs. 22:19; 2 Chr. 30:7; Jer. 5:30; 25:9,11; 29:18; 42:18; 48:12,22; 49:12,17; 50:23; 51:37,41)
 3. YHWH made them an object of hissing (BDB 1056, i.e., a sound gesture to denote an object of derision or disgust, cf. 1 Kgs. 9:8; Jer. 18:16; 19:8; 25:9,18; 29:18; 51:37; Lam. 2:15,16; Mic. 6:16)
- YHWH’s covenant people were meant to be a light to the world, a source of revelation of YHWH’s character but they had turned into a witness of His justice/judgment, not His mercy.

29:9 The term “captivity” (BDB 985) refers to the exile of Judeans in chapter 28.

1. to Syria – 2 Chr. 28:5
2. to Israel – 2 Chr. 28:8,11,13,14,15
3. to Edom – 2 Chr. 28:17

It certainly foreshadows the exile of Israel by Assyria (722 B.C.) and Judah by Babylon (586 B.C.). Exile was one of the consequences of disobedience in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. See 2 Chr. 28:5-8,17.

29:10-11 Hezekiah’s message to the priests and Levites continues (2 Chr. 29:4).

1. It is in my heart to make (i.e., renew) a covenant with YHWH.
2. So that His burning anger may turn away from us (BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* JUSSIVE; this root is also used of repentance).

3. “My sons,” in context this must refer to the assembled members of the tribe of Levi.
 - a. do not be negligent – BDB 1017, KB 1502, *Niphal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
 - b. for YHWH has chosen you to stand before Him (i.e., Num. 3:6-9; 8:14-19)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 29:12-19

¹²Then the Levites arose: Mahath, the son of Amasai and Joel the son of Azariah, from the sons of the Kohathites; and from the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi and Azariah the son of Jehallelel; and from the Gershonites, Joah the son of Zimmah and Eden the son of Joah; ¹³and from the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; and from the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; ¹⁴and from the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and from the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel. ¹⁵They assembled their brothers, consecrated themselves, and went in to cleanse the house of the LORD, according to the commandment of the king by the words of the LORD. ¹⁶So the priests went in to the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse *it*, and every unclean thing which they found in the temple of the LORD they brought out to the court of the house of the LORD. Then the Levites received *it* to carry out to the Kidron valley. ¹⁷Now they began the consecration on the first *day* of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they entered the porch of the LORD. Then they consecrated the house of the LORD in eight days, and finished on the sixteenth day of the first month. ¹⁸Then they went in to King Hezekiah and said, “We have cleansed the whole house of the LORD, the altar of burnt offering with all of its utensils, and the table of showbread with all of its utensils. ¹⁹Moreover, all the utensils which King Ahaz had discarded during his reign in his unfaithfulness, we have prepared and consecrated; and behold, they are before the altar of the LORD.”

29:15 “consecrated themselves” See note at 2 Chr. 29:5.

“to cleanse the house of the LORD” Ahaz had defiled and polluted it (cf. 2 Chr. 28:22-25).

29:16 “the inner part of the house of the LORD” This implies the “holy of holies” but could refer to the whole shrine tent. See Special Topic: The Tabernacle (chart) at 2 Chr. 3:8.

“to carry out to the Kidron valley” The city of Jerusalem had two main valleys.

1. the Kidron, east of the temple
2. the Hinnom, south of the city (cf. 2 Chr. 28:3)

Asa destroyed his mother’s *Asherah*. Hezekiah will also destroy the altars of Ahaz (2 Chr. 28:24) there (cf. 2 Chr. 30:14). The Kidron was where the blood from the temple drained.

The Valley of Hinnom was the place of *Molech* worship (cf. 2 Chr. 28:3).

29:17 The Jewish Study Bible, p. 1809, suggests that the timing of v. 17 is purposely related to

1. Exod. 40:17 – day the tabernacle was erected
2. Lev. 8:33-9:24 – the ordination of Aaron and his sons and their first sacrifices

29:18-19 The priests

1. cleansed the altar of burnt offerings, v. 18; see Special Topic: Altar of Sacrifice at 2 Chr. 1:5
2. reinstated Levitical music, vv. 25-28
3. accepted offerings the people brought, vv. 29-36

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 29:20-24

²⁰Then King Hezekiah arose early and assembled the princes of the city and went up to the house of the LORD. ²¹They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs and seven male goats for a sin offering for the kingdom, the sanctuary, and Judah. And he ordered the priests, the sons of Aaron, to offer *them* on the altar of the LORD. ²²So they slaughtered the bulls, and the priests took the blood and sprinkled it on the altar. They also slaughtered the rams and sprinkled the blood on the altar; they slaughtered the lambs also and sprinkled the blood on the altar. ²³Then they

brought the male goats of the sin offering before the king and the assembly, and they laid their hands on them. ²⁴The priests slaughtered them and purged the altar with their blood to atone for all Israel, for the king ordered the burnt offering and the sin offering for all Israel.

29:20 “Hezekiah arose early” This is a good example of the interpretive issue of word meaning.

1. does this refer to early in the day while it was still cool (literal use)?
2. does it express Hezekiah’s sense of urgency, like v. 3 (imagery use)?

29:21 There is a series of sacrifices.

1. seven bulls
2. seven rams
3. seven lambs
4. seven male goats for a sin offering (cf. v. 23)

The REB adds the words from v. 24, “the burnt offering,” after #3 because only the male goats were used for a “sin offering” (cf. Leviticus 4). However, the same construction is clarified in Ezra 8:35.

29:23 “laid their hands on them” This was done in the ritual to remove sin/guilt from the nation.

1. by the leadership – Lev. 4:13-15
2. by the High Priest – Lev. 16:21
3. in the ritual of Num. 8:5-13
 - a. the people laid their hands on the Levites, v. 10
 - b. the cleansed Levites laid their hands on the head of the bulls, v. 12

See Special Topic: Laying On of Hands in the Bible.

SPECIAL TOPIC: LAYING ON OF HANDS IN THE BIBLE

This gesture of personal involvement is used in several different ways in the Bible.

1. oath taking (i.e., hand under thigh, cf. Gen. 24:2,9; 47:29)
2. passing on the family leadership (cf. Gen. 48:14,17,18)
3. identifying with the death of a sacrificial animal as a substitute
 - a. priests (cf. Exod. 29:10,15,19; Lev. 16:21; Num. 8:12)
 - b. laypersons (cf. Lev. 1:4; 3:2,8; 4:4,15,24; 2 Chr. 29:23)
4. setting persons aside to serve God in a special task or ministry (cf. Num. 8:10; 27:18,23; Deut. 34:9; Acts 6:6; 13:3; 1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:6)
5. participating in the judicial stoning of a sinner (cf. Lev. 24:14)
6. the hand on one’s mouth denotes silence or acquiescence (cf. Jdgs. 18:19; Job 21:5; 29:9; 40:4; Micah 7:16)
7. the hand on one’s own head means sorrow/grief (2 Sam. 13:19)
8. receiving a blessing for health, happiness, and godliness (cf. Matt. 19:13,15; Mark 10:16)
9. relating to physical healing (cf. Matt. 8:3; 9:18,20; Mark 5:23; 6:5; 7:32; 8:23; 16:18; Luke 4:40; 13:13; Acts 9:17; 28:8)
10. receiving the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 8:17-19; 9:17; 19:6, note Deut. 34:9)

There is a surprising lack of uniformity in the passages that have been historically used to support the ecclesiastical installation of leaders (i.e., ordination, see Special Topic: Ordination).

1. In Acts 6:6 it is the Apostles who lay hands on the seven for local ministry.
2. In Acts 13:3 it is the prophets and teachers who lay hands on Barnabas and Paul for missionary service.
3. In 1 Tim. 4:14 it is the local elders who were involved in Timothy’s initial call and installation.
4. In 2 Tim. 1:6 it is Paul who lays hands on Timothy.

This diversity and ambiguity illustrate the lack of organization in the first century church. The early church was much more dynamic and regularly used the spiritual gifts of believers (cf. 1 Corinthians 12 and 14). The NT is simply not written to advocate or delineate a governmental model (see the variety in

Acts 15) or ordination procedure. Church organizational traditions are necessary but not biblical. The godliness of the leadership is far more important than the form of the leadership (i.e., polity).

29:24 This was similar to the Day of Atonement. This sacrifice was for all Judah, here called “Israel,” because Judah was “the true” Israel of God. See Special Topic: Atonement.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ATONEMENT

The Hebrew root (BDB 497, KB 493) combines several OT images.

1. the holiness of God which is offended by human rebellion
2. the cost of rebellion is death (cf. Ezek. 18:4,20)
3. the life of a sacrificial animal substituted for the death penalty of sinful human beings

The basic meaning of the root is “to cover,” which may best be illustrated by the “Day of Atonement” or “Day of Covering” (i.e., Leviticus 16). YHWH dwelt between the wings of the *Cherubim* on the ark of the covenant. Inside the gold box were the laws given to Moses by YHWH on Mt. Sinai. As the High Priest sprinkled blood on the lid of the ark, it symbolically obscured God’s eyes from the Law.

The perfect and eternal blood of the covenant (see the NT book of Hebrews) was the innocent blood of Jesus (cf. John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:21).

The NT term “propitiation” also relates to the lid of the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant. For extra information see the following Special Topics.

1. Special Topic: Ark of the Covenant
2. Special Topic: *Cherubim*
3. Special Topic: Mercy Seat

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 29:25-28

²⁵He then stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with harps and with lyres, according to the command of David and of Gad the king’s seer, and of Nathan the prophet; for the command was from the LORD through His prophets. ²⁶The Levites stood with the musical instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. ²⁷Then Hezekiah gave the order to offer the burnt offering on the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song to the LORD also began with the trumpets, accompanied by the instruments of David, king of Israel. ²⁸While the whole assembly worshiped, the singers also sang and the trumpets sounded; all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.

29:25 David began and organized the musical aspect of temple worship. The first instrument used in worship was the trumpet. However, after a military victory, the people of God celebrated with songs and instruments (i.e., Exodus 15; 1 Sam. 18:6,7). Also, David’s first attempt to move the ark to Jerusalem was accompanied by songs and music (2 Sam. 6:5), as was the next successful attempt (2 Sam. 6:14).

From these uses of song and music, David, the singer of Israel (i.e., 1 Sam. 16:16-18), loved music! This love of music for worship continued to develop throughout his life (i.e., the Psalms). As king he began to organize a musical component within the families of Levites (cf. 1 Chr. 6:31-32; 15:16-22,27; 16:4-6,23) for the future temple. Surely he used them in the tabernacle worship during his long reign. See *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, “Music,” pp. 576-578.

“His prophets” The people of Israel were all inspired writers as “prophets.”

1. Moses – Deut. 18:18
2. the authors of Joshua through Kings – are called the former prophets
3. David – 1 Chr. 28:19; here

David’s prophet writing dealt with the structure and procedures of the new temple.

See Special Topic: Prophecy (OT) at 2 Chr. 12:15.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 29:29-36

²⁹Now at the completion of the burnt offerings, the king and all who were present with him bowed down and worshiped. ³⁰Moreover, King Hezekiah and the officials ordered the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David and Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with joy, and bowed down and worshiped. ³¹Then Hezekiah said, “Now *that* you have consecrated yourselves to the LORD, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the LORD.” And the assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings, and all those who were willing *brought* burnt offerings. ³²The number of the burnt offerings which the assembly brought was 70 bulls, 100 rams, and 200 lambs; all these were for a burnt offering to the LORD. ³³The consecrated things were 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep. ³⁴But the priests were too few, so that they were unable to skin all the burnt offerings; therefore their brothers the Levites helped them until the work was completed and until the *other* priests had consecrated themselves. For the Levites were more conscientious to consecrate themselves than the priests. ³⁵There *were* also many burnt offerings with the fat of the peace offerings and with the libations for the burnt offerings. Thus the service of the house of the LORD was established *again*. ³⁶Then Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced over what God had prepared for the people, because the thing came about suddenly.

29:29-30 There were several postures worshipers used.

1. standing up (BDB 763, KB 840) – 1 Sam. 1:26; 1 Kgs. 8:22; Jer. 18:20
2. usually with hands and head raised (BDB 831, KB 925) – 1 Kgs. 8:54; Ps. 28:2; 134:2; 141:2; Isa. 1:15; Lam. 2:19
3. kneeling (BDB 138, KB 159) – 1 Kgs. 8:54; 2 Chr. 6:13
4. bowing/worshiping
 - a. רהג (BDB 155, KB 181) – 1 Kgs. 18:42
 - b. הוה (BDB 1005, KB 295) – 1 Sam. 1:3,19; 1 Chr. 29:20; 2 Chr. 7:3; Ps. 95:6; 99:5,9; 132:7; Jer. 7:2; Ezek. 46:9
 - c. ערכ (BDB 502, KB 499) – 1 Kgs. 8:54; 2 Chr. 29:29
 - d. הפכ (BDB 496, KB 493) – Micah 6:6
 - e. דגס (BDB 688, KB 741) – always denotes worship (i.e., bowing) before false gods; Isa. 44:15,17,19; 46:6; Dan. 2:46; 3 (several times)
 - f. רדק (BDB 869, KB 1065) – Exod. 4:21; 12:27; 1 Chr. 29:20; 2 Chr. 29:30

29:31 For the different types of sacrifices see Leviticus 1-7. See Special Topic: Sacrificial Systems of the ANE at 2 Chr. 24:6.

29:34 The priests killed, skinned, and prepared the animals for mass public sacrifices (i.e., 2 Chr. 29:22,24,34; Ezek. 44:11), but for free will sacrifices, usually the offerer killed, skinned, and cut up the animal (cf. Lev. 1:5-6).

“For the Levites were more conscientious to consecrate themselves than the priests” The Chronicler is very supportive of the Levites. Notice only Levites’ families are named in 2 Chr. 29:12-15. In Ezra’s day there was a great need for Levites. Often in history they had been neglected and overworked. They were given by God to serve the priests.

29:5 “peace offering” See notes at Leviticus 3. The meat would be shared with all the worshipers!

29:36 “because the thing came about suddenly” This ADVERB (BDB 837) is usually used of the rapid arrival of judgment, but only here is it used of sudden joy over the rapid cleansing, consecration, and restart of temple worship!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why does the Chronicler magnify the reign of Hezekiah? Where does he get the historical information?
2. What is the implication of 2 Chr. 29:3?
3. List the sins of the “fathers” (v. 6). List the sins of Ahaz (v. 7).
4. What is involved in consecration?
5. How did music become part of worship?
6. List the kinds of sacrifices involved in this worship experience.

2 CHRONICLES 30

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
All Israel Invited to the Passover	Hezekiah Keeps the Passover	Hezekiah's Great Passover Festival	Preparations for Passover	Preparations for Passover
30:1-9	30:1-9	30:1-9	30:1-6a 30:6b-9	30:1-9
30:10-12	30:10-12	30:10-12	30:10-12	30:10-12
Passover Reinstated			Passover Is Celebrated	The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread
30:13-22	30:13-20 30:21-22	30:13-22	30:13-22a A Second Celebration 30:22b-27	30:13-20 30:21-22a 30:22b-27
30:23-27	30:23-27	30:23-27		

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 30:1-12

¹Now Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover to the LORD God of Israel. ²For the king and his princes and all the assembly in Jerusalem had decided to celebrate the Passover in the second month, ³since they could not celebrate it at that time, because the priests had not consecrated themselves in sufficient numbers, nor had the people been gathered to Jerusalem. ⁴Thus the thing was right in the sight of the king and all the assembly. ⁵So they established a decree to circulate a proclamation throughout all Israel from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to celebrate the Passover to the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem. For they had not celebrated *it* in great numbers as it was prescribed. ⁶The couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with the letters from the hand of the king and his princes, even according to the command of the king, saying, “O sons of Israel, return to the LORD God of Abraham Isaac and Israel, that He may return to those of you who escaped *and* are left from the hand of the kings of Assyria. ⁷Do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were unfaithful to the LORD God of their fathers, so that He made them a horror, as you see. ⁸Now do not stiffen your neck like your fathers, but yield to the LORD and enter His sanctuary which He has consecrated forever, and serve the LORD your God, that His burning anger may turn away from you. ⁹For if you return to the LORD, your brothers and your sons *will find* compassion before those who led them captive and will return to this land. For the LORD your God is gracious and compassionate, and will not turn *His* face away from you if you return to Him.” ¹⁰So the couriers passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun, but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them. ¹¹Nevertheless some men of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. ¹²The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the princes commanded by the word of the LORD.

30:1 “all Israel and Judah. . .also to Ephraim and Manasseh” This is an unusual combination of geographical entities. “All Israel” may be another way for the Chronicler to affirm Judah’s legitimacy. Sometimes the northern tribes went by the name “Ephraim,” which was their largest tribe. However, the addition of Manasseh is unusual.

The best guess for this invitation to the northern tribes was just after the death of Sargon II when

Assyria's leadership was in turmoil.

“the Passover” The Chronicler records another Passover under Josiah in 2 Chr. 35:1-19. There is no parallel in Kings to Hezekiah's Passover.

See Special Topic: Passover.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE PASSOVER

I. Opening Statements

A. The divine act of judgment of Egyptians and deliverance for Israel is the touchstone for YHWH's love and establishment of Israel as a nation (i.e., esp. for the Prophets).

B. The exodus is a specific fulfillment of YHWH's promise to Abraham in Gen. 15:12-21. The Passover commemorates the exodus.

C. This is the last, most pervasive (geographically, i.e., Egypt and Goshen) and devastating (first born of humans and cattle killed) of the ten plagues sent by YHWH on Egypt through Moses.

II. The Term Itself (BDB 820, KB 947)

A. Meaning of NOUN is uncertain

1. connected to “plague,” thereby “to strike a blow” (i.e., Exod. 11:1); YHWH's angel strikes the firstborn of humans and cattle

B. Meaning of VERB

1. “to limp” or “to hobble” (cf. 2 Sam. 4:4), used in sense of “jump over the marked homes” (i.e., Exod. 12:13,23,27, BDB 619, a popular etymology)

2. “to dance” (cf. 1 Kgs. 18:21)

3. Akkadian – “to appease”

4. Egyptian – “to strike”

5. parallel VERBS in Isa. 31:5, “to stand guard over” (cf. REB of Exod. 12:13)

6. early Christian popular sound play between Hebrew *pasah* to Greek *paschō*, “to suffer”

C. Possible historical precedents

1. shepherd sacrifice for a new year

2. Bedouin sacrifice and communal meal at the time of moving tents to spring pasture to ward off evil

3. sacrifice to ward off evil from nomadic people

D. The reasons it is so hard to not only be sure of the meaning of the word itself, but also its origins is that so many varied features of the Passover are also found in other ancient rituals.

1. spring date

2. etymology of NOUN uncertain

3. connected to night watchings

4. use of blood

5. imagery of angels/demons

6. special meal

7. agricultural elements (unleavened bread)

8. no priests, no altar, local focus

III. The Event

A. The event itself is recorded in Exodus 11-12.

B. The annual feast is described in Exodus 12 and is combined into an eight day festival with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

1. originally it was a local event, cf. Exod. 12:21-23; Deut. 16:5 (cf. Numbers 9)

a. no priest

b. no special altar

c. specialized uses of blood

2. it became an event at the central shrine

3. this combination of a local sacrifice (i.e., lamb's blood to commemorate the passing over of the death angel) and a harvest feast at the central sanctuary was accomplished by the close proximity of dates *Abib* or *Nisan* 14 and 15-21

C. The symbolic ownership of all of the firstborn of humans and cattle and their redemption is described in Exodus 13.

IV. Historical Accounts of Its Observance

A. the first Passover celebrated in Egypt, Exodus 12

B. at Mt. Horeb/Sinai, Numbers 9

C. the first Passover celebrated in Canaan (Gilgal), Jos. 5:10-12

D. at the time of Solomon's dedication of the temple, 1 Kgs. 9:25 and 2 Chr. 8:12 (probably, but not specifically stated)

E. the one during Hezekiah's reign, 2 Chronicles 30

F. the one during Josiah's reforms, 2 Kgs. 23:21-23; 2 Chr. 35:1-18

G. Notice 2 Kgs. 23:22 and 2 Chr. 35:18 mention Israel's neglect in keeping this annual feast

V. The Significance

A. This is one of three required annual feast days (cf. Exod. 23:14-17; 34:22-24; Deut. 16:16):

1. Passover/Unleavened Bread

2. Feast of Weeks

3. Feast of Booths

B. Moses foreshadows the day it will be observed at the central sanctuary (as were the other two feasts) in Deuteronomy.

C. Jesus used the occasion of the annual Passover meal (or the day before) to reveal the New Covenant in the symbol of bread and wine, but did not use the lamb:

1. communal meal

2. redemptive sacrifice

3. ongoing significance to later generations

30:2 “the king and his princes and all the assembly” These represent the different levels in a monarchy of

1. the king

2. his princes (BDB 978), which denotes officials (i.e., 1 Kgs. 4:1-6)

a. government – Gen. 12:15; Num. 22:8; 1 Kgs. 4:2; 1 Chr. 22:17; 2 Chr. 30:6; Isa. 10:8; 31:9; 34:12; Ezra 8:20

b. military – Gen. 21:22,32; 26:26; 1 Sam. 12:9; Isa. 21:5

c. priests – 1 Chr. 15:16,22; 2 Chr. 35:9; 36:14; Ezra 8:24,29; 10:5

d. tribal elders – 1 Chr. 27:29; 29:6; 2 Chr. 24:13; Ezra 11:1

“in the second month” The Passover was to be the first month (i.e., Abib, Num. 9:1-14; Deut. 16:1) but because there were not enough consecrated priests (cf. 2 Chr. 30:3) it had to be postponed.

The NASB Study Bible, p. 621, has an interesting note.

“After the division of the kingdom, Jereboam deferred the sacral calendar of the northern kingdom by one month (1 Kin 12:32), possibly to further wean the subjects in the north away from devotion to Jerusalem. By delaying the celebration of Passover one month, Hezekiah not only allows time for the priests to consecrate themselves (v. 3) and for the people to gather (vv. 3,13), but also achieves unity between the kingdoms on the date of the Passover for the first time since the schism more than two centuries earlier. Delaying the date reflects Hezekiah's concern to involve “all Israel.” For the first time since Solomon the entire nation observes Passover together, reflecting the Chronicler's view that Hezekiah is a “second Solomon.” Passover was prescribed for the 14th day of the first month (Ex 12:2,6; Deut. 16:1-8), but could not be celebrated at that time due to the defilement of the temple and the purification rites under way (29:3,17). For celebration of Passover by the restored community shortly after the dedication of the rebuilt temple see Ezra 6:16-22.”

30:3 This refers to 2 Chr. 20:34.

30:4 Several times in Chronicles the kings' decisions are said to be in agreement with the wishes of their

people. Some commentators call this “the democratizing element” in the post-exilic period.

30:5 “from Beersheba even to Dan” These two cities, one in the south and one in the north, became an idiom for the whole land of Canaan.

“as it was prescribed” This is literally “written” (BDB 507, KB 503, *Qal* PASSIVE PARTICIPLE), which refers to the Mosaic guidelines.

See Special Topic: The Passover at 2 Chr. 30:1b.

30:6 “sons of Israel” This would denote all the descendants of Jacob. It was a literary device to recall the united monarchy.

“return” This VERB (BDB 996, KB 1427) is found in two forms.

1. *Qal* IMPERATIVE (a call to the covenant people)

2. *Qal* JUSSIVE (a plea to the covenant God; notice the reciprocal aspect of 2 Chr. 6:24-25,38-39; 2 Chr. 30:9)

This is one of the main words used for repentance.

See Special Topics: Repentance (OT) at 2 Chr. 7:14 and Covenant at 2 Chr. 6:16.

“the LORD God of Abraham Isaac and Israel” This is the full title of Israel’s God. Originally it was “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (cf. Exod. 3:6,15; 4:5; 6:3), but here “Israel” instead of “Jacob” (cf. 1 Chr. 29:18).

See Special Topics: Names for Deity, C. and D. at 2 Chr. 1:1b and Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs at 2 Chr. 1:9d.

30:6-9 Hezekiah acknowledges the waywardness and stubbornness of Abraham’s descendants. They were unfaithful and disobedient but if they would repent and seek YHWH, He would be found.

There are other corporate confessions like this one.

1. Moses – Exod. 32:9-14,30-33; Num. 11:13-19; Deut. 9:25-29

2. Ezra – Ezra 9:5-10:1

3. Nehemiah – Neh. 1:5-11

4. Daniel – Dan. 9:4-19

This prayer of confession includes several commands directed at the current generation of covenant people.

1. return to the LORD God, v. 6 – BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* IMPERATIVE, PLURAL

2. do not be like your fathers and your brothers, v. 7 – BDB 224, KB 243, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense, PLURAL

3. do not stiffen your neck like your fathers, v. 8 – BDB 904, KB 1151, *Hiphil* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense, PLURAL

4. yield to the LORD, v. 8 – BDB 678, KB 733, *Qal* IMPERATIVE, PLURAL

5. enter His sanctuary, v. 8 – BDB 97, KB 112, *Qal* IMPERATIVE, PLURAL

6. serve the LORD your God, v. 8 – BDB 712, KB 773, *Qal* IMPERATIVE, PLURAL

Two of the command forms are prayer requests to God.

1. that He may return to you, v. 6 – BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* JUSSIVE, SINGULAR

2. that His burning anger may turn away from you, v. 8 – BDB 996, KB 1427, *Qal* JUSSIVE SINGULAR

“those of you who escaped *and* are left from the hand of the kings of Assyria” This refers to the destruction of the Syro-Ephraimitic league. Hezekiah’s father, Ahaz, appealed to Assyria for help (i.e., Isaiah 7).

See Special Topic: Remnant, Three Senses at 2 Chr. 12:7.

30:7 This is an allusion to the consequences of disobedience (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). It is

often referred to as “the two ways” (cf. Deuteronomy 30, esp. vv. 15,19; Psalm 1).
See Special Topic: Consequences of Idolatry.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CONSEQUENCES OF IDOLATRY (cf. Deut. 11:16-17)

A. “Beware, lest your hearts are not deceived” – BDB 834, KB 984, *Qal* IMPERFECT, cf. Job 31:27
1. “turn away” – BDB 693, KB 747, *Qal* PERFECT, cf. Exod. 32:8; 9:12; 17:11,17; Jer. 5:23
2. “serve other gods” – BDB 712, KB 773, *Qal* PERFECT, cf. Deut. 7:4,26; 8:19; 11:16; 13:6,13; 17:3; 28:14,36,64; 29:26; 30:17; 31:20; Jos. 23:16; 24:2,16; Jer. 11:10; 13:10; 16:11,13; 22:9; 25:6; 35:15
3. “to worship” – BDB 1005, KB 295, *Hithpael* (Owens, p. 805) and *Hishtaphel* (Parsing Guide, p. 146)
Obviously this was a recurrent tendency on Israel’s part! The consequences for idolatry were severe.

B. “the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you” – BDB 354, KB 351, *Qal* PERFECT, cf. Exod. 4:14; 22:24; 32:10; Num. 11:1,10; 12:9; 32:10; Deut. 6:15; 7:4; 11:17; 29:27; Jos. 23:11
1. “He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain.” This is part of the curse for disobeying the covenant, cf. Deut. 28:24; 2 Chr. 6:26-28; 7:13
2. “the ground will not yield its fruit” – results of no rain

C. “you will perish quickly from the good land” – BDB 1, KB 2, *Qal* PERFECT, cf. Deut. 4:26; 7:4; 8:19,20; 28:20,22; 30:18; Jos. 23:13,16

There is no middle option! God presents His covenant as fully compliant or in default. Fallen humanity cannot obtain this level of consistent or complete obedience (cf. Jos. 24:19). Therefore, there was/is a need for a new covenant based on God’s mercy and His performance (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-38; Rom. 3:9-18,23; Galatians 3)!

“so that He made them a horror” See full note at 2 Chr. 29:8.

30:8 “do not stiffen your neck like your fathers” See full note at 2 Chr. 29:6-7.

NASB, NKJV,	
NRSV	“yield”
TEV	“obey”
NJB, JPSOA,	
REB	“submit”
LXX	“give glory”
Peshitta	—omit—
Knox (from Vulgate)	“surrender”

The MT has the IMPERATIVE “give” (BDB 678, KB 733, *Qal*), which has a wide semantic range. It is the opposite of being “stiff necked.”

Literally it is “give your hand” (BDB 388, KB 386). This could mean

1. in prayer
2. in a pledge/oath
3. imagery for giving your obedience

See Special Topic: Hand at 2 Chr. 18:5b.

“enter His sanctuary” The MT has “came to His sanctuary.” The Passover was one of three annual feast days that all male Israelites were required to attend at the temple.

The NOUN “sanctuary” appears as a NOUN (BDB 874) and a VERB (BDB 872, KB 1073, i.e., “sanctify” or “consecrate,” *Hiphil* PERFECT).

“forever” Remember the tension between the promises of God that never fail and the conditional

covenant (i.e., the two ways) of the OT (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; 30; Psalm 1). On one level God's will and sovereignty are unchangeable but on another level (i.e., individual, family, nation), God has allowed His highest creation (i.e., humans) to resist His will. This resistance is accompanied by terrible, temporal, and eternal consequences!

Notice the "if" of 2 Chr. 30:9. This "if. . .then" literary model reflects the conditional covenant.

See Special Topic: Forever (*'olam*) at 2 Chr. 5:13b.

"His burning anger" This is anthropomorphic language. See Special Topic: God Described As Human at 2 Chr. 6:4

30:9 "your brothers and your sons will find compassion before those who led them captive" This terminology and theology reflects Solomon's great dedicatory prayer to YHWH in 1 Kings 8 (esp. 8:50). The Chronicler

1. knew 1 Kings
2. wanted Israel and Judah unified as in David and Solomon's day (cf. v. 26)
3. promised a return from captivity
4. affirmed the character of YHWH (cf. Exod. 34:6)
5. affirmed the effectiveness of repentance (cf. 2 Chr. 7:14)

"For the LORD your God is gracious and compassionate" The unchanging character of Israel's God is fallen mankind's only hope!

See Special Topic: Characteristics of Israel's God (OT) at 2 Chr. 2:10-12.

"will not turn His face away from you" This VERB (BDB 996, KB 1427) is one of two VERBS used for "repentance." Believers turn from sin and turn to God! As we turn, He turns. This is not to say that the Spirit is not involved (i.e., John 6:44,65), but it is to assert the biblical mandate of a human response!

See Special Topic: What Does it Mean to "Receive," "Believe," "Confess/Profess," and "Call Upon"?

SPECIAL TOPIC: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "RECEIVE," "BELIEVE," "CONFESS/PROFESS," "CALL UPON"?

As an evangelical the Great Commission of the risen Lord of Matthew 28:18-20 has priority importance to me. My evangelicalism mandates a personal encounter with God through Christ. I have always pondered what "make disciples" means. Usually those Christian groups who emphasize an initial personal encounter model speak of

1. "receiving" – John 1:12
2. "believing" – Mark 1:15; John 3:16,18,36; 4:5; 6:40; 11:25-26; Acts 10:43
3. "confessing"/"professing" – Matt. 10:32; Luke 12:8; John 9:22; 12:42; 1 Tim. 6:12; 1 John 2:23; 4:15
4. "calling on" – Rom. 10:9-13

but the Great Commission uses "making disciples" and "teaching them to observe all that I have taught you." Jesus' discussion of a gate (initial personal encounter) and a narrow road (daily godly living) in Matt. 7:13-14; Luke 13:24 has given me a key theological concept—salvation is a process (see Special Topic: Greek Verbs Tenses Used to Describe Salvation). It starts with "an encounter" mechanism but is unclear exactly how that is done! Surely it is the initial wooing of the Spirit (John 6:44,65) and a sense of personal sin and spiritual need, combined with a willingness to repent and believe (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38; 3:16,19; 20:21; 26:20). This initial encounter (aha moment) must then issue in a Christlike life (cf. Rom. 8:28-30; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 2:10; 4:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:3; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:15). Justification and sanctification cannot, must not, be separated! I have come to believe that a mature salvation must involve

1. repentance, initial and continuing (see Special Topic: Repentance)
2. faith/trust/belief, initial and continuing (see Special Topic: Believe [NOUN, VERB, ADJECTIVE])

in the NT)

3. perseverance throughout life (see Special Topic: Perseverance)

As I see it, there are two dangers.

1. an over-emphasis on initial salvation that sees salvation as a ticket to heaven at the end of life or an insurance policy unrelated to daily lifestyle choices
2. an over-emphasis on the path as a process where the issue becomes “do my good deeds outweigh my bad deeds?” (a form of works righteousness)

Salvation is

1. a person to welcome (Jesus)
2. truths about that person to believe (the Bible)
3. a life like that person to live (Christlikeness)

Salvation is a free gift (Rom. 3:24; 6:23) of God’s grace, Christ’s finished work, and the leadership of the Spirit. The Christian life is also a grace gift that must be received daily. Here is the theological issue, “How does one receive/believe/call on/confess or profess?” Please look at the following notes and Special Topics:

1. receive – see note online at John 1:12 (www.freebiblecommentary.org)
2. believe – Special Topic: Believe, Trust, Faith and Faithfulness in the OT
3. confess/profess – Special Topic: Confession/Profession
4. call on – see notes online at Rom. 10:9-13

Salvation is a “gate” (initial personal encounter) and a way (daily godly living). These cannot be separated or reversed in time! The normal result of salvation is

1. Christlikeness (cf. Rom. 7:1; 8:28-30; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 2:10; 4:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 4:3; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:15; 1 Pet. 1:15)
2. service (cf. Matt. 25:31-46)

“Only believe, only believe” or “do better” are both inappropriate statements.

I guess the reason for this Special Topic is my conflict in doing evangelism among Orthodox or Catholic populations. I meet so many people who obviously know and love Jesus but do not answer “my questions” in a way that I feel comfortable. But I think the problem is with my traditions. To assert that one must pray a “sinner’s prayer,” when this is not an emphasis in the NT, shows a theological bias. I do believe in the necessity of an encounter mechanism, but I must widen my own understanding of what this involves. A person’s statement of faith and lifestyle fruit takes precedence over a certain methodology or theological construct.

Just a theological aside about “fruit.” My understanding of this comes from two passages by Jesus.

1. the Sermon on the Mount – Matt. 7:13-23
2. the Parable of the Soils – Matt. 13:1-24; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15

The “fruit” is not the way to be saved but the evidence of a true conversion (cf. James 2:14-26). No fruit, no root! Eternal life has observable characteristics!

Another theological aside about some of the inappropriate proof-text methods used by evangelicals:

1. using Rev. 3:20 as an initial salvation invitation when it is part of the letters to the seven churches (Revelation 2-3)
2. using the “Roman Road” as “the” way to be saved. The first three verses,
 - a. Rom. 3:23
 - b. Rom. 6:23
 - c. Rom 5:8

summarize the gospel message but there is no “encounter” verse in the literary unit of Romans, chapters 1-8, so we jump to the next literary unit on “why has Israel not believed the gospel?” (Romans 9-11) and quote Rom. 10:9-13 as the concluding act in “the” plan of salvation.

Some even assert that because of Rom. 10:9-13 it must be a spoken prayer (i.e., Rom. 10:9).

3. or as I mentioned before in this Special Topic, we make “the sinner’s prayer” (which probably

comes from the parable of the Pharisee and the sinner, cf. Luke 18:9-14) “the” model for all salvation.

Again, I want to affirm the necessity of “an encounter” mechanism but I think there are many ways.

1. a special moment of revelation (i.e., quoting a creed)
2. a special moment of worship (i.e., hearing a testimony or singing a hymn)
3. a life crisis
4. a dream encounter
5. surely prayer is a valid way
6. and many others

God is looking for the smallest response to flood us with His grace and salvation!

Salvation is the will of God for all humans (cf. John 1:12; 3:16; 1 Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 2:2; 4:14) made in His image for fellowship (see Special Topic: YHWH’s Eternal Redemptive Plan). Jesus’ life, teachings, and death paid the penalty of human sin and rebellion (cf. Romans 1-3). Now, “whosoever will,” “anyone who,” “all,” “as many as” become the open invitation! The drawing of the Spirit allows fallen humans to recognize their need, recognize God’s provision in Jesus, and it also demands (1) a personal, decisive decision (i.e., a volitional choice) and (2) a lifestyle change.

The gospel is not difficult, tricky, or confusing but available, understandable, and open to all!

Disciples are those who

1. hear
2. understand
3. respond
4. obey
5. continue (see Special Topic: Perseverance)

May God forgive denominational arrogance and manmade barriers, but also may the “exclusivistic scandal” of John 10:1-8; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5 be proclaimed to all! All may come and they may come in many ways, but they must all come through Jesus and live for Him (i.e., be changed, cf. Matt. 28:20)! There is only one door but it is wide open (cf. Acts 14:27; Col. 4:3; Rev. 3:7-8)— “as many as,” “whosoever will,” “all who” may enter!

30:10-12 Apparently the “all Israel” of 2 Chr. 30:1 was limited. Hezekiah’s offer was ridiculed and rejected by many in the northern kingdom. Idolatry over many generations had taken a foothold!

1. laughed
2. scorned
3. mocked

Josephus, *Antiq.* 9.13.2., goes beyond even this and says they killed the prophets who brought them the same message.

Thank God there were some who humbled themselves (cf. v. 18; Lev. 26:40-43; 2 Chr. 7:14). Was this an aspect of “the hand of God” (v. 12) or was it a human choice? Yes, both.

See Special Topic: Eastern Literature.

SPECIAL TOPIC: EASTERN LITERATURE (Biblical paradoxes)

1. This insight (i.e., that the Bible is an eastern book, not a western book) has been the most helpful to me personally as one who loves and trusts the Bible as God’s Word. In trying to take the Bible seriously it became obvious that different texts reveal truth in selected, not systematic ways. One inspired text cannot cancel or depreciate another inspired text! Truth comes in knowing all Scripture (all Scripture, not just some, is inspired, cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17), not quoting a single passage (proof-texting)!

2. Most biblical truths (eastern literature) are presented in dialectical or paradoxical pairs (remember the NT authors, except Luke, are Hebrew thinkers, writing in common Greek. Wisdom Literature and Poetic Literature present truth in parallel lines. The antithetical parallelism functions like the paradox. This synthetic parallelism functions like parallel passages). Somehow both are equally true! These paradoxes are painful to our cherished, simplistic, denominational traditions!

- a. predestination versus human free will
- b. security of the believer versus the need for perseverance (see Special Topic:

Perseverance)

- c. original sin versus volitional sin
- d. Jesus as God versus Jesus as man
- e. Jesus as equal with the Father versus Jesus as subservient to the Father
- f. Bible as God's Word versus human authorship
- g. sinlessness (perfectionism, cf. Romans 6) versus sinning less
- h. initial instantaneous justification and sanctification versus progressive sanctification (see

Special Topic: Sanctification)

- i. justification by faith (Romans 4) versus justification confirmed by works (cf. James 2:14-26)
- j. Christian freedom (cf. Rom. 14:1-23; 1 Cor. 8:1-13; 10:23-33) versus Christian responsibility (cf. Gal. 5:16-21; Eph. 4:1)
- k. God's transcendence versus His immanence
- l. God as ultimately unknowable versus knowable in Scripture and Christ
- m. Paul's many metaphors for salvation
 - (1) adoption
 - (2) sanctification
 - (3) justification
 - (4) redemption
 - (5) glorification
 - (6) predestination
 - (7) reconciliation
- n. the kingdom of God as present versus future consummation
- o. repentance as a gift of God (cf. Acts 11:18; Rom. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:25) versus repentance as a mandated response for salvation (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21)
- p. the OT is permanent versus the OT has passed away and is null and void (cf. Matt. 3:17-19 vs. 5:21-48; Romans 7 vs. Galatians 3)
- q. believers are servants/slaves or children/heirs

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 30:13-22

¹³Now many people were gathered at Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month, a very large assembly. ¹⁴They arose and removed the altars which *were* in Jerusalem; they also removed all the incense altars and cast *them* into the brook Kidron. ¹⁵Then they slaughtered the Passover *lambs* on the fourteenth of the second month. And the priests and Levites were ashamed of themselves, and consecrated themselves and brought burnt offerings to the house of the LORD. ¹⁶They stood at their stations after their custom, according to the law of Moses the man of God; the priests sprinkled the blood *which they received* from the hand of the Levites. ¹⁷For *there were* many in the assembly who had not consecrated themselves; therefore, the Levites *were* over the slaughter of the Passover *lambs* for everyone who *was* unclean, in order to consecrate *them* to the Lord. ¹⁸For a multitude of the people, *even* many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not purified themselves, yet they ate the Passover otherwise than prescribed. For Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "May the good LORD pardon ¹⁹everyone who prepares his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though not according to the purification *rules* of the sanctuary." ²⁰So the LORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people. ²¹The sons of Israel present in Jerusalem celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread *for* seven days with great joy, and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day after day with loud instruments to the LORD. ²²Then Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who showed good insight *in the things* of the LORD. So they ate for the appointed seven days, sacrificing peace offerings and giving thanks to the LORD God of their fathers.

30:13 "a very large assembly" This refers to 2 Chr. 30:5 (i.e., "as it was prescribed").

30:14 "They arose and removed the altars" These were the *Ba'al* altars set up by Ahaz (cf. 2 Chr.

28:24). This was the terrible influence of “the house of Ahab” (i.e., the idolatry of the northern kingdom).

This cleansing was an extension of Hezekiah’s actions in 2 Chr. 29:16 or the local people had restored these pagan altars, as they had so many times in the past (cf. 1 Kgs. 13:32-33; 14:22-24; 15:14; 22:43; 2 Chr. 14:3; 15:16-17; 17:6; 20:33; 21:11).

Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Josiah tried to remove this pagan influence but the people rebuilt them (i.e., 2 Chr. 33:17,19).

See Special Topic: Fertility Worship of the ANE at 2 Chr. 7:19.

30:15 “the priests and Levites were ashamed of themselves” It is not stated if their shame (BDB 483, KB 480, *Niphal* PERFECT) was related to

1. their own idolatrous actions with the high places
2. their inaction of not crying out against them

“consecrated themselves” See note at 2 Chr. 29:5.

30:16 “according to the law of Moses the man of God” This refers to the guidelines of the Pentateuch (cf. 2 Chr. 30:5, “as it was prescribed”).

The title, “Moses the man of God,” is used often to denote his special relationship to YHWH as leader and revealer (cf. Deut. 33:1; Josh. 14:6; 1 Sam. 2:27; 9:6-7; 1 Kgs. 9:6; 12:22; 13:1,20; 2 Kgs. 1:9-13; 5:8; 23:17; 2 Chr. 30:16; Ezra 3:2; Jer. 35:4).

The phrase is also used of Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, David, Shemiah, Hanani, and an unnamed person in 1 Sam. 2:27 and 1 Kgs. 13:1-3 (see NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 390, #9).

See Special Topic: Laws in the ANE.

SPECIAL TOPIC: LAWS IN THE ANE

A. Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, vol. 1, pp. 143-144, lists the OT law codes:

1. the Decalogue – Exod. 20:2-17; Deut. 5:6-21
2. the Code of the Covenant – Exod. 20:22-23:33
3. Deuteronomy – Deuteronomy 12-26
4. the Law of Holiness – Leviticus 17-26
5. the Priestly code – Leviticus 1-7, 11-16

All of these are considered Torah. They are specific divine prescriptions on actions and attitudes.

B. Types of Israeli laws

1. Casuistic – laws characterized by the “if. . .then” format. There are consequences to actions. These are usually guidelines for societies.
2. Apodictic – laws stated as general prohibitions (usually SECOND PERSON PLURAL statements – “you shall not. . .”). These are usually guidelines for the spiritual life.

C. Cultural influences

1. in content – earlier law codes
 - a. Lipit-Ishtar
 - b. Code of Hammurabi
2. in form – Hittite treaties (Suzerian; see Special Topic: Hittite Treaties), which occur in several set patterns, but Deuteronomy and Joshua 24 follow the pattern of the 2000 B.C. period, which shows its historicity (cf. John H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context*, pp. 95-107; K.A. Kitchen, *The Bible in Its World*, pp. 80-95; see introduction to the book, VII).

D. In many ways Israel’s laws were similar in form but radically different in content. Israel had God’s revelation, not only about the community’s powerful, wealthy, and influential, but about the poor,

powerless, and socially ostracized! God loves all people!

“the priests sprinkled the blood” The VERB (BDB 284, KB 283, *Qal* PARTICIPLE) is used in several rituals.

1. the burnt offering – Lev. 1:5,11; 8:19; 9:12; 2 Kgs. 16:15; Ezek. 43:18
2. the peace offering – Lev. 3:2,8,13; 9:18; 17:6; 2 Kgs. 16:13
3. the sin offering – Lev. 7:2,14; 2 Chr. 29:22

See Special Topic: Blood.

SPECIAL TOPIC: BLOOD

In the OT blood (BDB 196) denotes the life (cf. Lev. 17:11,14; Gen. 9:4; Deut. 12:23). This life, both animal and human, is a gift from God and belongs to God.

The AB, vol. 1, p. 761, notes that “blood” and “life” are poetical parallels in Hebrew, Ugaritic, and Akkadian.

In the Mosaic sacrificial system sin required a life (cf. Ezek. 18:4,20). God graciously allowed the substitute of an innocent animal’s life to atone for the sin of a human. Ultimately the blood that will atone for human rebellion is Jesus, the Messiah’s blood/death (cf. Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45; 14:24; John 1:29; Rom. 3:25; 15:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:2,19; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5; 5:9). An innocent life was given on behalf of the guilty (i.e., Hebrew corporality, cf. Rom. 5:12-21; 2 Cor. 5:14-15).

30:18-19 Here again, the “letter” of the law is modified for the inclusion of worshipers at Hezekiah’s request. The Law is for mankind, not vice versa (cf. Matthew 23; Mark 7).

30:19 “everyone who prepares his heart to seek God” This will become the reality of the gospel message! The heart is the key (see note at 2 Chr. 7:14; John 4).

30:21

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV “with loud instruments”

TEV “with all their strength”

NJB “with all their might”

JPSOA “with powerful instruments”

REB “with unrestrained fervor”

LXX “with instruments”

Peshitta “singing songs of praise”

The UBS Text Project, p. 479, gives two suggestions.

1. “with powerful instruments,” which it gives a “B” rating (some doubt)
2. with all their might (RSV, NEB)

The MT has “musical instruments” (BDB 479, #2, b., cf. 1 Chr. 15:16; 16:5,42; 23:5; 2 Chr. 5:13; 7:6; 23:13; 29:26-27; 34:12).

30:22 This is another example of the Chronicler’s positive attitude toward Levites.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 30:23-27

²³Then the whole assembly decided to celebrate *the feast* another seven days, so they celebrated the seven days with joy. ²⁴For Hezekiah king of Judah had contributed to the assembly 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep, and the princes had contributed to the assembly 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep; and a large number of priests consecrated themselves. ²⁵All the assembly of Judah rejoiced, with the priests and the Levites and all the assembly that came from Israel, both the sojourners who came from the land of Israel and those living in Judah. ²⁶So there was great joy in Jerusalem, because there was nothing like this in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel. ²⁷Then the Levitical priests arose and blessed the people; and their voice was heard and their

prayer came to His holy dwelling place, to heaven.

30:23 “another seven days” One wonders if this is a purposeful link to Solomon’s two-week dedication of the temple in 2 Chr. 7:8-10.

30:25 Notice all the groups that rejoiced.

1. all the assembly of Judah (2 Chr. 30:2)
2. priests and Levites (i.e., tribe of Levi)
3. all the assembly from the northern kingdom (v. 1)
4. sojourners (cf. Num. 9:14)
 - a. from Israel
 - b. from Judah

30:26 The Chronicler longed for “the good old days” of the United Monarchy (i.e., 2 Chr. 7:8-10).

30:27 “Levitical priests” The RSV, NRSV, NEB, REB, following the LXX, have “priests and Levites.” The UBS Text Project, p. 479, gives “Levitical priests” an “A” rating. See Special Topic: Levitical Priests at 2 Chr. 5:5b.

“blessed the people” This refers to Num. 6:23, called “the Aaronic blessing.” There are several texts that mention a priestly blessing (cf. Deut. 33:8-11; 1 Sam. 2:20; 9:13; 1 Chr. 23:13). This “blessing” held great importance for faithful worshipers. It was a prayer to YHWH for His covenant presence, promises, and abundance (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 27-30).

“His holy dwelling place, to heaven” This phrase could

1. refer to YHWH’s presence
 2. refer to where He symbolically dwelt between the wings of the *cherubim* over the ark of the covenant; see Special Topics: *Cherubim* at 2 Chr. 3:6b and Ark of the Covenant at 2 Chr. 1:3
 3. refer to the third heaven; see Special Topic: The Heavens and the Third Heaven at 2 Chr. 2:6
- It is possible this is also a literary echo of 2 Chr. 6:21,30,33,35 (the dedicatory prayer of Solomon).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why are “Israel” and “Ephraim and Manasseh” mentioned separately?
2. How can Hezekiah invite people from the northern kingdom to come to Jerusalem?
3. Explain the “if. . .then” nature of the Mosaic covenant.
4. Where is YHWH’s gracious character first delineated?
5. How does 2 Chr. 30:12 affirm both divine sovereignty and human free will?
6. Why do the Levites instead of the offerer kill the sacrificial animal in v. 17?
7. Why did they extend the Passover to two weeks?

2 CHRONICLES 31

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
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Idols Are Destroyed	The Reforms of Hezekiah	Hezekiah's Reform and His Re-establishment of the Priests and Levites	Hezekiah Reforms Religious Life	The Purification of the Country
31:1	31:1	31:1	31:1	31:1
				The Reorganization of the Priests and Levites
31:2	31:2-4	31:2-10	31:2-3	31:2-8
Reforms Continued				
31:3-10			31:4-10	
	31:5-10			31:9-19
31:11-19	31:11-19	31:11-19	31:11-19	
31:20-21	31:20-21	31:20-21	31:20-21	31:20-21

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 31:1

¹Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah, broke the pillars in pieces, cut down the Asherim and pulled down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, as well as in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the sons of Israel returned to their cities, each to his possession.

31:1 It was the worshipers (i.e., “all Israel who were present at the Passover”) of chapter 30 who spread out over Judah, as well as Ephraim and Manasseh, destroying the *Ba'al* high places.

1. broke the pillars – a raised stone symbolizing *Ba'al* (i.e., a phallic symbol)
2. cut down the *Asherim* – a planted or carved tree on the raised stone platform symbolizing the tree of life
3. pulled down the high places – altars made of cut stone to form a raised platform for worship
4. altars – probably a reference to the incense altars (cf. 2 Chr. 28:24; 30:14)

See Special Topic: Israel's Mandated Response to Canaanite Fertility Worship.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ISRAEL'S MANDATED RESPONSE TO CANAANITE FERTILITY WORSHIP

Deuteronomy 12:3 lists several cultic items of *Ba'al* worship and how Israel is to destroy them.

1. “You shall tear down their altars”
 - a. the VERB, BDB 683, KB 736, *Piel* PERFECT, cf. Deut. 7:5; 2 Chr. 31:3; 34:4
 - b. the item, “altars,” BDB 258, *Ba'al's* altars were raised platforms of cut stone with an uplifted stone (pillar) and a hole to plant a tree or secure a wooden, carved stake (*Asherah*)
2. “smash their *sacred* pillars”
 - a. the VERB, BDB 990, KB 1402, *Piel* PERFECT, cf. Deut. 7:5; 2 Kgs. 3:2; 10:27
 - b. the item, “pillars,” BDB 663. These were uplifted stones used as a phallic symbol for the male fertility god (cf. 16:22).
3. “burn their *Asherim* with fire”
 - a. the VERB, BDB 976, KB 1358, *Qal* IMPERFECT, cf. Deut. 7:5, in 2 Chr. 31:1 and 34:4, they were to be “chopped down.”
 - b. the item, *Asherim*, BDB 81. It symbolized the tree of life. *Asherah* (cf. ABD, vol. 1, pp. 483-87, although in the poetic literature from Ugarit, Anath is *Ba'al's* consort, cf. ABD, vol. 1, pp. 225-26) was the female consort of *Ba'al*. It may have been a live tree or a carved stake.
4. “you shall cut down the engraved images of their gods”
 - a. the VERB, BDB 154, KB 180, *Piel* IMPERFECT, cf. Deut. 7:5; 2 Chr. 14:2; 31:1; 34:4,7

b. the item, “engraved images of their gods,” BDB 820 CONSTRUCT 43. Deut. 7:5; and 2 Chr. 34:7 make a distinction between the *Asherim* and the images.

5. “obliterate their name from that place”

a. the VERB, BDB 1, KB 2, *Piel* PERFECT, cf. Deut. 12:2 (twice)

b. the item, “name,” BDB 1027. This seems to represent the god’s name as owner of the place, which is now destroyed and, therefore, their names have perished. It is YHWH’s name that has a name/worship site now (cf. Deut. 12:5,11).

“as well as Ephraim and Manasseh” Why these two northern tribes are mentioned is uncertain (cf. 2 Chr. 30:1).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 31:2

²And Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and the Levites by their divisions, each according to his service, *both* the priests and the Levites, for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister and to give thanks and to praise in the gates of the camp of the LORD.

31:2 These divisions of the families of Levites to assigned tasks goes back to David (cf. 1 Chronicles 23-26; 28:13,21; 2 Chr. 28:13).

“burnt offerings” These were free-will gifts totally burned on the altar of sacrifice, cf. Leviticus 1.

“peace offerings” These were free-will gifts of which a part was

1. burned (i.e., fat, blood) to YHWH
2. given to the priest
3. given to the offerer to eat within three days (Leviticus 3)

Surprisingly, the two required offerings were not mentioned (i.e., sin and guilt, cf. Leviticus 4-6), nor the grain/meal offering (cf. Leviticus 2).

“to give thanks and to praise in the gates” These two INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTS (BDB 392, KB 389, *Hiphil* and BDB 237, KB 248, *Piel*) denote music and singing (cf. 1 Chr. 16:4; 23:30; 25:3; 2 Chr. 5:13; 31:2; Ezra 3:11; Neh. 12:24,26).

The “in the gates” denotes “within the temple compound,” not just at/in the gates. Music was a major part of the Israelite worship experience, thanks to David, the shepherd singer of Israel!

“of the camp” This is an anachronism, going back to the tabernacle days of a portable sanctuary. The Chronicler likes to link back to the United Monarchy, especially David or here, possibly, back to Moses (see note at 2 Chr. 31:3).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 31:3-10

³He also appointed the king’s portion of his goods for the burnt offerings, *namely*, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths and for the new moons and for the fixed festivals, as it is written in the law of the LORD. ⁴Also he commanded the people who lived in Jerusalem to give the portion due to the priests and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to the law of the LORD. ⁵As soon as the order spread, the sons of Israel provided in abundance the first fruits of grain, new wine, oil, honey and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of all. ⁶The sons of Israel and Judah who lived in the cities of Judah also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of sacred gifts which were consecrated to the LORD their God, and placed *them* in heaps. ⁷In the third month they began to make the heaps, and finished *them* by the seventh month. ⁸When Hezekiah and the rulers came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and His people Israel. ⁹Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. ¹⁰Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok said to him, “Since the contributions began to be brought into the house of the LORD, we have had

enough to eat with plenty left over, for the LORD has blessed His people, and this great quantity is left over.”

31:3 The king was responsible for several offerings (cf. Ezek. 45:17,22; 46:2,16-18).

1. the continual
2. sabbaths
3. new moons (cf. 1 Chr. 23:21; 2 Chr. 2:3; 8:13; 31:3)
4. fixed festivals

Notice these different offerings involved daily, weekly, monthly, and annual worship events (cf. 1 Chr. 23:31; 2 Chr. 2:4; 8:13), which reflects Gen. 1:14.

See Special Topic: Feasts of Israel at 2 Chr. 5:3.

“as it is written in the law of the LORD” Obedience to the Mosaic covenant (cf. Numbers 28) was a crucial aspect of Hezekiah’s reform.

Chronicles reaffirms over and over that YHWH had revealed Himself through Moses. The Mosaic guidelines were not from a human origin but from YHWH. All things must be done according to these guidelines (cf. 1 Chr. 6:89; 15:15; 16:40; 22:13; 2 Chr. 8:13; 23:18; 24:6; 25:4; 30:16; 33:8; 34:14; 35:6,12).

31:4-6 YHWH’s people were to support the temple and its servants (cf. Numbers 18).

31:5 “the first fruits” The first ripened fruit and grain were given to YHWH as

1. recognition of His ownership of all crops
2. a thank offering for His blessings (i.e., good weather for good harvest)

“honey” This would be honey from “dates” (Josephus), not “bees.” It was given for the priests and Levites to eat but not to be put on the altar in the series of sacrifices. See NIDOTTE, vol. 1, p. 337, #4.

“the tithe of all” “All” could be understood as

1. all agricultural (v. 5) and pastoral (v. 6) required gifts
2. all the people’s portion (v. 4)

In Numbers 18, YHWH’s method for supporting the personnel of the tabernacle and later temple is spelled out.

1. priests’ portion (cf. Num. 18:8-20)
 - a. part of animal sacrifices
 - b. the wave offerings
 - c. the grain/cereal offerings
 - d. first fruits
 - e. redemption price of firstborn
 - f. a tithe from the Levites of the people’s tithe (cf. Num. 18:26)
2. Levites’ portion (cf. Num. 18:21-32 – the tithe of the people)

See Special Topic: Tithes in the Mosaic Legislation.

SPECIAL TOPIC: TITHES IN THE MOSAIC LEGISLATION

A. Scripture References

For Priests and Central Sanctuary

1. Lev. 27:30-32
2. Deut. 12:6-7,11,17
3. Deut. 14:22-26
- 4.
5. Num. 18:21-24

For Local Levites

- Deut. 12:12
Deut. 14:27
Deut. 26:12-15
Num. 18:25-29 (Levites)

For Local Poor

Deut. 14:28-29

must tithe of their tithe
to the central shrine)

6. Neh. 12:44

Neh. 10:37,38

Neh. 12:44

7. Mal. 3:8,10

B. Examples of tithing predate Mosaic legislation

1. Genesis 14:20, Abraham to Melchizedek (Heb. 7:2-9)

2. Genesis 28:22, Jacob to YHWH

C. The tithes of Israel were used to support the central sanctuary, but every third year the national tithes were directed exclusively to the local poor.

31:7 “the seventh month” This harvest month (i.e., Tishri) has three scheduled corporate worship days.

1. Feast of Trumpets

2. Day of Atonement

3. Feast of Booths/Tabernacles

See Special Topic: The Feasts of Israel at 2 Chr. 5:3.

31:8 Hezekiah was surprised and blessed by the obedience of Judah’s gifts to the temple.

It is unusual that the king and his officials “blessed” the people; usually it was the priests. After Solomon’s dedication of the temple in 2 Kgs. 8:66, the people “blessed” him.

YHWH’s covenant people took “blessings” seriously. They had an effect!

31:10 “Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok” Solomon exiled the priestly house of Abiathar (cf. 1 Kgs. 2:26-27). Both Zadok and Abiathar were high priests during David’s reign.

The descendants of Zadok are hard to follow because

1. only some are named

2. often names move through families

A good brief summary is found in Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel*, “The Descendants of Zadok,” pp. 375-376.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 31:11-19

¹¹Then Hezekiah commanded *them* to prepare rooms in the house of the Lord, and they prepared *them*. ¹²They faithfully brought in the contributions and the tithes and the consecrated things; and Conaniah the Levite *was* the officer in charge of them and his brother Shimei *was* second. ¹³Jehiel, Azariah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath and Benaiah *were* overseers under the authority of Conaniah and Shimei his brother by the appointment of King Hezekiah, and Azariah *was* the *chief* officer of the house of God. ¹⁴Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the keeper of the eastern *gate*, *was* over the freewill offerings of God, to apportion the contributions for the LORD and the most holy things. ¹⁵Under his authority *were* Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah and Shecaniah in the cities of the priests, to distribute faithfully *their portions* to their brothers by divisions, whether great or small, ¹⁶without regard to their genealogical enrollment, to the males from thirty years old and upward—everyone who entered the house of the LORD for his daily obligations—for their work in their duties according to their divisions; ¹⁷as well as the priests who were enrolled genealogically according to their fathers’ households, and the Levites from twenty years old and upwards, by their duties *and* their divisions. ¹⁸The genealogical enrollment *included* all their little children, their wives, their sons and their daughters, for the whole assembly, for they consecrated themselves faithfully in holiness. ¹⁹Also for the sons of Aaron the priests *who were* in the pasture lands of their cities, or in each and every city, *there were* men who were designated by name to distribute portions to every male among the priests and to everyone genealogically enrolled among the Levites.

31:12 Here is a list of the things brought to the temple.

1. the contributions, BDB 925

2. the tithes, BDB 798
3. the consecrated/dedicated things, BDB 871
4. freewill offerings, 2 Chr. 31:14, BDB 621

31:14 “the keeper of the eastern gate” This was the main entrance to the temple area. The inner shrine faced east. These Levitical gatekeepers controlled access to the sacred area. See IVP, *Bible Background Commentary (OT)*, p. 454.

“the most holy things” This referred to the priests’ part of the sin and guilt offering. The blood of these was taken into the shrine, therefore, it became “most holy” and could be eaten only by priests (cf. Lev. 6:24-30; 7:1-6).

31:15 “the cities of the priests” See Joshua 20-21. See Special Topic: Cities of Refuge.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CITIES OF REFUGE

Originally in the OT, those who were fleeing from hasty justice (i.e., the kinsman avenger) could grab the horns of the sacrificial altar for safety (cf. Exod. 21:14; 1 Kgs. 1:50-53; 2:28-31). However, this system was replaced by having strategically located cities within the Promised Land (i.e., 6 Levitical cities, see Joshua 20). Moses had already designated three cities in the trans-Jordan area (cf. Deut. 4:41ff). There are several discussions in the Pentateuch related to the cities of refuge (cf. Exod. 21: 12-14; Num. 35:10-28; Deut. 19:1-13). If a person killed a fellow Israelite by accident, he could flee to one of these six cities. There, a trial would be held (cf. Josh. 20:4). If innocent of premeditated murder, he still had to remain in the city until the death of the High Priest. If guilty of murder, he was turned over to the blood avenger of the family he violated for the immediate punishment of death (cf. Josh. 20:9).

“whether great or small” This could be interpreted in two ways.

1. age (cf. 2 Chr. 31:16)
2. size of family or division

31:16 “their genealogical enrollment” The offices of priest and Levite were hereditary. The family lineage must be established.

The Levites were given their portion of the gifts from “thirty” years up. All ancient versions and the MT have “three,” but this number does not make sense with the following phrase. The UBS Text Project gives “3” an “A” rating, p. 479. However, NASB, NAB, TEV, and NJB emend it to “thirty” (cf. Num. 4:3,23,35; 1 Chr. 23:3).

The forms are close.

1. “three” – BDB 1025, three forms
 - a. שלש
 - b. השלש
 - c. שולש
2. “thirty” – BDB1026, three forms
 - a. מִישְׁלֵשׁ (2 Chronicles, 9 times)
 - b. מִשְׁלֵשׁ
 - c. מִישׁוּלֵשׁ (1 Chr. 11:15; 16:12)
3. they appear together in 1 Chr. 3:4; 11:15; 29:24

31:17 The priests were given their portion of the gifts from “twenty” years up.

“from twenty years old and upwards” This lower age requirement changes from period to period either because

1. there was a five year apprenticeship
2. the number of Levites was smaller and they needed more; even after fifty the Levites could do some things in temple service that required less physical strength
3. see *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, p. 164

31:18 The gifts were shared with the priests' and Levites' families (except that which was "most holy").

31:19 All of the Levitical families did not live close to Jerusalem but all shared.

1. priests in offerings
2. Levites in the tithe

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 31:20-21

²⁰Thus Hezekiah did throughout all Judah; and he did what *was* good, right and true before the LORD his God. ²¹Every work which he began in the service of the house of God in law and in commandment, seeking his God, he did with all his heart and prospered.

31:20 Notice how Hezekiah's actions are characterized.

1. what was good
2. what was right
3. what was true

31:21 Hezekiah did

1. what was written in the law of Moses (v. 3)
2. what was according to his heart which sought YHWH completely (this VERB "seek" is common in Chronicles, i.e., BDB 205, KB 233; as well as its SYNONYM, BDB 134, KB 152. Notice how both are used in 2 Chronicles 15:

BDB 205; 15:12-15

BDB 134; 15:4,15

These are the twin requirements of the old covenant.

1. obedience
2. a heart for YHWH Himself

31:21 "prospered" This was a fulfillment of the blessings for covenant obedience found in Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28. Hezekiah was faithful, the people were faithful; all had abundance!

This "prosperity" emphasis is often transferred to the NT but this is a performance-based covenant. The NT (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-36) is a grace-based covenant. See Gordon Fee, *The Disease of the Health and Wealth Gospel*.

Prosperity is not the goal of the NT, but Christlikeness!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Describe the "high places" and their worship.
2. How did these worshipers manage to destroy the "high places" even in Israel?
3. How many events did the king provide sacrificial animals for?
4. How were the priests and Levites supported?
5. Why do the ages of serving Levites differ in the OT?

6. What things did Hezekiah do that caused YHWH to bless and prosper him?

2 CHRONICLES 32

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
Sennacherib Invades Judah 32:1-8	Sennacherib Boasts Against the LORD 32:1-8	The Invasion of Sennacherib and the End of Hezekiah's Reign 32:1-8	The Assyrians Threaten Jerusalem 32:1-8	Sennacherib's Invasion (MT versing) 32:1-4 32:5-8
Sennacherib Undermines Hezekiah 32:9-15 32:16-19	32:9-15 32:16-19	32:9-15 32:16-19	32:9-15 32:16-19	Sennacherib's Blasphemous Ultimatum and Downfall 32:9-16 32:17-19
Hezekiah's Prayer Is Answered 32:20-23	Sennacherib's Defeat and Death 32:20-23	32:20-23	32:20-21 32:22-23	32:20-23
32:24-26	Hezekiah Humbles Himself 32:24-26	32:24-26	Hezekiah's Illness and Pride 32:24-26	The Closing Years of Hezekiah's Reign 32:24-26
32:27-31	Hezekiah's Wealth and Honor 32:27-30 32:31	32:27-31	Hezekiah's Wealth and Splendor 32:27-31	32:27-29 32:30-31
32:32-33	Death of Hezekiah 32:32-33	32:32-33	The End of Hezekiah's Reign 32:32-33	32:32-33

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 32:1-8

¹After these acts of faithfulness Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and besieged the fortified cities, and thought to break into them for himself. ²Now when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and that he intended to make war on Jerusalem, ³he decided with his officers and his warriors to cut off the *supply of water* from the springs which *were* outside the city, and they helped him. ⁴So many people assembled and stopped up all the springs and the stream which flowed through the region, saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find abundant water?" ⁵And he took courage and rebuilt all the wall that had been broken down and erected towers on it, and *built* another outside wall and strengthened the Millo *in* the city of David, and made weapons and shields in great number. ⁶He appointed military officers over the people and gathered them to him in the square at the city gate, and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, ⁷"Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria nor because of all the horde that is with him; for the one with us is greater than the one with him. ⁸With him is *only* an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles." And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

32:1 This period of conflict is also recorded in

1. 2 Kgs. 18:13-19,37
2. Isa. 36:1-37:38

For Sennacherib, King of Assyria, see Special Topic: Kings of Assyria at 2 Chr. 25:1d.

It is somewhat surprising that after Hezekiah's "faithfulness" (BDB 41, i.e., his spiritual reforms) that Assyria attacked. Usually invasion was a result of covenant disobedience. Here, it was

1. a way to reveal YHWH's power and uniqueness to all the ANE
2. a way to test Hezekiah (cf. 2 Chr. 32:31)

32:2-6 Hezekiah made several preparations for war. He trusted YHWH but he also prepared by

1. cutting off the local spring so the Assyrian army would have no water, v. 4
2. rebuilding the part of the city wall that had been broken down by Joash, the King of Israel (cf. 2 Chr. 25:23; Isa. 22:9-11), v. 5
3. building the towers on the wall higher, v. 5
4. building two walls of fortification (location unknown)
5. strengthening the Millo (i.e., supporting terraces of the old city; see note at 2 Chr. 11:8), v. 5
6. making large numbers of weapons, v. 5
7. appointing military officers over the militia, v. 6

32:4

NASB "through the region"

NKJV, NRSV,

JPSOA, REB "through the land"

NJB "through the country"

LXX "that separated the city"

Peshitta "through the midst of the land"

The term "land" (BDB 75) has a wide semantic range. See Special Topic: Land, Country, Earth at 2 Chr. 9:23.

32:5 "the city of David" This refers to the old city of the Jebusites or the citadel in its midst. See Special Topic: Moriah, Salem, Jebus, Jerusalem, Zion at 2 Chr. 3:1b.

32:7-8 The Chronicler records several speeches of godly Judean kings as a way to communicate theological truths.

This speech has several wonderful theological affirmations.

1. encouragement of YHWH's help, so fear not
 - a. be strong – BDB 304, KB 302, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
 - b. be courageous – BDB 54, KB 65, *Qal* IMPERATIVE
 - c. do not fear – BDB 431, KB 432, *QAL* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
 - d. do not be dismayed – BDB 369, KB 365, *Qal* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
 - e. these same kinds of encouraging words were given:
 - (1) Moses to Joshua – Deut. 31:7-8,23
 - (2) YHWH to Joshua – Josh. 1:6,7,9; 10:8
 - (3) Joshua to his military – Josh. 10:25
 - (4) David to Solomon – 1 Chr. 22:13; 28:20
2. theological truths
 - a. the One with us is greater than the one with him (i.e., YHWH vs. Assyrian gods); notice similar imagery in 2 Kgs. 6:16; Ps. 118:6; Rom. 8:31
 - b. with him is *only* an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and fight our battles (i.e., YHWH the Divine Warrior); notice similar imagery in Isa. 31:3; Jer. 17:5; there is more to reality than the physical!
3. the people relied on the words of Hezekiah
 - a. they trusted their leader's words (cf. 2 Kgs. 18:5 for Hezekiah's faith)
 - b. They trusted their God
 - c. Isaiah 22 seems to criticize Hezekiah for his military preparations but Chronicles does not

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 32:9-15

⁹After this Sennacherib king of Assyria sent his servants to Jerusalem while he *was* besieging Lachish with all his forces with him, against Hezekiah king of Judah and against all Judah who *were* at Jerusalem, saying, ¹⁰“Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria, ‘On what are you trusting that you are remaining in Jerusalem under siege? ¹¹Is not Hezekiah misleading you to give yourselves over to die by hunger and by thirst, saying, “The LORD our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria”? ¹²Has not the same Hezekiah taken away His high places and His altars, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, “You shall worship before one altar, and on it you shall burn incense”? ¹³Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of the lands? Were the gods of the nations of the lands able at all to deliver their land from my hand? ¹⁴Who *was there* among all the gods of those nations which my fathers utterly destroyed who could deliver his people out of my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand? ¹⁵Now therefore, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you like this, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people from my hand or from the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you from my hand?”

32:9-15 The king of Assyria tried to instill fear in the defenders of Jerusalem with a loud public message (cf. 2 Kings 18).

1. What are you trusting? (v. 10)
2. Asserting that Hezekiah had given them false hope. (v. 11)
3. Reminding them that Hezekiah had taken away their local worship sites (i.e., high places). v. 12
4. Look at our military victories, has any nation or their god been successful against us? (vv. 13-15, see note, *IVP Bible Background Commentary [OT]*, p. 455)
5. Do not let Hezekiah
 - a. deceive you – BDB 674, KB 728, *Hiphil* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
 - b. mislead you – BDB 694, KB 749, *Hiphil* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense
 - c. do not believe him – BDB 52, KB 63, *Hiphil* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense

32:9 Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.1.1., mentions the name of

1. Sennacherib’s military general as Rabshakeh
2. his two commanders as
 - a. Tartan
 - b. Rab-saris (cf. 2 Kgs. 18:17)

Josephus says Sennacherib ignored his promise not to besiege Jerusalem in light of Hezekiah’s offer to pay a large tribute, mostly from the temple (cf. 2 Kgs. 18:13-16), but instead he attacked Egypt and Ethiopia but left a large military contingent to attack and destroy Jerusalem. Chronicles never mentions this attempted bribe of Hezekiah’s.

32:11,15 “the hand of the king of Assyria” See Special Topic: Hand at 2 Chr. 18:5b.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 32:16-19

¹⁶ His servants spoke further against the LORD God and against His servant Hezekiah. ¹⁷He also wrote letters to insult the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against Him, saying, “As the gods of the nations of the lands have not delivered their people from my hand, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver His people from my hand.” ¹⁸They called this out with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, so that they might take the city. ¹⁹They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as of the gods of the peoples of the earth, the work of men’s hands.

32:16-19 The king of Assyria sent letters to instill fear against Hezekiah’s leadership.

1. These letters insulted YHWH, v. 17.
2. They asserted that no other national god had delivered their people and neither could YHWH,

v. 17.

3. The Assyrian messengers read this letter publicly and loudly, in Hebrew (cf. 2 Kgs. 18:26), before the walls of Jerusalem, v. 18.

4. They asserted that YHWH was a manmade idol like the other gods of the nations, v. 19. The theological stage is set! YHWH must defend His name. He is not one of the gods of the nations; He is more powerful than the gods of Assyria.

32:16 This added comment seems to assume that the people of this post-exilic period knew the full account of the speech of 2 Kings 18 or Isa. 36:4-10.

32:18 This verse also assumes a familiarity with 2 Kgs. 18:26-37 or Isa. 36:11-20.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 32:20-23

²⁰But King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed about this and cried out to heaven. ²¹And the LORD sent an angel who destroyed every mighty warrior, commander and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in shame to his own land. And when he had entered the temple of his god, some of his own children killed him there with the sword. ²²So the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria and from the hand of all *others*, and guided them on every side. ²³And many were bringing gifts to the LORD at Jerusalem and choice presents to Hezekiah king of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations thereafter.

32:20 As is true of so much of Chronicles, its account is based on prophetic writings. Here, the great prophet Isaiah is named (cf. Isa. 36:1-37:38).

Notice both the king and the great prophet prayed (cf. 2 Kings 19). YHWH answered in power (2 Chr. 32:21). This powerful act of deliverance is detailed in 2 Kgs. 19:35-37.

Notice, too, the answered prayers. (See Special Topic: Intercessory Prayer)

1. Hezekiah and Isaiah pray for military victory, v. 20.
2. Hezekiah prays for healing, v. 24.
3. Hezekiah prays for forgiveness, v. 26 (cf. 2 Chr. 7:14; 30:18,20).

SPECIAL TOPIC: INTERCESSORY PRAYER

I. Introduction

A. Prayer is significant because of Jesus' example

1. personal prayer, Mark 1:35; Luke 3:21; 6:12; 9:29; 22:31-46
2. cleansing of the Temple, Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46
3. Model Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13; Luke 11:2-4
2. Prayer is putting into tangible action our belief in a personal, caring God who is present, willing, and able to act on our behalf and others, through our prayers.
3. God has personally limited Himself to act on the prayers of His children in many areas (cf. James 4:2)
4. The major purpose of prayer is our fellowship and time with the Triune God.
5. The scope of prayer is anything or anyone that concerns believers. We may pray once, believing, or over and over again as the thought or concern returns.
6. Prayer can involve several elements
 1. praise and adoration of the Triune God
 2. thanksgiving to God for His presence, fellowship, and provisions
 3. confession of our sinfulness, both past and present
 4. petition of our sensed needs or desires
 5. intercession where we hold the needs of others before the Father
7. Intercessory prayer is a mystery. God loves those for whom we pray much more than we do, yet our prayers often effect a change, response, or need, not only in ourselves, but in them.

B. Biblical Material

1. Old Testament

1. Some examples of intercessory prayer:
 - a. Abraham pleading for Sodom, Gen. 18:22ff
 - b. Moses' prayers for Israel
 - (1) Exodus 5:22-23
 - (2) Exodus 32:9-14,31-35
 - (3) Exodus 33:12-16
 - (4) Exodus 34:9
 - (5) Deuteronomy 9:18,25-29
 - c. Samuel prays for Israel
 - (1) 1 Samuel 7:5-6,8-9
 - (2) 1 Samuel 12:16-23
 - (3) 1 Samuel 15:11
 - d. David for his child, 2 Samuel 12:16-18
2. God is looking for intercessors, Isaiah 59:16
3. Known, unconfessed sin or an unrepentant attitude affects our prayers
 - a. Psalm 66:18
 - b. Proverbs 28:9
 - c. Isaiah 59:1-2; 64:7

B. New Testament

1. The Son and Spirit's intercessory ministry
 - a. Jesus
 - (1) Romans 8:34
 - (2) Hebrews 7:25
 - (3) 1 John 2:1
 - b. Holy Spirit, Romans 8:26-27
2. Paul's intercessory ministry
 - a. Prays for the Jews
 - (1) Romans 9:1ff
 - (2) Romans 10:1
 - b. Prays for the churches
 - (1) Romans 1:9
 - (2) Ephesians 1:16
 - (3) Philippians 1:3-4,9
 - (4) Colossians 1:3,9
 - (5) 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3
 - (6) 2 Thessalonians 1:11
 - (7) 2 Timothy 1:3
 - (8) Philemon, v. 4
 - c. Paul asked the churches to pray for him
 - (1) Romans 15:30
 - (2) 2 Corinthians 1:11
 - (3) Ephesians 6:19
 - (4) Colossians 4:3
 - (5) 1 Thessalonians 5:25
 - (6) 2 Thessalonians 3:1
3. The church's intercessory ministry
 - a. Pray for one another
 - (1) Ephesians 6:18
 - (2) 1 Timothy 2:1
 - (3) James 5:16

- b. Prayer requested for special groups
 - (1) our enemies, Matt. 5:44
 - (2) Christian workers, Hebrews 13:18
 - (3) rulers, 1 Timothy 2:2
 - (3) the sick, James 5:13-16
 - (5) backsliders, 1 John 5:16

III. Conditions for answered prayer

- A. Our relationship to Christ and the Spirit
 - 1. Abide in Him, John 15:7
 - 2. In His name, John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23-24
 - 3. In the Spirit, Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20
 - 4. According to God's will, Matthew 6:10; 1 John 3:22; 5:14-15
- B. Motives
 - 1. Not wavering, Matthew 21:22; James 1:6-7
 - 2. Humility and repentance, Luke 18:9-14
 - 3. Asking amiss, James 4:3
 - 4. Selfishness, James 4:2-3
- C. Other aspects
 - 1. Perseverance
 - a. Luke 18:1-8
 - b. Colossians 4:2
 - 2. Kept on asking
 - a. Matthew 7:7-8
 - b. Luke 11:5-13
 - c. James 1:5
 - 2. Discord at home, 1 Peter 3:7
 - 3. Free from known sin
 - b. Psalm 66:18
 - c. Proverbs 28:9
 - d. Isaiah 59:1-2
 - e. Isaiah 64:7

IV. Theological Conclusion

- A. What a privilege. What an opportunity. What a duty and responsibility.
- B. Jesus is our example. The Spirit is our guide. The Father is eagerly waiting.
- C. It could change you, your family, your friends, and the world.

32:21 “the LORD sent an angel” This destroying angel is probably the same one that brought the last plague on Egypt (cf. Exodus 11).

The mentioning of angels (BDB 521) is rare in Chronicles.

- 1. the destroying angel of 1 Chronicles 21
- 2. the destroying angel here

This is not the “angel of the LORD” that personifies Deity but the angel that brings judgment. See Special Topic: The Angel of the Lord.

Just one lexical note. The Hebrew root translated “destroy” (BDB 470, KB 469) normally means “hide.” Only in the *Hiphil* stem does it rarely mean “destroy” (i.e., Exod. 23:23; 1 Kgs. 13:34; Ps. 83:4; Zech. 11:9). This implies that there were once two different roots with the same consonants. Remember, context, not lexicons, determines word meaning. Context, context, context!

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE ANGEL OF THE LORD (BDB 521 CONSTRUCT BDB 217)

It is obvious that deity manifests Himself physically in human form in the OT. The question for

Trinitarians becomes which person of the Trinity fulfills this role. Since God the Father (YHWH) and His Spirit are consistently non-corporeal, it seems possible to suggest that these human manifestations are the pre-incarnate Messiah.

To demonstrate the difficulties one faces in trying to identify a theophany from an angelic encounter the following list is illustrative.

1. the angel of the LORD as an angel (often “His angel,” “an angel,” “the angel,” “the Angel of God,” even “pillar”)
 - a. Gen. 24:7,40
 - b. Exod. 23:20-23; 32:34
 - c. Num. 22:22
 - d. Jdgs. 5:23
 - e. 2 Sam. 24:16
 - f. 1 Chr. 21:15-30
 - g. Zech. 1:12-13
2. the angel of the LORD as theophany
 - a. Gen. 16:7-13; 18:1-33; 22:11,15; 31:11,13; 48:15-16
 - b. Exod. 3:2,4; 14:19 (13:21)
 - c. Jdgs. 2:15; 6:22-24; 13:3-23
 - d. Hosea 12:3-4
 - e. Zech. 3:1-5
 - f. Acts 7:30,35,38

Only context can distinguish between the two options.

“his own children killed him” Sennacherib invaded in 701 B.C. (cf. 2 Kgs. 18:13, “in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah”). He was not assassinated until 681 B.C., some twenty years later when Esarhaddon became king.

Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.1.5., gives the names of the son of Adrammelch and Seraser at the temple called Araske. The people exiled these sons to Armenia, and Esarhaddon became king (681 B.C.).

See Special Topic: Kings of Assyria at 2 Chr. 25:1d.

32:22 YHWH gave Judah “rest,” which is the Chronicler’s way of asserting that Hezekiah and the people’s faith brought covenant blessings (i.e., Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28).

NASB, NKJV,

MT “and guided them on every side”

NRSV, LXX,

Vulgate “he gave them rest on every side”

TEV “He let the people live in peace”

NJB “he gave them peace on every side”

JPSOA “He provided for them on all sides”

REB “He gave them respite on every side”

The MT has “guided” (BDB 624, KB 675, *Piel* IMPERFECT with *waw*). The UBS Text Project, p. 480, suggests (“C” rating, meaning considerable doubt) an emendation that divides the Hebrew letters and adds one consonant.

1. MT, “and he led them” – מלהניי (BDB 624, KB 675)

2. LXX translates as “and he gave them rest” – מהל הניי

“Rest” (BDB 628, KB 679) is a recurrent covenant promise (i.e., Exod. 33:14; Deut. 3:20; 12:10; 25:19; Josh. 1:13,15; 21:44; 22:4; 23:1; 2 Sam. 7:1,11; 1 Kgs. 5:4; 1 Chr. 22:9,18; 23:25; 2 Chr. 14:6,7; 15:15; 20:30).

32:23 YHWH's actions on behalf of His people caused both fear and honor (i.e., bringing gifts).

1. fear
 - a. Exod. 15:14-16; 23:27
 - b. Deut. 2:25; 11:25
 - c. Josh. 2:9
 - d. 1 Chr. 14:17
 - e. 2 Chr. 17:10-11; 20:29
2. honor (i.e., bringing gifts)
 - a. Exod. 3:22; 11:2; 12:35-36
 - b. 2 Chr. 9:23-24; 17:10-11; 26:8; 32:23

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 32:24-26

²⁴In those days Hezekiah became mortally ill; and he prayed to the LORD, and the LORD spoke to him and gave him a sign. ²⁵But Hezekiah gave no return for the benefit he received, because his heart was proud; therefore wrath came on him and on Judah and Jerusalem. ²⁶However, Hezekiah humbled the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come on them in the days of Hezekiah.

32:24 This account of Hezekiah's illness and YHWH answering his prayer is found in 2 Kgs. 10:1-11; Isa. 28:1-8.

“mortally ill” This illness is not specified in Chronicles but

1. in 2 Kgs. 20:7; Isa. 38:21, it is related to a boil (BDB 1006), which was
 - a. one of the plagues on Egypt – Exod. 9:9-11
 - b. one of the consequences of covenant disobedience – Deut. 28:27,35
2. Josephus, *Antiq* 10.2.1., calls it “distemper” (physical) and “melancholy circumstances” (mental, i.e., no heir)

“gave him a sign” The miracle is recorded in 2 Kgs. 20:8-9. The shadow from the sun moved backwards on the steps.

32:25 The account of Hezekiah's prideful act and its consequences is found in 2 Kgs. 20:12-21 (note v. 31 here).

This does show that even godly people in good times still have a pull towards self! This is the residue of the Fall of Genesis 3. Hezekiah's pride brought terrible consequences, to his descendants and to all the people of Judah. His sin affected the whole nation! This same theological issue of corporality can be seen in

1. Adam's sin of Genesis 3 – Rom. 5:12-21
2. Achan's sin at Jericho – Joshua 7
3. David's sin with Bathsheba – 2 Samuel 11
4. Solomon's sin in his old age with his foreign wives – 1 Kgs. 11:1-8
5. Messiah's substitutionary death – Isaiah 53

“heart” See Special Topic: The Heart.

SPECIAL TOPIC: THE HEART (NT)

The Greek term *kardia* is used in the Septuagint and NT to reflect the Hebrew term *lēb* (BDB 523, KB 513). It is used in several ways (cf. Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 2nd ed., pp. 403-404).

1. the center of physical life, a metaphor for the person (cf. Acts 14:17; 2 Cor. 3:2-3; James 5:5)
2. the center of spiritual life (i.e., moral)

- a. God knows the heart (cf. Luke 16:15; Rom. 8:27; 1 Cor. 14:25; 1 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 2:23)
- b. used of mankind's spiritual life (cf. Matt. 15:18-19; 18:35; Rom. 6:17; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Pet. 1:22)
3. the center of the thought life (i.e., intellect, cf. Matt. 13:15; 24:48; Acts 7:23; 16:14; 28:27; Rom. 1:21; 10:6; 16:18; 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 1:18; 4:18; James 1:26; 2 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 18:7; heart is synonymous with mind in 2 Cor. 3:14-15 and Phil. 4:7)
4. the center of the volition (i.e., will, cf. Acts 5:4; 11:23; 1 Cor. 4:5; 7:37; 2 Cor. 9:7)
5. the center of the emotions (cf. Matt. 5:28; Acts 2:26,37; 7:54; 21:13; Rom. 1:24; 2 Cor. 2:4; 7:3; Eph. 6:22; Phil. 1:7)
6. unique place of the Spirit's activity (cf. Rom. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:22; Gal. 4:6 [i.e., Christ in our hearts, Eph. 3:17])
7. The heart is a metaphorical way of referring to the entire person (cf. Matt. 22:37, quoting Deut. 6:5). The thoughts, motives, and actions attributed to the heart fully reveal the type of individual. The OT has some striking usages of the terms
 - a. Gen. 6:6; 8:21, "God was grieved to His heart," also notice Hosea 11:8-9
 - b. Deut. 4:29; 6:5; 10:12, "with all your heart and all your soul"
 - c. Deut. 10:16; Jer. 9:26, "uncircumcised heart" and Rom. 2:29
 - d. Ezek. 18:31-32, "a new heart"
 - e. Ezek. 36:26, "a new heart" vs. "a heart of stone" (cf. Ezek. 11:19; Zech. 7:12)

32:26 "humbled himself" This VERB (BDB 488, KB 484, *Niphal* IMPERFECT with *waw*, cf. 2 Chr. 7:14; 12:6,7,12; 30:11; 33:12,19,23; 34:27) is an idiom for repentance. Repentance changes hearts, minds, and circumstances. See Special Topic: Repentance (OT) at 2 Chr. 7:14.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 32:27-31

²⁷Now Hezekiah had immense riches and honor; and he made for himself treasuries for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields and all kinds of valuable articles, ²⁸storehouses also for the produce of grain, wine and oil, pens for all kinds of cattle and sheepfolds for the flocks. ²⁹He made cities for himself and acquired flocks and herds in abundance, for God had given him very great wealth. ³⁰It was Hezekiah who stopped the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all that he did. ³¹Even *in the matter of* the envoys of the rulers of Babylon, who sent to him to inquire of the wonder that had happened in the land, God left him *alone only* to test him, that He might know all that was in his heart.

32:27 "spices" It seems unusual to modern westerners that perfumes (BDB 141, lit. "spices") were a source of wealth (cf. 1 Kgs. 10:2,10,25; 2 Chr. 9:1,24; Ezek. 27:22). In 2 Kgs. 20:13 and Isa. 39:2 "spices" are linked with "precious oils" (BDB 1032 and BDB 373 II). See NIDOTTE, vol. 1, pp. 774-775.

The MT has "shields" (BDB 171) after "spices" and before "all kinds of courtly vessels" (BDB 479 CONSTRUCT BDB 326). The NET Bible suggests an emendation unsupported by the ancient versions which changes "shields," מִיָּגָם to "precious items," מִיְּגָמָה (BDB 550, cf. v. 23).

32:29

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, TEV,

JPSOA, LXX "cities"

NJB "donkeys"

REB, Peshitta omits "cities"

The UBS Text Project, p. 481, gives "cities" an "A" rating. The NEB and REB follow the Peshitta,

which lists only animals. The NOUN “cities” (BDB 746) has the same consonants as “donkeys” (BDB 747). Donkey fits better the list of animals in this verse. Donkeys were the royal mount of Israel’s kings.

Large flocks were a symbol of agricultural blessing from YHWH (i.e., Lev. 26:2-6) for covenant obedience (i.e., Deut. 8:13; 15:14; 28:4).

32:30 The Jewish Study Bible, p. 1816, suggests this verse may refer to the Siloam tunnel (cf. 2 Kgs. 20:20). See R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 128.

32:31 “the wonder that had happened in the land” What “wonder” (lit. “sign,” BDB 68, cf. 2 Chr. 32:24)?

1. Because the term “wonder/sign” is used in vv. 24 and 31, most think it was Hezekiah’s healing (cf. 2 Kgs. 20:12); possibly because they were astral worshipers and the “sign” involved the sun.

2. But “in the land,” along with “envoys of the rulers of Babylon, who were enemies of Assyria,” I think it was the miraculous defeat of Sennacherib’s large army (v. 1) who had not been defeated before this (vv. 21-22; cf. 2 Kgs. 19:35-37). Also note the information in 2 Kgs. 20:13-21 and Edwin M. Yamauchi, *The Stones and the Scriptures*, p. 80.

See Special Topic: God Tests His People.

SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD TESTS HIS PEOPLE (OT)

The term “test” (BDB 650, KB 702, *Piel* PERFECT; Gen. 22:1) is used in the sense of “to try.” It is used in the sense of bringing someone to the place whereby they recognize and act on their own stated priorities. It is obvious from Genesis 12 through 22 that God is presenting Abraham with a series of situations (the rabbis say ten) in order to focus his love and trust in God and God alone (possibly Job). These tests were not so much for God’s sake, but for Abraham’s sake and his understanding of the God who called him out of Ur of the Chaldees. Abraham is asked to give up family, home, friends, inheritance, tradition and even the future (his promised son in Genesis 22) to follow God by faith. God tests all of His children in the area of their priority (cf. Matt. 4:1ff; Heb. 5:8; 12:5-13).

God tests (BDB 650) in order to know (BDB 393, see Special Topic: Know). Israel often tested God by their disobedience and God proved to be true to His word. Now God will give Israel and her people a chance to demonstrate their spoken allegiance and faith.

1. God tested His people corporately
 - a. Exod. 15:25; 16:4; 20:20
 - b. Deut. 8:2,16; 13:3
 - c. Jdgs. 2:22; 3:1,4
2. God tested individual Israelites
 - a. Abraham, Gen. 12:1-12
 - b. Hezekiah, 2 Chr. 32:31
3. The Psalm writers cry out for God to test them so as to remove any hidden flaws (cf. Ps. 26:2; 139:23)
4. The NT people of God are also tested, as was Jesus (Matthew 4; Luke 4; Heb. 5:8, see Special Topic: Greek Terms for Testing and Their Connotations).

“that He might know all that was in his heart” This is an idiom, not a theological affirmation, of “Open Theism.” God often “tests” his people to demonstrate their faith (i.e., Genesis 3; 22; see Special Topic above).

We must remember that God knows the motives of the human heart, which determine the appropriateness or inappropriateness of every action (cf. 1 Sam. 2:7; 16:7; 1 Kgs. 8:39; 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 6:30; Ps. 7:9; 44:21; 139:1-4; Pro. 15:11; 21:2; Jer. 11:20; 17:9-10; 20:12; Luke 16:15; Acts 1:24; 15:8; Rom. 8:27).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 32:32-33

³²Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his deeds of devotion, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ³³So Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the upper section of the tombs of the sons of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem honored him at his death. And his son Manasseh became king in his place.

32:32-33 This is a typical summary statement of a king's reign. Notice the two sources of information used by the Chronicler.

1. writing of Isaiah
2. royal document of the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel
3. other sources about this period are found in James B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East*, vol. 1.
 - a. Sennacherib's siege of Jerusalem, pp. 199-201
 - b. Lachish Ostraca, pp. 212-214
 - c. also note Esarhaddon's Syro-Palestinian campaign, 2 Chronicles 33, pp. 201-202

The Chronicler uniquely used prophetic sources (cf. 1 Chr. 29:29; 2 Chr. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 24:19-21; 26:22; 32:32; 33:19).

32:32 "his deeds of devotion" This is a secular use of the covenant word *hesed* (cf. Neh. 13:14). See Special Topic: Lovingkindness (*hesed*) at 2 Chr. 1:8.

32:33 "slept with his fathers" This is a Hebrew idiom for being buried in the royal tombs. The OT asserted a conscious, but gloomy, afterlife until judgment day (i.e., Dan. 12:2). See Special Topic: Where Are the Dead? at 2 Chr. 9:31.

"honored him" Honor (BDB 468 II) is used of several godly kings.

1. David – 1 Chr. 29:12,28
2. Solomon – 1 Kgs. 3:13; 2 Chr. 1:11-12
3. Jehoshaphat – 2 Chr. 17:5; 18:1
4. Hezekiah – here

Mostly the term is used of YHWH giving them honor, but here of the people of Judah and Jerusalem honoring Hezekiah at his burial.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. What “acts of faithfulness” is 2 Chr. 32:1 referring to?
2. Why did the Chronicler not mention Hezekiah trying to buy off Sennacherib?
3. Why does Isaiah 22 make Hezekiah’s preparations for the coming Assyrian siege evil, while the Chronicler affirms them?
4. Why are 2 Chr. 32:7-8 such wonderful theological verses?
5. How is 2 Chr. 32:10 the theological key to the whole chapter?
6. List the reasons given by Sennacherib’s envoy why Judah should not resist.
7. How did YHWH spare Jerusalem?
8. How does this chapter show Hezekiah’s great faith and yet human failure?

2 CHRONICLES 33

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
Manasseh Succeeds Hezekiah in Judah 33:1-9	Manasseh Reigns in Judah 33:1-9	The Bad Beginning of Manasseh; His Punishment and Repentance 33:1-9	King Manasseh of Judah 33:1-9	Manasseh Undoes the Work of Hezekiah (MT versing) 33:1-2 33:3-10
Manasseh's Idolatry Rebuked 33:10-13	Manasseh Restored After Repentance 33:10-13	33:10-13	Manasseh Repents 33:10-13	Manasseh's Captivity and Conversion 33:11-13
33:14-17	33:14-17	33:14-17	33:14-17	33:14 33:15-17
33:18-20	33:18-20	33:18-20	33:18-20	33:18-20
Amon Becomes King in Judah 33:21-25	Amon's Reign and Death 33:21-25	The Evil Reign of Amon 33:21-25	King Amon of Judah 33:21-23 33:24-25	The Obduracy of Amon 33:21-25

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 33:1-9

¹Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. ²He did evil in the sight of the LORD according to the abominations of the nations whom the LORD dispossessed before the sons of Israel. ³For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he also erected altars for the Baals and made Asherim, and worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. ⁴He built altars in the house of the LORD of which the LORD had said, "My name shall be in Jerusalem forever." ⁵For he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. ⁶He made his sons pass through the fire in the valley of Ben-hinnom; and he practiced witchcraft, used divination, practiced sorcery and dealt with mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to *anger*. ⁷Then he put the carved image of the idol which he had made in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, "In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; ⁸and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers, if only they will observe to do all that I have commanded them according to all the law, the statutes and the ordinances *given* through Moses." ⁹Thus Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the sons of Israel.

33:1 "Manasseh" One wonders if Hezekiah named his son after a northern tribe in an attempt to unify the tribes.

Manasseh was the longest reigning Judean king and one of the most wicked (cf. 2 Kings 21). Hezekiah's prayer for healing resulted in the birth of this evil son.

However, like no other, Manasseh shows the character of YHWH's mercy and the power of prayer and repentance!

Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.3.1., mentions his mother's name as "Hephzibah of Jerusalem," following 2 Kgs. 21:1. In Isa. 67:4 this name, "my delight is in her," becomes the new name of restored Jerusalem.

33:2-7 "all the abominations of the nations" See Special Topic: Abomination.

What a list of pagan gods and superstitions (cf. Lev. 19:26,31; 20:6; Deut. 18:9-12; 2 Kgs. 21:3-7; Jer. 7:30-31)!

1. rebuilt the high places (Canaanite)
 - a. altars for the *Ba'als* (male god)
 - b. made *Asherim* (female god)
2. worshiped the host of heaven (Assyrian, Babylonian, i.e., sun, moon, constellations), 2 Chr. 33:5; the "host of heaven" can refer to angels, cf. 1 Kgs. 22:19, but here to astral deities, cf. Deut. 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs. 12:16; 21:3; 23:4; Jer. 8:2
3. worshiped *Molech* (cf. Lev. 18:21; 20:2-4; Deut. 18:10; Jer. 7:31; 32:35), 2 Chr. 33:6
4. practiced witchcraft (cf. Deut. 18:10; see article in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, p. 957), 2 Chr. 33:6
5. used divination (cf. Lev. 19:26; Deut. 18:10; Jer. 27:9; NIDOTTE, vol. 3, pp. 945-951), 2 Chr. 33:6
6. practices sorcery (cf. Exod. 22:18; Lev. 19:26; Jer. 27:9; NIDOTTE, vol. 2, pp. 735-738), 2 Chr. 33:6
7. dealt with mediums (cf. Lev. 19:31; 20:6,27; Deut. 18:11; Isa. 8:19; 19:3), 2 Chr. 33:6
8. dealt with spiritists (cf. Lev. 19:31; 20:6,27; Deut. 18:11; Isa. 8:19; 19:3; NIDOTTE, vol. 1, pp. 303-304), 2 Chr. 33:6

He even put some of these pagan altars in the temple, 2 Chr. 33:4,7,15. See Special Topics:

Fertility Worship of the ANE at 2 Chr. 7:19

Moon Worship

Molech at 2 Chr. 28:3b

Diviner

See full notes at Deut. 18:10-11.

SPECIAL TOPIC: MOON WORSHIP

Moon worship was the most widespread mythology of the Ancient Near East starting with *Sumer* (the first written culture of the ANE). There was both a male and female aspect to the myth. Originally the moon god came from the rape of the grain goddess, *Ninlil* by *Enlil*, the sky god. *Enlil* was cast out of the pantheon and condemned to the underworld for his act, but when *Ninlil* found out she was with child she joined him. The child, *Sin*, was allowed to climb into the sky each night.

The worship of the moon is designed by its different phases.

1. new moon – *Asimbabbar*
2. crescent moon – *Sin*
3. full moon – *Nanna* (Sumerian "illumination" from *En-su*, "lord of wisdom")

These names basically mean "wise lord" (i.e., *Su'en*) or "illumination" (*Nanna*, Sumerian), worshiped at Ur of the Chaldees. The city itself was often called the city of Nannar. The fertility pair (i.e., *En-su* and consort *Ningal*) were worshiped at Ziggurats (large pyramids with flat tops) located in the city. The sun god (*Shamash*) was the firstborn of the couple and later *Ereshkigal* (the Queen of the Underworld) and *Inanna* (the Queen of Heaven/sky).

The cult was spread all across the ANE, but the major centers of worship were

1. Ur
2. Haran
3. Tema
4. Canaan
5. Mecca

Basically this mythology combined the fertility emphasis with astral worship.

The OT rejects astral worship (cf. Deut. 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kgs. 21:3,5; 23:5; Jer. 8:2; 19:13; Zeph. 1:5) and fertility worship (i.e., *Ba'al* and *Asherah*, Ugarit poems). The Hebrews, originally nomads, were very careful to resist moon worship because in general moon worship was characteristic of nomadic peoples who traveled at night, while the sun was much more generally worshiped by settled or agricultural peoples. Eventually nomads settle and then astral worship in general became the problem.

SPECIAL TOPIC: DIVINER

This PARTICIPLE (BDB 890, KB 1116, *Qal* PARTICIPLE) means “one trying to know and control the future.” Several different methods were used.

1. casting lots
2. consulting idols
3. examining sheep livers
4. necromancy
5. cloud reading
6. flight and perching of birds

Some typical texts are Num. 22:7; 23:23; Deut. 18:10,14; Jos. 13:22; 1 Sam. 6:5; 15:23; 28:8; 2 Kgs. 17:17; Isa. 2:6; 3:2; 44:25; Jer. 14:14; 27:9; 29:8; Ezek. 12:24; 13:6,7,9,23; 21:21,22,23,29; 22:28.

It is based on the pagan worldview that there

1. are spiritual beings active in this world who affect persons and events
2. is information about the future hidden in natural events and that gifted humans (i.e., diviners, mediums, spiritists, e.g., Lev. 19:26,31; 20:6,27; Deut. 18:11-12; 2 Chr. 33:6; false prophets, e.g., Jer. 14:13-16; 27:9; 29:8; Ezek. 13:6,9,23; 22:28) can know and influence this future

33:5 “the two courts” See 2 Chronicles 4:9.

33:6 “the valley of Ben-hinnom” See Special Topic: Where Are the Dead? (Gehenna, II. D) at 2 Chr. 9:31.

33:7 YHWH chose Jerusalem as the permanent site of His temple. Below is an excerpt from my exegetical commentary on Deut. 12:5.

“the place which the LORD your God shall choose” God chose (BDB 103, KB 119, *Qal* IMPERFECT, cf. vv. 11,14,18,21,26; 14:25; 15:20; 16:2,6,11,15; 17:8,10; 18:6; 26:2; 31:11) the worship site (cf. Exod. 20:24).

The tabernacle (ark) traveled with Israel:

1. Gilgal, Josh. 4:19; 10:6,15
2. Shechem, Josh 8:33
3. Shiloh, Josh 18:1; Jdgs. 18:31; 1 Sam. 1:3
4. Bethel, (possibly) Jdgs. 20:18,26-28; 21:2
5. Kiriath-jearim, ark, 1 Sam. 6:21; 7:1-2 (priests at Nob, cf. 1 Samuel 21-22)
6. Jerusalem
 - a. David captures the citadel of Jebus (cf. 2 Sam. 5:1-10)
 - b. David brings the ark to Jerusalem (cf. 2 Samuel 6)
 - c. David purchases the site of the temple (2 Sam. 24:15-25; 2 Chr. 3:1)

Many modern scholars have tried to assert that Deuteronomy was written late to accommodate Hezekiah and Josiah’s reforms of centralizing Israel’s worship. However, Deuteronomy does not name Jerusalem as the specific site that YHWH will choose. In context the theological contrast is between:

1. the local *Ba'al* shrines and the one shrine of Israel
2. the monotheism of Israel versus the polytheism of Canaan (and the rest of the ancient Near East)

33:8 “remove the foot of Israel” This is idiomatic for Israel’s occupation of Canaan. This promise of a

land goes back initially to Gen. 12:9

See Special Topic: Covenant Promises to the Patriarchs at 2 Chr. 1:9b.

“if” New Testament believers must recognize the difference between the conditional, performance-based OT (i.e., the cursing and blessing, Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; also known as “the two ways, cf. Deuteronomy 30) and the conditional, grace covenant of the NT. The character of YHWH does not change but His way of salvation does (i.e., “the new covenant,” cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-36).

See Special Topics:

Covenant at 2 Chr. 6:16

Characteristics of Israel’s God (OT), at 2 Chr. 2:10-12

“the law, the statutes and the ordinances” See Special Topic: Terms for God’s Revelation at 2 Chr. 7:17b.

33:9 What a shocking verse (cf. 2 Kgs. 21:9)! It reminds me of 1 Corinthians 5:1. Even people identified with Jewish/Christian faith do terrible things. This is a good place to remind all of us of Matt. 7:13-27!

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 33:10-13

¹⁰The Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. ¹¹Therefore the LORD brought the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria against them, and they captured Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze *chains* and took him to Babylon. ¹²When he was in distress, he entreated the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. ¹³When he prayed to Him, He was moved by his entreaty and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD *was* God.

33:10 This verse is alluding to YHWH’s sending His prophets to speak for Him (2 Chr. 33:18; 2 Kgs. 21:10, whom he killed, see Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.3.1.) to His people, but they would not (i.e., Matt. 5:12; 23:37).

See Special Topic: Prophets (OT) at 2 Chr. 12:15.

33:11-19 These are found only in Chronicles. Nothing of this (i.e., captivity or repentance and restoration) is found in 2 Kings.

33:11 “the Lord brought. . . Assyria” This is clearly seen in Isa. 10:5 and 8:5-10; as He will use Babylon (cf. Jer. 51:20-23 and Isa. 41:15-16; even later, Media-Persia, Cyrus II, cf. Isa. 44:28-45:1).

“hooks. . . bronze *chains*” Assyria was a cruel nation. If nations submitted to their control, Assyria gave them some local autonomy but if they resisted, Assyria ravaged the population.

1. killed the very young and old
2. skinned the leadership publicly
3. deported/exiled large segments of the population by hooking them together (i.e., hook in the nose or lip; this imagery is used of YHWH’s defeat of Sennacherib before Jerusalem, cf. 2 Kgs. 19:28)

Manasseh was humiliated in this way. It is surprising that he was taken to “Babylon” (2 Chr. 33:11) and not Assyria (see R. K. Harrison, *Old Testament Times*, pp. 238-239). Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.1.2., asserts YHWH sent “the king of Babylon and Chaldea” against Judah. There were several revolts in the early years of the new Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal (i.e., Egypt and Babylon).

33:12 This may be the most powerful affirmation of the spiritual effectiveness of

1. prayer
2. repentance

There is an apocryphal, non-canonical Jewish book called *Prayer of Manasseh*, which, though not

inspired, surely catches the essence of Manasseh's repentance. See R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 1255-1258.

Just imagine, the most wicked king of Judah, who knew better (i.e., Hezekiah's son) yet led Israel into terrible idolatry (cf. 2 Chr. 33:2-7), was forgiven and brought back to Jerusalem (v. 13) by the merciful YHWH. Yes, obedience is crucial but repentance unleashes divine mercy! This reminds me of the companion of Deut. 5:9 (i.e., third and fourth) with Deut. 5:10; 7:9 (i.e., to the thousandth). Judgment is YHWH's strange work (cf. Isa. 28:21c; Lam. 3:33).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 33:14-17

¹⁴Now after this he built the outer wall of the city of David on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entrance of the Fish Gate; and he encircled the Ophel *with it* and made it very high. Then he put army commanders in all the fortified cities of Judah. ¹⁵He also removed the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, as well as all the altars which he had built on the mountain of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem, and he threw *them* outside the city. ¹⁶He set up the altar of the LORD and sacrificed peace offerings and thank offerings on it; and he ordered Judah to serve the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁷Nevertheless the people still sacrificed in the high places, *although* only to the LORD their God.

33:14-17 These verses document the acts of Manasseh after his repentance and divine return to Jerusalem.

1. physical building projects
 - a. fortified the outer wall of Jerusalem
 - b. encircled Ophel with a high wall
 - c. stationed soldiers into the other fortified cities of Judah

2. spiritual reforms
 - a. removed the pagan idols
 - b. removed the pagan altars
 - c. set up (LXX, Vulgate, "fixed") the altar of the Lord
 - (1) sacrificed peace offerings
 - (2) sacrificed thank offerings
 - d. ordered Judah to serve only YHWH

33:17 The residual effect of Manasseh's sin continued among the population of Judah. Manasseh set in motion the idolatry and disobedience that resulted in the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar and the deportation of her population several times (cf. 2 Kgs. 21:10-15,16; 23:26; 24:3; Jer. 15:4).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 33:18-20

¹⁸Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh even his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, behold, they are among the records of the kings of Israel. ¹⁹His prayer also and *how God* was entreated by him, and all his sin, his unfaithfulness, and the sites on which he built high places and erected the Asherim and the carved images, before he humbled himself, behold, they are written in the records of the Hozai. ²⁰So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house. And Amon his son became king in his place.

33:18-20 This is the summary of Manasseh's reign. It highlights both his sin (2 Chr. 33:19) and faith (vv. 18-19a).

33:20 "they buried him in his own house" It means, "not in the royal tombs," but somewhere on the palace grounds. In 2 Kgs. 21:8, it has "in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza." The LXX puts the first part of this phrase here (see REB). This is followed by the Vulgate, but the Peshitta has the same as the MT.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 33:21-25

²¹Amon *was* twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. ²²He did evil in the sight of the Lord as Manasseh his father had done, and Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and he served them. ²³Moreover, he did not humble himself before the Lord as his father Manasseh had done, but Amon multiplied guilt. ²⁴Finally his servants conspired against him and put him to death in his own house. ²⁵But the people of the land killed all the conspirators against King Amon, and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place.

33:21-25 This is a brief account of the short reign of Amon (cf. 2 Kgs. 21:19-24). He tried to restore the pagan worship of his father. He would not listen to the seers and would not humble himself before YHWH.

He was assassinated by his servants in his palace. These servants were killed by the people of Jerusalem, who then coronated Josiah.

33:25 “the people of the land” This phrase has different meanings in different parts of the OT.

1. local non-Israelite people – Gen. 23:7,12,13; Ezra 9:1,11; 10:2,11
2. poor farmers or herdsmen – 2 Kgs. 24:14; 25:12
3. land owners and leaders – 2 Kgs. 11:14,18,19,20; 21:24; 23:30,35; 2 Chr. 23:20-21; 26:21;

33:25; 36:1; Jer. 1:18; 34:19; 37:2; 44:2

In Chronicles, #3 is meant.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. List the idolatries of Manasseh.
2. Who are “the host of heaven “?
3. Who is *Molech*?
4. What is the significance of the “if” in 2 Chr. 33:8?
5. Why is 2 Chr. 33:12-13 so significant?
6. Is 2 Chr. 33:17 a positive or negative statement?

2 CHRONICLES 34

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
Josiah Succeeds Amon in Judah 34:1-7	Josiah Reigns in Judah 34:1-7	The Good Reign of Josiah 34:1-7	King Josiah in Judah 34:1-2 Josiah Attacks Pagan Worship 34:3-7	Accession of Josiah 34:1-2 The First Reforms 34:3-7
Josiah Reforms the Temple 34:8-13	Hilkiah Finds the Book of the Law 34:8-13	Josiah's Reforms and Finding the Book of the Law 34:8-13	The Book of the Law Is Discovered 34:8-13	Work on the Temple 34:8-11 34:12-13
Hilkiah Discovers Lost Book of the Law 34:14-18 34:19-21	34:14-18 34:19-21	34:14-18 34:19-21	34:14-18 34:19-28a	The Book of the Law Discovered 34:14-18 34:19-21
Huldah, the Prophetess Speaks 34:22-28	34:22-28	34:22-28	34:28b Josiah Makes A Covenant to Obey the LORD	Huldah the Prophetess Is Consulted 34:22-28 The Renewal of the Covenant
34:29-30 34:31-33	34:29-33	34:29-33	23:29-33	34:29-32a 34:32b-33

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 34:1-7

¹Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. ²He did right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David and did not turn aside to the right or to the left. ³For in the eighth year of his reign while he was still a youth, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images. ⁴They tore down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars that were high above them he chopped down; also the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images he broke in pieces and ground to powder and scattered *it* on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵Then he burned the bones of the priests on their altars and purged Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶In the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, even as far as Naphtali, in their surrounding ruins, ⁷he also tore down the altars and beat the Asherim and the carved images into powder, and chopped down all the incense altars throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

34:1 “eight years old” There are several time designators in this chapter.

1. eight years old, v. 1
2. in the eighth year of his reign, v. 3
3. in the twelfth year of his reign, v. 3
4. in the eighteenth year of his reign, v. 8

See Special Topic: Kings of the Divided Kingdom.

The *IVP Bible Background Commentary* (OT), p. 457, puts Josiah's reign (640-609 B.C.) in historical context.

1. At the death of Ashurbanipal (669-603 B.C.), the Assyrian Empire began to lose power and control of the ANE.

2. By Josiah's time, two Egyptian Pharaoh's impacted Judah.

a. Psammetichus I (Psamtik, 663-609 B.C.)

b. Neco II (609-593 B.C.); the one who passed through Judah to fight Assyria and in the conflict Josiah is fatally wounded (for a good brief note on the tragedy of Josiah's death, see *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, pp. 245-246)

3. In the rising power of Neo-Babylon, Nabopolassar (626-605 B.C.) was in control. See chart, "A Brief Historical Survey of the Powers of Mesopotamia (using dates primarily from John Bright's *A History of Israel*, p. 462ff)"

KINGS OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

JUDAH'S KINGS (1 CHR. 3:1-16; MATT. 1:6-11)					ISRAEL'S KINGS				
NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS	NAMES & DATES	BRIGHT	YOUNG	HARRISON	BIBLE TEXTS
Rehoboam	922-915	933-917	931/30-913	1 Kgs. 11:43-12:27; 14:21-31 2 Chr. 9:31-12:16	Jeroboam I	922-901	933-912	931/30-910/09	1 Kgs. 11:26-40; 12:12-14:20
Abijah (Abijam)	915-914	916-914	913-911/10	1 Kgs. 14:31-15:8 2 Chr. 11:20,22					
Asa	913-873	913-873	911/10-870/69	1 Kgs. 15:8-30; 16:8,13,29; 22:41,43,46 Jer. 41:9	Nadab	901-900	912-911	910/09-909/08	1 Kgs. 14:20; 15:25-31
					Baasha	900-877	911-888	909/08-886/85	1 Kgs. 15:16-16:7; 2 Kgs. 9:9 2 Chr. 16:1-6 Jer. 41:9
Jehoshaphat	873-849	873-849	870/69-848	1 Kgs. 15:24; 22:1-51 2 Kgs. 3:1-12; 8:16-19 1 Chr. 3:10 2 Chr. 17:1-21:1	Elah	877-876	888-887	886/85-885/84	1 Kgs. 16:8-14
(Jehoram Co-regent)	-----	-----	853-848	1 Kgs. 22:50 2 Kgs. 1:17; 8:16; 12:18	Zimri (Army General) Omri (Army General)	876 876-869	887 887-877	885/84 885/84-874/73	1 Kgs. 16:9-20 2 Kgs. 9:31 1 Kgs. 16:15-28 2 Kgs. 8:26 Micah 6:16
Jehoram (Joram)	849-842	849-842	848-841	1 Chr. 22:1-20 Matthew 1:8					
Ahaziah	842	842	-----	2 Kgs. 8:24-9:29 2 Chr. 22:1-9	Ahab	869-850	876-854	874/73-853	1 Kgs. 16:29-22:40
					Ahaziah	850-849	854-853	853-852	1 Kgs. 22:40,41,49, 51-53 2 Chr. 18:1-3,19
Athaliah (Queen)	842-337	842-836	841-835	2 Kgs. 8:26; 11:1-20 2 Chr. 22:2-23:21	Jehoram (Joram)	849-842	853-842	852-841	2 Kgs. 1:17; 3:1-27; 8:16-9:29
Joash (Jehoash)	837-800	836-797	835-796	2 Kgs. 11:2-3; 12:1-21 2 Chr. 22:11-12; 24:1-27	Jehu (Army General)	842-815	842-815	841-814/13	1 Kgs. 19:16-17 2 Kgs. 9:1-10:36; 15:12 2 Chr. 22:7-9 Hosea 1:4

SPECIAL TOPIC: A BRIEF HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE POWERS OF MESOPOTAMIA
(using dates based primarily on John Bright's A History of Israel, p. 462ff.)

I. Assyrian Empire (Gen.10:11)

A. Religion and culture were greatly influenced by the Sumerian/Babylonian Empire.

B. Tentative list of rulers and approximate dates:

1. 1354-1318 – Asshur-Uballit I:
 - (a) conquered the Hittite city of Carchemish
 - (b) began to remove Hittite influence and allowed Assyria to develop
2. 1297-1266 – Adad-Nirari I (powerful king)
3. 1265-1235 – Shalmaneser I (powerful king)
4. 1234-1197 – Tukulti-Ninurta I
– first conquest of Babylonian empire to the south
5. 1118-1078 – Tiglath-Pileser I
– Assyria becomes a major power in Mesopotamia
6. 1012- 972 – Ashur-Rabi II
7. 972- 967 – Ashur-Resh-Isui II
8. 966- 934 – Tiglath-Pileser II
9. 934- 912 – Ashur-Dan II
10. 912- 890 – Adad-Nirari II
11. 890- 884 – Tukulti-Ninurta II
12. 883- 859 – Asshur-Nasir-Apal II
13. 859- 824 – Shalmaneser III
– Battle of Qarqar in 853
14. 824-811 – Shamashi-Adad V
15. 811-783 – Adad-Nirari III
16. 781-772 – Shalmaneser IV
17. 772-754 – Ashur-Dan III
18. 754-745 – Ashur-Nirari V
19. 745-727 – Tiglath-Pileser III:
 - a. called by his Babylonian throne name, Pul, in 2 Kings 15:19
 - b. very powerful king

c. started the policy of deporting conquered peoples

d. in 735 B.C. there was the formation of the “Syro-Ephramatic League,” which was an attempt to unify all the available military resources of the transjordan nations from the head waters of the Euphrates to Egypt for the purpose of neutralizing the rising military power of Assyria. King Ahaz of Judah refused to join and was invaded by Israel and Syria. He wrote to Tiglath-Pileser III for help against the advise of Isaiah (cf. 2 Kgs. 16; Isa. 7-12).

e. in 732 Tiglath-Pileser III invades and conquers Syria and Israel and places a vassal king on the throne of Israel, Hoshea (732-722). Thousands of Jews from the Northern Kingdom were exiled to Media (cf. 2 Kings 15).

20. 727-722 – Shalmaneser V

a. Hoshea forms an alliance with Egypt and is invaded by Assyria (cf. 2 Kings 17)

b. besieged Samaria in 724 B.C.

21. 722-705 – Sargon II:

a. After a three year siege started by Shalmaneser V, his successor Sargon II conquers the capital of Israel, Samaria. Over 27,000 are deported to Media.

- b. The Hittite empire is also conquered.
- c. In 714 – 711 another coalition of transjordan nations and Egypt rebelled against Assyria. This coalition is known as “the Ashdod Rebellion.” Even Hezekiah of Judah originally was involved. Assyria invaded and destroyed several Philistine cities.
- 22. 705-681 – Sennacherib:
 - a. In 705 another coalition of transjordan nations and Egypt rebelled after the death of Sargon II. Hezekiah fully supported this rebellion. Sennacherib invaded in 701. The rebellion was crushed but Jerusalem was spared by an act of God (cf. Isa. 36-39 and 2 Kings 18-19).
 - b. Sennacherib also put down the rebellion in Elam and Babylon.
- 23. 681-669 – Esarhaddon:
 - a. first Assyrian ruler to attack and conquer Egypt
 - b. had great sympathy with Babylon and rebuilt its capital city
- 24. 669-633 – Ashurbanipal:
 - a. also called Osnappar in Ezra 4:10
 - b. his brother Shamash-shum-ukin was made king of Babylon (later demoted to viceroy). This brought several years of peace between Assyria and Babylon, but there was an undercurrent of independence which broke out in 652 led by his brother (who had been demoted to Viceroy).
 - c. fall of Thebes, 663 B.C.
 - d. defeated Elam, 653, 645 B.C.
- 25. 633-629 – Asshur-Etil-Ilani
- 26. 629-612 – Sin-Shar-Ishkun
- 27. 612-609 – Asshur-Uballit II:
 - a. enthroned king in exile in Haran
 - b. the fall of Asshur in 614 B.C. and Nineveh in 612 B.C.

II. Neo-Babylon Empire:

- A. 703-? Merodach-Baladan
 - Started several revolts against Assyrian rule
- B. 652 Shamash-shum-ukin:
 - 1. Esarhaddon’s son and Assurbanipal’s brother
 - 2. he started a revolt against Assyria but was defeated
- C. 626-605 Nabopolassar:
 - 1. was the first monarch of the Neo-Babylonian Empire
 - 2. he attacked Assyria from the south while Cyaxares of Media attacked from the northeast
 - 3. the old Assyrian capital of Asshur fell in 614 and the powerful new capital of Nineveh fell in 612 B.C.
 - 4. the remnant of the Assyrian army retreated to Haran. They even installed a king.
 - 5. in 608 Pharaoh Necho II (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:29) marched north to help the remnant of the Assyrian army for the purpose of forming a buffer zone against the rising power of Babylon. Josiah, the godly king of Judah (cf. 2 Kings 23), opposed the movement of the Egyptian army through Palestine. There was a minor skirmish at Megiddo. Josiah was wounded and died (2 Kgs. 23:29-30). His son, Jehoahaz, was made king. Pharaoh Necho II arrived too late to stop the destruction of the Assyrian forces at Haran. He engaged the Babylonian forces commanded by the crown prince Nebuchadnezzar II and was soundly defeated in 605 B.C. at Carchemesh on the Euphrates River. On his way back to Egypt Pharaoh Necho stopped at Jerusalem and sacked the city. He replaced and deported Jehoahaz after only three months. He put another son of Josiah, Jehoiakim, on the throne (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:31-35).
 - 6. Nebuchadnezzar II chased the Egyptian army south through Palestine but he received word of his father’s death and returned to Babylon to be crowned. Later, in the same year, he returned to Palestine. He left Jehoiakim on the throne of Judah but exiled several thousand of the leading citizens and

several members of the royal family. Daniel and his friends were part of this deportation.

D. 605-562 – Nebuchadnezzar II:

1. From 597-538 Babylon was in complete control of Palestine.
2. In 597 another deportation from Jerusalem occurred because of Jehoiakim's alliance with Egypt (2 Kings 24). He died before the arrival of Nebuchadnezzar II. His son Jehoiachin was only king for three months when he was exiled to Babylon. Ten thousand citizens, including Ezekiel, were resettled close to the City of Babylon by the Canal Kebar.

3. In 586, after continued flirtation with Egypt, the City of Jerusalem was completely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25) and a mass deportation occurred. Zedekiah, who replaced Jehoiachin, was exiled and Gedaliah was appointed governor.

4. Gedaliah was killed by Jewish renegade military forces. These forces fled to Egypt and forced Jeremiah to go with them. Nebuchadnezzar invaded a fourth time (605, 596, 586, 582) and deported all remaining Jews that he could find.

E. 562-560 – Evil-merodach, Nebuchadnezzar's son, was also known as Amel-Marduk (Akkadian, "Man of Marduk") – He released Jehoiakim from prison but he had to remain in Babylon (cf. 2 Kgs. 25:27-30; Jer. 52:31).

F. 560-556 – Neriglissar

– He assassinated Evil-merodach, who was his brother-in-law

– He was previously Nebuchadnezzar's general who destroyed Jerusalem (cf. Jer. 39:3,13)

G. 556 – Labaski-Marduk

– He was Neriglissar's son who assumed kingship as a boy, but was assassinated after only nine months (Berossos).

H. 556-539 – Nabonidus (Akkadian, "Nebo is exalted"):

1. Nabonidus was not related to the royal house so he married a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar

2. He spent most of the time building a temple to the moon god "Sin" in Tema. He was the son of the high priestess of this goddess. This earned him the enmity of the priests of Marduk, chief god of Babylon.

3. He spent most of his time trying to put down revolts (in Syria and north Africa) and stabilize the kingdom.

4. He moved to Tema and left the affairs of state to his son, Belshazzar, in the capital, Babylon (cf. Daniel 5).

I. ? - 539 – Belshazzar (co-reign)

– The city of Babylon fell very quickly to the Persian Army under Gobryas of Gutium by diverting the waters of the Euphrates and entering the city unopposed. The priests and people of the city saw the Persians as liberators and restorers of Marduk. Gobryas was made Governor of Babylon by Cyrus II. Gobryas may have been the Darius the Mede of Dan. 5:31; 6:1. "Darius" means "royal one."

III. Medio-Persian Empire: Survey of the Rise of Cyrus II (Isa. 41:2,25;44:28-45:7; 46:11; 48:15):

A. 625-585 – Cyaxares was the king of Media that helped Babylon defeat Assyria.

B. 585-550 – Astyages was king of Media (capital was Ecbatana). Cyrus II was his grandson by Cambyses I (600-559, Persian) and Mandane (daughter of Astyages, Median).

C. 550-530 – Cyrus II of Ansham (eastern Elam) was a vassal king who revolted:

1. Nabonidus, the Babylonian king, supported Cyrus.

2. Astyages' general, Harpagus, led his army to join Cyrus' revolt

3. Cyrus II dethroned Astyages.

4. Nabonidus, in order to restore a balance of power, made an alliance with:

a. Egypt

b. Croesus, King of Lydia (Asia Minor)

5. 547 – Cyrus II marched against Sardis (capital of Lydia) and it fell in 546 B.C.
 6. 539 – In mid-October the general Ugbaru and Gobryas, both of Gutium, with Cyrus' army, took Babylon without resistance. Ugbaru was made governor, but died of war wounds within weeks, then Gobryas was made governor of Babylon.
 7. 539 – In late October Cyrus II “the Great” personally entered as liberator. His policy of kindness to national groups reversed years of deportation as a national policy.
 8. 538 – Jews and others (cf. the Cyrus Cylinder) were allowed to return home and rebuild their native temples (cf. 2 Chr. 36:22,23; Ezra 1:1-4). He also restored the vessels from YHWH’s temple which Nebuchadnezzar had taken to Marduk’s temple in Babylon (cf. Ezra 1:7-11; 6:5).
 9. 530 – Cyrus’ son, Cambyses II, succeeded him briefly as co-regent, but later the same year Cyrus died while in a military campaign.
- D. 530-522 – reign of Cambyses II
1. added Egyptian empire in 525 B.C. to the Medo-Persian Empire
 2. he had a short reign:
 - a. some say he committed suicide
 - b. Heroditus said he cut himself with his own sword while mounting his horse and died of the resulting infection.
 3. brief usurpation of the throne by Pseudo-Smerdis (Gaumata) – 522
- E. 522-486 – Darius I (Hystapes) came to rule
1. He was not of the royal line but a military general.
 2. He organized the Persian Empire using Cyrus’ plans for Satraps (cf. Ezra 5-6; also during Haggai’s and Zechariah’s time).
 3. He set up coinage like Lydia.
 4. He attempted to invade Greece, but was repulsed.
- F. 486-465 – Reign of Xerxes I:
1. put down Egyptian revolt
 2. intended to invade Greece and fulfill Persian dream but was defeated in the battle of Thermoply in 480 B.C. and Salamis in 479 B.C.
 3. Esther’s husband, who is called Ahasuerus in the Bible, was assassinated in 465 B.C.
- G. 465-424 – Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) reigned (cf Ezra 7-10; Nehemiah; Malachi):
1. Greeks continued to advance until confronted with the Peloponisian Civil Wars
 2. Greece divides (Athenian – Peloponisian)
 3. Greek civil wars lasted about 20 years
 4. during this period the Jewish community is strengthened
 5. brief reign of Xerxes II and Sekydianos – 423
- H. 423-404 – Darius II (Nothos) reigned
- I. 404-358 – Artaxerxes II (Mnemon) reigned
- J. 358-338 – Artaxerxes III (Ochos)reigned
- K. 338-336 – Arses reigned
- L. 336-331 – Darius III (Codomannus)reigned until the Battle of Issus 331 and was defeated by Greece
- IV. Survey of Egypt:
- A. Hyksos (Shepherd Kings – Semitic rulers) – 1720/10-1550
 - B. 18th Dynasty (1570-1310):
 1. 1570-1546 – Amosis
 - a. made Thebes the capital
 - b. invaded southern Canaan
 2. 1546-1525 – Amenophis I (Amenhotep I)

3. 1525-1494 – Thutmose I
4. 1494-1490 – Thutmose II - married Thutmose I's daughter, Hatshepsut
5. 1490-1435 – Thutmose III (nephew of Hatshepsut)
6. 1435-1414 – Amenophis II (Amenhotep II)
7. 1414-1406 – Thutmose IV
8. 1406-1370 – Amenophis III (Amenhotep III)

9. 1370-1353 – Amenophis IV (Akhenaten)
 - a. worshiped the Sun, Aten
 - b. instituted a form of high-god worship (monotheism)
 - c. Tel-El-Amarna letters are in this period
10. ? Smenkhare
11. ? Tutankhamun (Tutankhaten)
12. ? Ay (Aye-Eye)
13. 1340-1310 Haremhab

C. 19th Dynasty (1310-1200):

1. ? Rameses I (Ramses)
2. 1309-1290 – Seti I (Sethos)
3. 1290-1224 – Rameses II (Ramses II)
 - a. from archaeological evidence most likely Pharaoh of the exodus
 - b. built the cities of Avaris, Pithom and Ramses by Habaru (possibly Semites or

Hebrew) slaves

4. 1224-1216 – Marniptah (Merenptah)
5. ? Amenmesses
6. ? Seti II
7. ? Siptah
8. ? Tewosret

D. 20th Dynasty (1180-1065)

1. 1175-1144 – Rameses III
2. 1144-1065 – Rameses IV - XI

E. 21st Dynasty (1065-935):

1. ? Smendes
2. ? Herihor

F. 22nd Dynasty (935-725 - Libyan):

1. 935-914 – Shishak (Shosenk I or Sheshong I)
 - a. protected Jeroboam I until Solomon's death
 - b. conquered Palestine about 925 (cf. 1 Kings 14-25; 2 Chronicles 12)
2. 914-874 – Osorkon I
3. ? Osorkon II
4. ? Shoshnek II

G. 23rd Dynasty (759-715 - Libyan)

H. 24th Dynasty (725-709)

I. 25th Dynasty (716/15-663 – Ethiopian/Nubian):

1. 710/09-696/95 – Shabako (Shabaku)
2. 696/95-685/84 – Shebteko (Shebitku)
3. 690/89, 685/84-664 – Tirhakah (Taharqa)
4. ? Tantamun

- J. 26th Dynasty (663-525 – Saitic):
 1. 663-609 – Psammetichus I (Psamtik)
 2. 609-593 – Neco II (Necho)
 3. 593-588 – Psammetichus II (Psamtik)
 4. 588-569 – Apries (Hophra)
 5. 569-525 – Amasis
 6. ? Psammetichus III (Psamtik)
- K. 27th Dynasty (525-401 – Persian):
 1. 530-522 – Cambyses II (Cyrus II's son)
 2. 522-486 – Darius I
 3. 486-465 – Xerxes I
 4. 465-424 – Artaxerxes I
 5. 423-404 – Darius II
- L. Several brief dynasties (404-332)
 1. 404-359 – Artaxerxes II
 2. 359/8 - 338/7 – Artaxerxes III
 3. 338/7 - 336/7 – Arses
 4. 336/5 - 331 – Darius III

*for a differing chronology see Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia, vol. 2 p. 231.

- V. Survey of Greece:
 - A. 359-336 – Philip II of Macedon:
 1. built up Greece
 2. assassinated in 336 B.C.
 - B. 336-323 – Alexander II “the Great” (Philip's son):
 1. routed Darius III, the Persian king, at the battle of Issus
 2. died in 323 B.C. in Babylon of a fever at 32/33 yrs. of age
 3. Alexander's generals divided his empire at his death:
 - a. Cassander – Macedonia and Greece
 - b. Lysimachus – Thrace
 - c. Seleucus I – Syria and Babylon
 - d. Ptolemy – Egypt and Palestine
 - e. Antigonus – Asia Minor (He did not last long)
 - C. Seleucids vs. Ptolemies struggle for control of Palestine:
 1. Syria (Seleucid Rulers):
 - a. 312-280 – Seleucus I
 - b. 280-261 – Antiochus I Soter
 - c. 261-146 – Antiochus II Theus
 - d. 146-126 – Seleucus II Callinicus
 - e. 126-123 – Seleucus III Ceraunus
 - f. 123-117 – Antiochus III the Great
 - g. 117-115 – Seleucus IV Philopator
 - h. 115-113 – Antiochus IV Epiphanes
 - i. 113-112 – Antiochus V
 - j. 112-110 – Demetrius I
 2. Egyptian (Ptolemaic Rulers):

- a. 327-285 – Ptolemy I Soter
 - b. 285-246 – Ptolemy II Philadelphus
 - c. 246-221 – Ptolemy III Euegetes
 - d. 221-203 – Ptolemy IV Philopator
 - e. 203-181 – Ptolemy V Epiphanes
 - f. 181-146 – Ptolemy VI Philometor
3. Brief Survey:
- a. 301 – Palestine under Ptolemy rule for 181 years.
 - b. 175-163 – Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the eighth Seleucid ruler, wanted to Hellenize Jews by force, if necessary:
 - (1) constructed gymnasiums
 - (2) constructed pagan altars of Zeus Olympius in the Temple
 - c. 168 – December 13 – hog slain on the altar in Jerusalem by Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

Some consider this to be “the abomination of desolation” in Daniel 8.

- d. 167 – Mattathias, priest in Modin, and sons rebel. The best known of his sons was Judas Maccabeas, “Judas the Hammer.”
- e. 165 - December 25 – Temple rededicated. This is called Hanukkah or “Festival of Lights.”

For a good discussion of the dating problems, procedures and presuppositions see *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp. 10-17.

34:2 Notice how Josiah’s reign is characterized.

- 1. He did right in the sight of the Lord.
- 2. He walked in the ways of his father David.
- 3. He did not turn aside to the right or left (this idiom denotes conformity to God’s revealed laws, cf. Deut. 5:32; 17:11,20; 28:14; Josh. 1:7; 23:6; Pro. 25:25-27; 2 Kgs. 22:2).

The Chronicler spends much of his writings on David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. These kings demonstrated the power of obedience and devotion. Their lives were to be emulated by post-exilic Judah.

34:3 Josiah’s personal faith developed early.

- 1. He began to seek the God of his father, David; see full note on VERB at 2 Chr. 7:14 (eighth year, v. 3).
- 2. He began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of idolatry (twelfth year, vv. 3-7).
 - a. he destroyed high places, vv. 3,4,7
 - b. he destroyed *Asherim*, vv. 3-4,7
 - c. he destroyed the carved images, vv. 3-4
 - d. he destroyed the molten images, vv. 3-4
 - e. he destroyed the incense altars, vv. 4,7
 - f. he desecrated the graves of idol worshipers, v. 4
 - g. he desecrated the bones of the pagan priests on their altars, v. 5 (cf. 1 Kings 13)

None of the previous attempts at spiritual reform worked (i.e., 2 Chr. 14:5; 15:17; 17:6; 20:37; 33:15-17). The people of God had become completely and irreversibly entangled with Canaanite fertility worship. The Assyrian and Babylonian exiles were YHWH’s drastic measures to restore pure worship. They were an act of His love, as well as an act of His judgment.

See Special Topic: Israel’s Mandated Response to Canaanite Fertility Worship at 2 Chr. 31:1.

34:4 “incense altars” In the past the Hebrew word (BDB 329) was translated “son-pillars” (i.e., BDB 329; John Joseph Owens, *Analytical Key to the OT*, p. 921, and *Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible*, p. 465.

However, modern archaeology says that this term means “incense altar” (cf. Lev. 26:30; 2 Chr. 14:5; 34:4,7; Isa. 17:8; 27:9). R. K. Harrison, *Old Testament Times*, p, 8, discusses this archaeological find from Palmyra, northern Syria, found on a horned limestone altar.

I like R. K. Harrison so much because he relates the OT to the ANE. Two other persons I trust who do the same thing are

1. John H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context* and *The Lost World of Genesis One: Ancient Cosmology and the Origins Debate and Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the OT: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*

2. D. Brent Sandy, *Plowshares and Pruning Hooks: Rethinking the Language of Biblical Prophecy and Apocalyptic*

3. together, #1 and #2 wrote, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority*

I highly recommend all three authors who take the historical and literary setting of Scripture seriously!

34:6 The northern kingdom had been defeated and exiled to Assyria since 722 B.C. (Manasseh’s reign). Josiah extends his purge and reform to the northern tribes.

The “remnant of Israel” is mentioned in 2 Chr. 34:9. See Special Topic: The Remnant (three senses) at 2 Chr. 12:7.

“**Simeon**” It is surprising that the tribe of Simeon is mentioned here. Simeon was incorporated into Judah very early. Simeon is not mentioned at all in Samuel and Kings. It is mentioned briefly in lists in 1 Chronicles (cf. 1 Chr. 2:1; 4:24,42; 6:65; 12:25). It is mentioned only twice in 2 Chronicles, both in connection with reforms (i.e., Asa’s, 2 Chr. 15:9 and Josiah’s, 2 Chr. 34:9).

NASB	“in their surrounding ruins”
NKJV	“and all around, with axes”
NRSV	“in their ruins all around”
TEV	“and the devastated areas”
NJB	“and around their open spaces”
JPSOA	“(lying) in ruins on every side”
REB	“he burnt down their houses wherever he found them”
LXX	“in reference to their sites round about”
Peshitta	“in their streets round about”
Rotherham’s Bible	“searched their houses round about”

MT *Ketiv* has “he chose their houses”; the *Qere* has “with their swords” or “in their ruins.” The UBS Text Project, p. 484, gives the MT a “C” rating (considerable doubt).

The context is Josiah’s destruction of idols and idol worship. Apparently this different phrase refers to a search for these abominations in public (i.e., in the square, NJB) and private homes (i.e., REB, Rotherham’s Bible). Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.4.5., mentions this house-to-house search for idols.

Martin J. Selman, *Tyndale OT Commentaries*, p. 529, suggests the phrase means “destroyed their temples,” following I. Seeligmann.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 34:8-13

⁸Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah an official of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. ⁹They came to Hilkiyah the high priest and delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the doorkeepers, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim, and from all the remnant of Israel, and from all Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁰Then they gave *it* into the hands of the workmen

who had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and the workmen who were working in the house of the LORD used it to restore and repair the house. ¹¹They in turn gave *it* to the carpenters and to the builders to buy quarried stone and timber for couplings and to make beams for the houses which the kings of Judah had let go to ruin. ¹²The men did the work faithfully with foremen over them to supervise: Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites of the sons of Merari, Zechariah and Meshullam of the sons of the Kohathites, and the Levites, all who were skillful with musical instruments. ¹³*They were* also over the burden bearers, and supervised all the workmen from job to job; and *some* of the Levites were scribes and officials and gatekeepers.

34:8-13 These verses document Josiah's temple repair. Obviously the temple had been neglected and its procedures forgotten or ignored.

The repair was done by the supervision of Levites, using non-Levite workers. This fits the Chronicler's interest and affirmation of the Levites (cf. 2 Kgs. 22:7).

34:12-13 Once again, the Chronicler highlights the ministry of the Levites. These families of the tribe of Levi, given by YHWH to help the priests, are mentioned mostly in the books of

1. Numbers (56 times)
2. 1 Chronicles (34 times)
3. 2 Chronicles (64 times)
4. Ezra – Nehemiah (59 times)

It is surprising that the Chronicler does not mention the Levites' faithfulness, as does 2 Kgs. 22:7 (also note 2 Chr. 12:15).

Apparently the Levite musicians set a tempo for the construction crew (see the *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, I, p. 425).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 34:14-18

¹⁴When they were bringing out the money which had been brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiyah the priest found the book of the law of the Lord *given* by Moses. ¹⁵Hilkiyah responded and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan. ¹⁶Then Shaphan brought the book to the king and reported further word to the king, saying, "Everything that was entrusted to your servants they are doing. ¹⁷They have also emptied out the money which was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hands of the supervisors and the workmen." ¹⁸Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, "Hilkiyah the priest gave me a book." And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king.

34:14-21 These verses document the wonderful discovery of "the book of the law of the LORD given by Moses." It is uncertain to what Scriptures this refers.

1. Genesis – Deuteronomy
2. Deuteronomy (esp. chapter 28; see Special Topic: Moses' Authorship of the Pentateuch.
3. part of Exodus (i.e., the Book of the Covenant, v. 30, cf. Exodus 19-24)
4. Leviticus (esp. chapter 26)

Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.4.2., says "the holy books of Moses"; notice the PLURAL.

Notice the levels of royal leadership.

1. the High Priest – Hilkiyah
2. the royal recorder – Shaphan
3. the royal servant – Asaiah
4. the prophetess – Huldah

SPECIAL TOPIC: MOSES' AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH

A. The Bible itself does not name the author (as is true of many OT books). Genesis has no "I" sections like Ezra, Nehemiah, or "we" sections like Acts.

B. Jewish tradition

1. Ancient Jewish writers say Moses wrote it
 - a. Ben Sirah's *Ecclesiasticus*, 24:23, written about 185 B.C.
 - b. The *Baba Bathra* 14b, a part of the Talmud which gives traditional authorship of OT books
 - c. Philo of Alexandria, Egypt, a Jewish philosopher, living about 20 B.C. to A.D. 42
 - d. Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian, living about A.D. 37-70
2. YHWH reveals truth to Moses
 - a. Moses is said to have written for the people
 - (1) Exodus 17:14
 - (2) Exodus 24:4, 7
 - (3) Exodus 34:27, 28
 - (4) Numbers 33:2
 - (5) Deuteronomy 31:9, 22, 24-26
 - b. God is said to have spoken through Moses to the people
 - (1) Deuteronomy 5:4-5, 22
 - (2) Deuteronomy 6:1
 - (3) Deuteronomy 10:1
 - c. Moses is said to have spoken the words of the Torah to the people
 - (1) Deuteronomy 1:1, 3
 - (2) Deuteronomy 5:1
 - (3) Deuteronomy 27:1
 - (4) Deuteronomy 29:2
 - (5) Deuteronomy 31:1, 30
 - (6) Deuteronomy 32:44

 - (7) Deuteronomy 33:1
3. OT authors attribute it to Moses
 - a. Joshua 8:31
 - b. 2 Kings 14:6
 - c. Ezra 6:18
 - d. Nehemiah 8:1; 13:1-2
 - e. 2 Chronicles 25:4; 34:12; 35:12
 - f. Daniel 9:11
 - g. Malachi 4:4

C. Christian tradition

1. Jesus attributes quotes from the Torah to Moses
 - a. Matthew 8:4; 19:8
 - b. Mark 1:44; 7:10; 10:5; 12:26
 - c. Luke 5:14; 16:31; 20:37; 24:27, 44
 - d. John 5:46-47; 7:19, 23
2. Other NT authors attribute quotes from the Torah to Moses
 - a. Luke 2:22
 - b. Acts 3:22; 13:39; 15:1, 15-21; 26:22; 28:23
 - c. Romans 10:5, 19
 - d. 1 Corinthians 9:9

- e. 2 Corinthians 3:15
- f. Hebrews 10:28
- g. Revelation 15:3

3. Most early Church Fathers accepted Mosaic authorship. However, Ireneaus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Tertullian all had questions about Moses' relationship to the current canonical form of Genesis (cf. D. 2. on page 3).

D. Modern Scholarship

1. There have obviously been some editorial additions to the Torah (seemingly to make the ancient work more understandable to contemporary readers, which was a characteristic of Egyptian scribes):

- a. Genesis 12:6; 13:7; 14:14; 21:34; 32:32; 36:31; 47:11
- b. Exodus 11:3; 16:36
- c. Numbers 12:3; 13:22; 15:22-23; 21:14-15; 32:33ff
- d. Deuteronomy 3:14; 34:6

2. Ancient scribes were highly trained and educated. Their techniques, however, differed from country to country:

- a. In Mesopotamia, they were careful not to change anything, and even checked their works for accuracy. Here is an ancient Sumerian scribal footnote from about 1400 B.C.: "the work is complete from beginning to end, has been copied, revised, compared, and verified sign by sign."
- b. In Egypt they freely revised ancient texts to update them for contemporary readers.

The scribes at Qumran (i.e., Dead Sea Scrolls) followed this approach.

3. Scholars of the 19th century theorized that the Torah is a composite document from many sources over an extended period of time (Graff-Wellhausen). This theory was based on:

- a. the different names for God
- b. apparent doublets in the text
- c. the literary form of the accounts
- d. the theology of the accounts

4. Supposed sources and dates

- a. J source (use of YHWH from southern Israel) – 950 B.C.
- b. E source (use of Elohim from northern Israel) – 850 B.C.
- c. JE combined – 750 B.C.
- d. D source – 621 B.C. (The Book of the Law, 2 Kgs. 22:8, discovered during Josiah's reform while remodeling the Temple was supposedly the book of Deuteronomy, written by an unknown priest of Josiah's time to support his reform.).

e. P source (priestly rewrite of OT, especially ritual and procedure) – 400 B.C.

5. There have obviously been editorial additions to the Torah. The Jews assert that it was

- a. The High Priest (or another of his family) at the time of the writing
- b. Jeremiah the Prophet
- c. Ezra the Scribe – IV Esdras says he rewrote it because the originals were destroyed

in the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

6. However, the J. E. D. P. theory says more about our modern literary theories and categories than evidence from the Torah (R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, pp. 495-541 and *Tyndale's Commentaries*, "Leviticus," pp. 15-25).

7. Characteristics of Hebrew Literature

- a. Doublets, like Genesis 1 & 2, are common in Hebrew. Usually a general description is given, followed by a specific account. This may have been a way to accent truths or help oral memory.
- b. The ancient rabbis said the two most common names for God have theological

significance:

(1) YHWH – the Covenant name for deity as He relates to Israel as Savior and Redeemer (cf. Ps. 19:7-14; 103).

(2) *Elohim* – deity as Creator, Provider, and Sustainer of all life on earth (cf. Ps. 19:1-6; 104).

c. It is common in non-biblical near eastern literature for a variety of styles and vocabulary to occur in unified literary works (cf. R. K. Harrison, pp. 522-526).

8. There is an emerging theory that there were scribes (in different parts of Israel) working on different parts of the Pentateuch at the same time under the direction of Samuel (cf. 1 Sam. 10:25). This theory was first proposed by E. Robertson's *The Old Testament Problem*.

E. The evidence from ancient Near Eastern literature implies that Moses used written cuneiform documents or Mesopotamian style (patriarchal) oral traditions to write Genesis. This in no way means to imply a lessening of inspiration, but is an attempt to explain the literary phenomenon of the book of Genesis (cf. P. J. Wiseman's *New Discoveries in Babylonia about Genesis*). Beginning in Genesis 37, a marked Egyptian influence of style, form and vocabulary seems to indicate Moses used either literary productions or oral traditions from the Israelites' days in both

Egypt and Mesopotamia. Moses' formal education was entirely Egyptian! The exact literary formation of the Pentateuch is uncertain. I believe that Moses is the compiler and author of the vast majority of the Pentateuch, though he may have used scribes and/or written and oral (patriarchal) traditions. His writings have been updated by later scribes. The historicity and trustworthiness of these first few books of the OT have been illustrated by modern archaeology.

34:14 YHWH's codified revelation to Moses is called by several names in Chronicles and Ezra – Nehemiah (note the variety).

1. "the Law of the LORD" – 1 Chr. 16:40; 2 Chr. 12:1; 31:3,4; 35:26; Ezra 7:10
2. "the Law of the LORD your God" – 1 Chr. 22:12
3. "My Law" – 2 Chr. 6:16
4. "the Law and the commandment" – 2 Chr. 14:4; 31:21
5. "the book of the Law of the LORD" – 2 Chr. 17:9; 34:14
6. "between Law and commandment, statutes and ordinances" – 2 Chr. 19:10
7. "the law of Moses" – 2 Chr. 23:18; 30:16; Ezra 3:2; 7:6
8. "in the Law in the book of Moses" – 2 Chr. 25:4
9. "according to the whole Law, the statutes and the ordinances" – 2 Chr. 33:8
10. "the book of the law" – 2 Chr. 34:15
11. "of the Law" – 2 Chr. 34:19
12. "the book of the covenant" – 2 Chr. 34:30
13. "His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes" – 2 Chr. 34:31
14. "the commandment of our God. . . according to the Law" – Ezra 10:3
15. "the book of the Law of Moses" – Neh. 8:1
16. "the law" – Neh. 8:2,7,14
17. "the book of the law" – Neh. 8:3
18. "from the book, from the law of God" – Neh. 8:8
19. "the words of the law" – Neh. 8:9,13
20. "the book of the law of God" – Neh. 8:18
21. "the book of the law of the LORD their God" – Neh. 9:3
22. "just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments" – Neh. 9:13,14
23. "Your Law" – Neh. 9:26,29,34

24. “the Law of God” – Neh. 10:28

34:15 “the scribes” See Special Topic: Scribes at 2 Chr. 24:10c.

34:18 The recently found book was read to Josiah. This was part of YHWH’s guidelines for the king (cf. Deut. 17:19) and the people (cf. Exod. 24:7; Deut. 4:9-10; 31:11). Reading of the Law of Moses to the people was also part of the covenant renewal ceremony (cf. Josh. 8:30-35; Nehemiah 8; 9:3).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 34:19-21

¹⁹When the king heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes. ²⁰Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king’s servant, saying, ²¹“Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book which has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD which is poured out on us because our fathers have not observed the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book.”

34:19 “he tore his clothes” This was a sign of mourning. See Special Topic: Grieving Rites at 2 Chr. 23:13.

34:21 This verse clearly shows why Josiah was grieving. It was the people of God’s covenant disobedience which triggered His judgment (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 34:22-28

²²So Hilkiah and *those* whom the king had told went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, the keeper of the wardrobe (now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter); and they spoke to her regarding this. ²³She said to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to Me, ²⁴thus says the LORD, “Behold, I am bringing evil on this place and on its inhabitants, *even* all the curses written in the book which they have read in the presence of the king of Judah. ²⁵Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place and it shall not be quenched.”’ ²⁶But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus you will say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel *regarding* the words which you have heard, ²⁷Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and *because* you humbled yourself before Me, tore your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you,” declares the LORD. ²⁸Behold, I will gather you to your fathers and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, so your eyes will not see all the evil which I will bring on this place and on its inhabitants.”’” And they brought back word to the king.

34:22-28 Josiah commanded the priests (i.e., “go,” “inquire,” *Qal* IMPERATIVES) to find a prophet to give clear guidance on what he should do. They went to Huldah the prophetess, not Jeremiah.

See Special Topic: Women in the Bible.

Her words were very strong about YHWH’s plans to judge His people because of their repeated idolatry and faithlessness, both leaders and people. The curses of the law have been loosed (cf. 2 Chr. 34:24-25)! This, however, will not happen in Josiah’s day. He will have a reign of peace (v. 28).

Notice the words of the prophetess, as well as prophets, reinforce the written word, not add to it. They are interpreters of revelation, not innovators.

See Special Topic: Prophecy (OT) at 2 Chr. 12:15. (I don’t have one titled “OT Prophets”)

SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN THE BIBLE

I. The Old Testament

A. Culturally women were considered property

1. included in list of property (Exodus 20:17)
2. treatment of slave women (Exodus 21:7-11)
3. women's vows annulable by socially responsible male (Numbers 30)
4. women as spoils of war (Deuteronomy 20:10-14; 21:10-14)

B. Practically there was a mutuality

1. male and female made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27)
2. honor father and mother (Exodus 20:12 [Deut. 5:16])
3. reverence mother and father (Leviticus 19:3; 20:9)
4. men and women could be Nazirites (Numbers 6:1-2)
5. daughters have right of inheritance (Numbers 27:1-11)
6. part of covenant people (Deuteronomy 29:10-12)
7. observe teaching of father and mother (Proverbs 1:8; 6:20)
8. sons and daughters of Heman (Levite family) led music in Temple (1 Chronicles 25:5-6)
9. sons and daughters will prophesy in new age (Joel 2:28-29)

C. Women were in leadership roles

1. Moses' sister, Miriam, called a prophetess (Exodus 15:20-21 also note Micah 6:4)
2. women gifted by God to weave material for the Tabernacle (Exodus 35:25-26)
3. a married woman, Deborah, also a prophetess (cf. Jdgs. 4:4), led all the tribes (Judges 4:4-5; 5:7)
4. Huldah was a prophetess whom King Josiah invoked to read and interpret the newly-found "Book of the Law" (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chr. 34:22-27)
5. Queen Esther, a godly woman, saved Jews in Persia

II. The New Testament

A. Culturally women in both Judaism and the Greco-Roman world were second class citizens with few rights or privileges (the exception was Macedonia).

B. Women in leadership roles

1. Elizabeth and Mary, godly women available to God (Luke 1-2)
2. Anna, a prophetess serving at the Temple (Luke 2:36)
3. Lydia, believer and leader of a house church (Acts 16:14,40)
4. Philip's four virgin daughters were prophetesses (Acts 21:8-9)
5. Phoebe, deaconess of church at Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1)
6. Prisca (Priscilla), Paul's fellow-worker and teacher of Apollos (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:3)
7. Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, Julia, Nereus' sister, several women co-workers of Paul (Rom. 16:6-16)
8. Junia (KJV), possibly a woman apostle (Rom. 16:7)
9. Euodia and Syntyche, co-workers with Paul (Phil. 4:2-3)

III. How does a modern believer balance the divergent biblical examples?

A. How does one determine historical or cultural truths, which apply only to the original context, from eternal truths valid for all churches, all believers of all ages?

1. We must take the intent of the original inspired author very seriously. The Bible is the Word of God and the only source for faith and practice.
2. We must deal with the obviously historically-conditioned inspired texts.
 - a. the cultus (i.e., ritual and liturgy) of Israel (cf. Acts 15; Gal. 3)
 - b. first century Judaism
 - c. Paul's obviously historically-conditioned statements in 1 Corinthians
 - (1) the legal system of pagan Rome (1 Corinthians 6)

- (2) remaining a slave (1 Cor. 7:20-24)
- (3) celibacy (1 Cor. 7:1-35)
- (4) virgins (1 Cor. 7:36-38)
- (5) food sacrificed to an idol (1 Cor. 8; 10:23-33)
- (6) unworthy actions at Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11)

3. God fully and clearly revealed Himself to a particular culture, a particular day. We must take seriously the revelation, but not every aspect of its historical accommodation. The Word of God was written in human words, addressed to a particular culture at a particular time.

B. Biblical interpretation must seek the original author's intent. What was he saying to his day? This is foundational and crucial for proper interpretation. But then we must apply this to our own day.

The real interpretive problem may be defining the term. Were there more ministries than pastors who were seen as leadership? Were deaconesses or prophetesses seen as leaders? It is quite clear that Paul, in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 and 1 Tim. 2:9-15, is asserting that women should not take the lead in public worship! But how do I apply that today? I do not want Paul's culture or my culture to silence God's Word and will. Possibly Paul's day was too limiting, but also my day may be too open. I feel so uncomfortable saying that Paul's words and teachings are conditional, first century, local situational truths. Who am I that I should let my mind or my culture negate an inspired author?!

However, what do I do when there are biblical examples of women leaders (even in Paul's writings, cf. Romans 16)? A good example of this is Paul's discussion of public worship in 1 Corinthians 11-14. In 1 Cor. 11:5 he seems to allow women's preaching and praying in public worship, with their heads covered, yet in 14:34-35 he demands they remain silent! There were deaconesses (cf. Rom. 16:1) and prophetesses (cf. Acts 21:9). It is this diversity that allows me freedom to identify Paul's comments (as relates to restrictions on women) as limited to first century Corinth and Ephesus. In both churches there were problems with women exercising their newly-found freedom (cf. Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth*), which could have caused difficulty for the church in reaching their society for Christ. Their freedom had to be limited so that the gospel could be more effective.

My day is just the opposite of Paul's. In my day the gospel might be limited if articulate, trained women are not allowed to share the gospel, not allowed to lead! What is the ultimate goal of public worship? Is it not evangelism and discipleship? Can God be honored and pleased with women leaders? The Bible as a whole seems to say "yes"!

I want to yield to Paul; my theology is primarily Pauline. I do not want to be overly influenced or manipulated by modern feminism! However, I feel the church has been slow to respond to obvious biblical truths, like the inappropriateness of slavery, racism, bigotry, and sexism. It has also been slow to respond appropriately to the abuse of women in the modern world. God in Christ set free the slave and the woman. I dare not let a culture-bound text reshackle them.

One more point: as an interpreter I know that Corinth was a very disrupted church. The charismatic gifts were prized and flaunted. Women may have been caught up in this. I also believe that Ephesus was being affected by false teachers who were taking advantage of women and using them as surrogate speakers in the house churches of Ephesus.

C. Suggestions for further reading

1. *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth* by Gordon Fee and Doug Stuart (pp. 61-77)
2. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* by Gordon Fee
3. *Hard Sayings of the Bible* by Walter C. Kaiser, Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce, and Manfred T. Branch (pp. 613-616; 665-667)

34:25 "all the works of their hands" This refers to the creation of idols, either

1. carved and overlaid

- molten metal formed into idols

“provoke Me to anger. . .My wrath” See Special Topic: Anthropomorphic Language Used to Describe God at 2 Chr. 6:4.

34:27 Josiah and the people will be spared YHWH’s wrath because

- Josiah’s heart was tender (BDB 939, KB 1236, *Qal* PERFECT)
- Josiah humbled himself before God (BDB 488, KB 484, *Niphal* IMPERFECT with *waw*, cf. 1 Chr. 28:9; 2 Chr. 7:14; 12:7; 32:26)
 - tore his clothes, 2 Chr. 34:19
 - wept before Me (i.e., in prayer)

See Special Topic: Grieving Rites at 2 Chr. 23:13.

NASB, NKJV “your heart was tender”

NRSV “your heart was penitent”

TEV “you repented”

NJB “your heart has been touched”

JPSOA “your heart was softened”

REB “you have shown a willing heart”

LXX “your heart was embarrassed”

This VERB (BDB 939, KB 1236, *Qal* PERFECT, cf. 2 Kgs. 22:19) is used in two senses.

- fear of men – Deut. 20:3,8
- soft hearted towards God – 2 Kgs. 22:19; 2 Chr. 12:7; 32:26

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 34:29-30

²⁹Then the king sent and gathered all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. ³⁰The king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the Levites and all the people, from the greatest to the least; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.

34:29-33 This is a covenant renewal ceremony.

- law is read
- people promised (INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT, *Qal*)
 - to walk after YHWH, 2 Chr. 34:31
 - to keep His law, v. 31
 - to perform the words of the book, v. 31
 - to serve the Lord their God, v. 33

34:30 Various segments of society heard the word of God read.

- the king
- all the men of Judah
- the inhabitants of Jerusalem
- the priests
- the Levites (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:2 has “prophets”)
- all the people
 - from the greatest
 - to the least
- 2 Chr. 34:9 gives a list of those who gave money for the temple to be repaired
 - Manasseh

- b. Ephraim
- c. all the remnant of Israel
- d. all Benjamin
- e. the inhabitants of Jerusalem

so one can assume those mentioned in v. 17 were there when the law was read in v. 9.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 34:31-33

³¹Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant written in this book. ³²Moreover, he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand *with him*. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. ³³Josiah removed all the abominations from all the lands belonging to the sons of Israel, and made all who were present in Israel to serve the LORD their God. Throughout his lifetime they did not turn from eshithe LORD God of their fathers.

34:31 “commandments. . .testimonies. . .statutes” See Special Topic: Terms for God’s Revelation at 2 Chr. 7:17b.

34:32

**NASB, NKJV,
NRSV, TEV,
NJB, JPSOA,
LXX, Peshitta “Benjamin”**

REB “to keep the covenant”

The UBS Text Project, p. 486, gives “Benjamin” an “A” rating. It is followed by all the ancient versions.

The NEB and REB make an emendation based on 2 Kgs. 23:3; *The Bible Commentary, 1 Samuel-Esther*, by F. C. Cook, says “‘Benjamin’ is never put in contrast with ‘Jerusalem’ but always with ‘Judah.’”

34:33 Josiah’s reform (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:4-14,24) example and influence protected the people throughout his life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. What makes Judean kings do what is right in YHWH's eyes?
2. What did Josiah do to the idols in the land?
3. What was "the book of the law of the Lord"?
4. Why did Josiah tear his clothes when he heard the law read?
5. What does 2 Chr. 34:22 say about female leadership?
6. What are "the curses" of the book in 2 Chr. 34:24?
7. Why did YHWH delay His judgment?
8. How can 2 Chr. 34:28 be reconciled with Josiah's early, violent death in chapter 35?

2 CHRONICLES 35

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
The Passover Observed Again	Josiah Keeps the Passover	Josiah's Great Passover	Josiah Celebrates the Passover	Preparations for the Passover
35:1-9	35:1-9	35:1-6	35:1-6	35:1
		35:7-9	35:7-9	35:2-6
				35:7-9
				The Celebration of the Passover
35:10-15	35:10-19	35:10-15	35:10-19	35:10-13
				35:14-15
35:16-19		35:16-19		35:16-18
				Death of Josiah
Josiah Dies in Battle	Josiah Dies in Battle	Josiah's Tragic Mistake and Consequent Death	The End of Josiah's Reign	35:19
35:20-27	35:20-25	35:20-27	35:20-22	35:20-25
			35:23-24	
			35:25	
	35:26-27		35:26-27	35:26-27

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 35:1-9

¹Then Josiah celebrated the Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover *animals* on the fourteenth *day* of the first month. ²He set the priests in their offices and encouraged them in the service of the house of the LORD. ³He also said to the Levites who taught all Israel *and* who were holy to the LORD, "Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel built; it will be a burden on *your* shoulders no longer. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel. ⁴Prepare *yourselves* by your fathers' households in your divisions, according to the writing of David king of Israel and according to the writing of his son Solomon. ⁵Moreover, stand in the holy place according to the sections of the fathers' households of your brethren the lay people, and according to the Levites, by division of a father's household. ⁶Now slaughter the Passover *animals*, sanctify yourselves and prepare for your brethren to do according to the word of the LORD by Moses." ⁷Josiah contributed to the lay people, to all who were present, flocks of lambs and young goats, all for the Passover offerings, numbering 30,000 plus 3,000 bulls; these were from the king's possessions. ⁸His officers also contributed a freewill offering to the people, the priests and the Levites. Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, the officials of the house of God, gave to the priests for the Passover offerings 2,600 *from the flocks* and 300 bulls. ⁹Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, the officers of the Levites, contributed to the Levites for the Passover offerings 5,000 *from the flocks* and 500 bulls.

35:1-19 The Chronicler greatly expands his account of the Passover when compared to 2 Kgs. 23:21-23. The Chronicler is much more interested in the temple and its function and personnel than the writer of Kings.

35:1 “the Passover” The Passover was the major miracle of YHWH’s promised deliverance of Israel (cf. Gen. 15:12-21). This was the last plague on Egypt (cf. Exodus 11). It became an annual feast of remembrance (cf. Exodus 12).

In the closing period of Judah’s history as a nation, two godly kings tried to restore Judah to the Mosaic covenant.

1. Hezekiah – 2 Chronicles 30
2. Josiah – 2 Chronicles 35

In Ezra’s day they also wanted to reestablish the Mosaic covenant and used the observance of the Passover as a means (cf. Ezra 6).

See Special Topic: The Passover at 2 Chr. 30:1b.

“they slaughtered” Usually the offerer killed the sacrifice (i.e., Lev. 1:2-7). Passover was a family affair in Exodus but became a national feast day. There were so many animals killed at the same time that the Levites took over the slaughter and then gave the collected blood to the priests (cf. 2 Chr. 35:6,11).

“on the fourteenth *day* of the first month” This was the normal date for its observance. Hezekiah had to postpone it one month because there were not enough consecrated priests/Levites (cf. 2 Chr. 29:34; 30:2-3).

35:3 “the Levites who taught all Israel” See NIDOTTE, vol. 2, pp. 772-777. Originally the Levites were

1. to carry the portable tabernacle
2. to help the priests in the sacrificial system
3. later when the house of YHWH was in a permanent place, they were able to take on more tasks
4. they became the local teachers and interpreters of the law. In time, this position would turn into “the scribes” (cf. 2 Chr. 17:7-9; Neh. 8:7).

See Special Topics: Levitical Priests, II. at 2 Chr. 5:5b, and Scribes at 2 Chr. 24:10c.

“Put the holy ark in the house” There are two ways to view this verse.

1. It is referring to 1 Kings 8.
2. Somehow, there was an annual reenactment where the ark was brought in (Oxford Study Bible, p. 470).
3. NASB Study Bible, p. 629, suggests it had been taken from the temple and hidden during the evil days of Ahaz (i.e., 2 Chr. 28:24), Manasseh (i.e., 2 Chr. 33:7), and Amon (i.e., 2 Chr. 33:22).

See Special Topic: Altar of Sacrifice at 2 Chr. 1:5.

35:4-5 David organized the priests and Levites into divisions and task-oriented groups (cf. 1 Chronicles 9; 24) as did Solomon (2 Chr. 8:14).

35:4 The first VERB in the MT is “be established” (BDB 465, KB 464, *Niphal* IMPERATIVE) but the Masoretic scholars changed this (*Qere*) to “prepare yourselves” (BDB 465, KB 464, *Hiphil* IMPERATIVE); same root, different stems.

In 2 Chr. 35:3, there is a series of seven IMPERATIVES.

1. put, v. 3 – BDB 678, KB 733, *Qal*
2. serve, v. 3 – BDB 712, KB 773, *Qal*
3. prepare, v. 4 – *Hiphil*
4. stand, v. 5 – BDB 763, KB 840, *Qal*
5. slaughter, v. 6 – BDB 1006, KB 1458, *Qal*

6. sanctify, v. 6 – BDB 872, KB 1073, *Hithpael*
7. prepare, v. 6 – same as #3

35:5 There are three roots that refer to subsections of a larger tribal/clan unit. Two of them appear only in this chapter.

1. “the sections,” v. 5, הגלפ – BDB 811, KB 929
2. “the sections,” v. 12, גלפמ – BDB 811, KB 618
3. “the divisions, Jdgs. 5:15,16, הגלפ – BDB 811, KB 929

Numbers 1 and 3 differ only in vowels. The exact meaning of these terms is uncertain. In determining the meaning of rare words, one must look at

1. synonymous roots
2. cognate languages
3. ancient versions
4. but the most important is context, context, context

35:6 “sanctify yourselves” See note at 2 Chr. 29:5.

“to do according to the word of the LORD by Moses” This is the key thought of spiritual renewal.

1. obedience
2. to YHWH’s revealed word
3. through His spokesperson

This is how the covenant blessings came and the curses were avoided (cf. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; 30:1-19; Psalm 1).

35:7-9 Josiah was obligated as the king to give sacrifices on behalf of the people.

1. Hezekiah – 2 Chr. 30:24-25
2. end-time prince – Ezek. 45:17

The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 4, p. 553, suggests:

“While the flocks of sheep and goats provided for the paschal lambs, the cattle must have served for peace offerings, for feasting throughout the days of Unleavened Bread that followed the Passover (cf. on v. 17, on 30:24, and on 1 Chron 29:21).”

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 35:10-15

¹⁰So the service was prepared, and the priests stood at their stations and the Levites by their divisions according to the king’s command. ¹¹They slaughtered the Passover *animals*, and while the priests sprinkled the blood *received* from their hand, the Levites skinned them. ¹²Then they removed the burnt offerings that *they* might give them to the sections of the fathers’ households of the lay people to present to the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. They did this also with the bulls. ¹³So they roasted the Passover *animals* on the fire according to the ordinance, and they boiled the holy things in pots, in kettles, in pans, and carried *them* speedily to all the lay people. ¹⁴Afterwards they prepared for themselves and for the priests, because the priests, the sons of Aaron, *were* offering the burnt offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, the sons of Aaron. ¹⁵The singers, the sons of Asaph, *were* also at their stations according to the command of David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king’s seer; and the gatekeepers at each gate did not have to depart from their service, because the Levites their brethren prepared for them.

35:11 Note the divisions of labor at the altar (note 2 Chr. 29:34).

1. Levites killed the animal and caught the blood (LXX addition)
2. Priests sprinkled the blood on the altar (cf. Lev. 1:5,11; 3:2,8,13; 7:2,14; 17:6)

3. the Levites skinned the animal (BDB 832, KB 980, *Hiphil* ACTIVE PARTICIPLE, cf. Lev. 1:6; 2 Chr. 29:34)

35:12 “to the sections” This word (BDB 811) occurs only here and apparently means a subdivision of non-Levitical families (cf. NIDOTTE, vol. 2, pp. 1055-1056). A similar root (BDB 324) is found in 1 Chr. 23:6, where it does return to Levites.

“as it is written in the book of Moses” See note at 2 Chr. 34:14.

35:13 “the ordinance” See Special Topic: Terms for God’s Revelation at 2 Chr. 7:17b.

“they boiled the holy things in pots, in kettles, in pans and carried *them* speedily to all the lay people” This is surprising. Originally Passover was a family event involving only sheep or goats (i.e., Exod. 12:3-5). Here, parts of the Passover sacrifices are shared with the people (i.e., like a peace offering). This may be the meaning of Deut. 12:7; 16:2,7 (which allowed cattle, and the meat must be boiled, while Exodus 12 requires roasting). It seems the Chronicler is referring to

1. the Passover kid or lamb, roasted with fire
2. other peace offerings were boiled and shared with all (i.e., notice all the types of cooking containers used)

There are many Hebrew terms for different sizes of pots, pans, kettles, bowls, etc. used at home, in the temple, and for divination. For the long list, see NIDOTTE, vol.2, pp. 655-656.

“carried *them* speedily” Part of the Passover was to prepare the meal and eat it quickly. But here, it seems to refer to providing the food (both the Passover sheep/goat and fellowship beef) to

1. the people, 2 Chr. 35:13; also note vv. 5-6
2. the priests, v. 14
3. the Levites, v. 15

35:14 “the burnt offerings and the fat” These items were completely burned on the altar of sacrifice.

1. burnt offerings – Leviticus 1
2. fat (cf. Lev. 3:3-4,9-10,16-17; 4:8-9,19,26,30,35; 6:12; 7:3-4,23-25,30-31,33; 8:16,25; 9:10,19-20,24)

35:15 “The singers. . .at their stations according to the command of David” See notes at 1 Chronicles 25.

“the king’s seer” See Special Topic: Prophecy (OT), I. B. at 2 Chr. 12:15.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 35:16-19

¹⁶So all the service of the LORD was prepared on that day to celebrate the Passover, and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD according to the command of King Josiah. ¹⁷Thus the sons of Israel who were present celebrated the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days. ¹⁸There had not been celebrated a Passover like it in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet; nor had any of the kings of Israel celebrated such a Passover as Josiah did with the priests, the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁹In the eighteenth year of Josiah’s reign this Passover was celebrated.

35:18 This verse surprises me in light of Hezekiah’s celebration of the Passover in 2 Chronicles 30 (esp. v. 26).

The Jerusalem Bible (reference edition, p. 567) suggests that this verse does not mean there were no

other Passovers, but that some of the procedures had been changed.

It is possible that v. 18 refers to the inclusion of the Feast of Unleavened Bread with the Passover. The seven-day feast of Unleavened Bread goes back to Exod. 12:15-20; 34:18-20. It is not mentioned in the brief parallel in 2 Kgs. 23:21-23.

Some scholars assert the new feature of this Passover was the central location (i.e., at the temple in Jerusalem). Originally the Passover was a family event, not a national annual feast (*IVP Bible Background Commentary*, p. 458).

It is also possible that the new feature was a return to the head of each family killing the animal (2 Chr. 35:5-6; from *Jerome Biblical Commentary*, p. 425).

The mentioning of Samuel was a literary way of referring to the United Monarchy (i.e., Saul, David, Solomon). 2 Kings 23:22 says, “the days of the judges,” not Samuel. But they follow one another.

35:19 “the eighteenth year” This is the same year that Josiah

1. purged the land of idolatry
2. began repairs on the temple and “the book of the law of the LORD *given* by Moses” was found (cf. 2 Chr. 34:8)

The LXX inserts a quote from 2 Kgs. 23:24-27 here but it is not present in any Hebrew MSS of 2 Chronicles.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 35:20-27

²⁰After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, Neco king of Egypt came up to make war at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to engage him. ²¹But Neco sent messengers to him, saying, “What have we to do with each other, O King of Judah? *I am not coming against you today but against the house with which I am at war, and God has ordered me to hurry. Stop for your own sake from interfering with God who is with me, so that He will not destroy you.*” ²²However, Josiah would not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to make war with him; nor did he listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but came to make war on the plain of Megiddo. ²³The archers shot King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, “Take me away, for I am badly wounded.” ²⁴So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in the second chariot which he had, and brought him to Jerusalem where he died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. ²⁵Then Jeremiah chanted a lament for Josiah. And all the male and female singers speak about Josiah in their lamentations to this day. And they made them an ordinance in Israel; behold, they are also written in the Lamentations. ²⁶Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his deeds of devotion as written in the law of the LORD, ²⁷and his acts, first to last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

35:20 The “after all this” of v. 20 marks the end of the Chronicler’s discussion of Josiah’s godly reign. There is about a ten to thirteen year gap between vv. 1-19 and vv. 20-24. There is a drastic change of literary mood between the great Passover and the invasion of Neco II.

The battle of Carchemish (Assyria’s last capital, established in 610 B.C.) is one of the secular events/dates that is used to corroborate the history of Israel.

In 609 B.C. the Egyptian army under Pharaoh Neco II tried to move rapidly north along the Canaan coast to support the remnants of the Assyrian army under Ashur-uballit, who was besieged at Carchemish by the Neo-Babylonian army under General Nebuchadnezzar II (who was Nabopolassar’s son, cf. 2 Kgs. 23:29; Jer. 46:2). Egypt did not want the growing power of the ANE, Babylon, to threaten them. They wanted a weak Assyria as a buffer state (cf. Jer. 46:3-12,13-24,25-26). The Egyptians and Assyrians were defeated at Carchemish in 605 B.C.

For some reason Josiah did not want to let the Egyptian army pass through to Carchemish. Neco II tried to reason with him and assure him that he had no interest in Judah (cf. 2 Chr. 35:21). Neco even

asserts it is God's will that he confront Babylon quickly. 2 Chronicles 25:22 calls his words "from the mouth of God" (see Josephus, *Antiq* 10.5.1.).

See Special Topic: Brief Historical Survey of the Powers of Mesopotamia at 2 Chr. 34:1.

35:21-22 *The Tyndale Commentary on 2 Chronicles*, by Martin J. Selman, has a good word about Neco speaking as YHWH's spokesperson.

"Like other biblical writers, the Chronicler never limits God's ways of speaking. For example, the expression *by the mouth of God* is used as naturally of Neco as it is of Jeremiah (cf. 36:12, 21,22), and God regularly employs foreigners as his spokespersons (e.g. 2 Ch. 2:11-12; 9:8; 36:22-23). Though Neco is surprisingly blunt in claiming that *God has told me to hurry* (v. 21), his language is no more shocking than that of other non-Israelites (e.g. Gn. 20:3-7; Mt. 27:19)."

35:21 Pharaoh Neco II's warning message to Josiah was

1. "stop for your own sake" – BDB 292, KB 292, *Qal* IMPERATIVE, SINGULAR
2. "that He may not destroy you" – BDB 1007, KB 1469, *Hiphl* IMPERFECT used in a JUSSIVE sense

Neco felt he was doing God's will in attacking the Babylonian army so as to preserve a buffer state (i.e., remnants of the Assyrian army) between himself and Babylon.

35:22 Josiah disguised himself (BDB 344, KB 341, *Hithpael* PERFECT, cf. 1 Sam. 28:8; 1 Kgs. 22:30; 2 Chr. 18:29), probably so as not to be targeted. But a random arrow found its mark (2 Chr. 35:23-24).

Was Josiah's death a result of

1. disobedience to God's word (v. 23; Targum comment on v. 23 – "Josiah died because he did not seek instruction from the LORD")
2. a random act (v. 23)
3. a reversal of the promise of God in 2 Chr. 34:28
4. Josiah's attempt to help the Babylonians?

Although Josiah was a true faithful follower, the people of Judah were not truly changed. YHWH's predicted judgment (cf. 2 Chr. 34:22-28) will come (2 Chronicles 36).

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV

"disguised himself"

TEV

—omited—

NJB, REV

JPSOA, Targums

"determined to fight he donned [his armour]"

LXX

"he was strengthened"

Peshitta

"for he had gone to fight with him"

NAB

"for he had sought a pretext for fighting with him"

Although other kings had "disguised" themselves, this does not fit Josiah.

"the plain of Megiddo" This was the site of several battles.

1. Joshua and the king of Megiddo – Josh. 7:21; 12:21
2. Manasseh and the Canaanites – Josh. 17:11-13; Jdgs. 1:27
3. Pharaoh Shishak and Judah – 1 Kgs. 14:25-28; 1 Chr. 12:2
4. Tiglath-pileser of Assyria and Israel – 2 Kgs. 15:29-30
5. Pharaoh Neco II and Josiah – 2 Kgs. 23:29-30

35:25 "Jeremiah chanted a lament for Josiah" The Jewish tradition of Jeremiah's authorship of

Lamentations (Baba Bathra 15a) may be the source of the LXX and Vulgate's attributing authorship to Jeremiah. All of the speculation may have come from this verse. Modern scholars do not know what part, or if any part, of Scripture this refers to.

“all the male and female singers”

“in the Lamentations”

35:26 “his deeds of devotion” This NOUN (BDB 338) is the powerful covenant term *hesed*, usually used of YHWH; here, used of the actions and motives of this godly king.

See Special Topic: Lovingkindness (*hesed*) at 2 Chr. 1:8.

“written in the Law of the LORD” See note at 2 Chr. 34:14.

35:27 “written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah” See notes at Introduction to Chronicles, IV., F., #2.

Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 204, suggests:

“When the chronicler did his work toward the end of the fifth century, the combined volume of the Kings of Israel and Judah was in existence. This is known from the fact that the sources there cited are no longer the separate journals of days of the kings of Israel or those of Judah as cited in Kings, but a combined “book of kings of Judah and Israel” (2 Chron 16:11; 25:26; 27:7; 28:26; 32:32; 35:27; 36:8).”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How does one view 2 Chr. 35:3: as past act, a yearly act, an act of desperation?
2. Why are the writings of Moses mentioned so often?
3. How does one explain some animals being roasted and some boiled?
4. How does 2 Chr. 35:18 relate to 2 Chronicles 30?
5. Why did Neco want to pass through Judah and Israel?
6. Why did Josiah want to stop him?
7. How does 2 Chr. 35:23 fit with 2 Chr. 34:28?
8. Do we have Jeremiah's laments?

2 CHRONICLES 36

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

NASB	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB (verses follow LXX)
Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, then Jehoiachin Rule 36:1-4	The Reign and Captivity of Jehoahaz 36:1-4	The Last Agonies of the Doomed Nation 36:1-4	King Jehoahaz of Judah 36:1-4	Jehoahaz 36:1-4
36:5-8	The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiakim 36:5-8	36:5-8	King Jehoiakim of Judah 36:5-8	Jehoiakim 36:5-8
36:9	The Reign and Captivity of Jehoiachin 36:9-10	36:9-10	King Jehoiachin of Judah 36:9-10	Jehoiachin 36:9-10
Captivity in Babylon Begun 36:10				
Zedekiah Rules in Judah 36:11-14	Zedekiah Reigns in Judah 36:11-14	36:11-14	King Zedekiah of Judah 36:11-12 The Fall of Jerusalem 36:13-16	Zedekiah 36:11-13 The Nation 36:14-16
36:15-21	The Fall of Jerusalem 36:15-16 36:17-21	36:15-16 36:17-21	36:17-21	Ruin 36:17-21
Cyrus Permits Return 36:22-23	The Proclamation of Cyrus 36:22-23	36:22-23	Cyrus Commands the Jews to Return 36:22 36:23	A New Hope 36:22-23

READING CYCLE THREE (from "Bible Interpretation Seminar")

CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

A. There is a series of faithless kings after Josiah.

1. Joahaz, who reigned only three months and was replaced by Neco's surrogate (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:30-35; see Josephus, *Antiq.* 10.5.2.). He was exiled to Egypt (cf. Jer. 22:11-12, where he is called "Shallum").

2. Jehoiakim, Neco's surrogate (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:36-24:7) is brought in chains to Babylon (the 2 Kings parallel does not mention this; and Jer. 22:18-19 implies he was returned quickly to Jerusalem, where he was ignobly buried; see Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 213-214).

3. Jehoiachin also reigned only three months (cf. 2 Kgs. 24:8-17; Jer. 22:24-30) and was replaced by Nebuchadnezzar's surrogate, Zedekiah.

4. Zedekiah (cf. 2 Kings 25) rebelled against Babylon, which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C.

B. 2 Chronicles closes with a brief note about Cyrus II, King of Medo-Persia (cf. Isa. 44:28-45:1) and his allowing the Judean exiles to return home and rebuild a much smaller temple (cf. Ezra – Nehemiah).

C. There were several deportations of Judeans to Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar.

1. 605 B.C. – Jehoiakim and Daniel with his three friends

2. 597 B.C. – Jehoiachin and thousands of artisans
3. 586 B.C. – Zedekiah and the general population taken and the city of Jerusalem and the temple destroyed
4. 582 B.C. – at the assassination of the Babylonian-appointed Judean governor, Gedelilah, even more rural people were deported

D. See Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, summary of these brief reigns and dates, pp. 182-191.

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 36:1-4

¹Then the people of the land took Joahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in place of his father in Jerusalem. ²Joahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. ³Then the king of Egypt deposed him at Jerusalem, and imposed on the land a fine of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. ⁴The king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But Neco took Joahaz his brother and brought him to Egypt.

36:1 “the people of the land” See note at 2 Chr. 33:25.

“**Joahaz**” In 2 Kgs. 23:31, he is called by his full name, “Jehoahaz.”

36:3 “talents” See Special Topic: ANE Weights and Volumes at 2 Chr. 1:17.

36:4 “Eliakim. . .Jehoiakim” Judean kings often took a throne name.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 36:5-8

⁵Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and he did evil in the sight of the LORD his God. ⁶Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against him and bound him with bronze *chains* to take him to Babylon. ⁷Nebuchadnezzar also brought *some* of the articles of the house of the LORD to Babylon and put them in his temple at Babylon. ⁸Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim and the abominations which he did, and what was found against him, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. And Jehoiachin his son became king in his place.

36:5 “and he did evil in the sight of the LORD his God” This is a recurrent phrase which implies disobedience to the Mosaic covenant (cf. 2 Kgs. 23:32). In Jer. 26:20-24 we see his treatment of YHWH’s prophets. He imprisoned Jeremiah and Baruch (Jer. 36:26). Also notice how his actions affected the people in 2 Chr. 36:16.

36:6 In 2 Kgs. 24:2 YHWH sends several invaders into Judah because of Jehoiakim’s faithlessness (and Manasseh’s, 2 Chr. 36:3).

1. bands of Chaldeans
2. bands of Syrians
3. bands of Moabites
4. bands of Ammonites

“**Nebuchadnezzar**” The name (BDB 613) in Babylonian has several possible meanings.

1. “Nebo, protect (the) boundary (or frontier)”

2. “Nebo, protect (my) progeny”
3. “Nebo, protect (my) inheritance”
4. “Nebo, protect (the) crown”
5. “Nebo, protect (thy) servant”

In Daniel, like Jeremiah, it is spelled two ways, Nebuchadrezzar (most accurate spelling) and Nebuchadnezzar (found in OT 27 times). The difference is due to the transliteration from Babylonian to Aramaic/Hebrew. But why both spellings are in one book is uncertain, possibly different scribes were used. The original name in Akkadian would have been Nabu-kudurri-usur.

He was not really king yet because his father Nabopolassar (626-605 B.C.) did not die until the summer of 605 B.C. He was the crown prince in charge of the military campaign. We have no other historical record of this raid. However, 2 Kgs. 24:1-7 and 2 Chr. 36:1-7 surely imply a confrontation between Nebuchadnezzar and Jehoiakim before 597 B.C. Jerusalem seems to have fallen into Babylonian hands in 605 B.C. (Daniel and his friends taken), 597 B.C. (Jehoiachim and nobles and artisans taken), 586 B.C. (general deportation) and 582 B.C. (all who could be found taken).

36:7 Nebuchadnezzar displayed his military victories by putting the idols and implements of the different gods of the conquered nations in alcoves of the temple of *Marduk* (cf. Ezra 1:7).

He also took young men from each nation and turned them into servants in his great hall. They were trophies (i.e., Daniel 9:1-4)!

36:8 “abominations” See Special Topic: Abomination.

SPECIAL TOPIC: ABOMINATION (OT)

The basic meaning is something “loathsome” or “repulsive.” It is an intentional violation of known boundaries.

“Abomination” (BDB 1072, KB 1702) can refer to several things:

1. things related to Egyptians:
 - a. they loathe eating with Hebrews, Gen. 43:32
 - b. they loathe shepherds, Gen. 46:34
 - c. they loathe Hebrew sacrifices, Exod. 8:26
2. things related to YHWH’s feelings toward Israel’s actions:
 - a. unclean food, Deut. 14:3-20
 - b. idols, Deut. 7:25; 27:15
 - c. pagan spiritists, Deut. 18:9,12
 - d. sacrificing (burning) children to *Molech*, Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5; Deut. 12:31; 18:9,12; 2 Kgs. 16:3; 17:17-18; 21:6; Jer. 32:35
 - e. Canaanite idolatry, Deut. 13:14; 17:4; 20:17-18; 32:16; Isa. 44:19; Jer. 16:18; Ezek. 5:11; 6:9; 11:18,21; 14:6; 16:50; 18:12
 - f. sacrificing blemished animals, Deut. 17:1 (cf. Deut.15:19-23; Mal. 1:12-13)
 - g. sacrificing to idols, Jer. 44:4-5
 - h. remarrying a woman that you had previously divorced, Deut. 24:1-4
 - i. women wearing man’s clothes (possibly Canaanite worship), Deut. 22:5
 - j. money from cultic prostitution (Canaanite worship), Deut. 23:18
 - k. Israel’s idolatry, Jer. 2:7
 - l. homosexuality (possibly Canaanite worship), Lev. 18:22; 20:13
 - m. use of false weights, Deut. 25:15-16; Pro. 11:1; 20:23
 - n. food laws violated (possibly Canaanite worship), Deut. 14:3
3. Examples in Wisdom Literature:
 - a. Job 30:10 – Job to his society

- b. Psalms 88:8 – psalmist to his acquaintances
- c. Proverbs
 - (1) Pro. 3:32 – the crooked person
 - (2) Pro. 6:16-19
 - (a) haughty eyes, Pro. 6:17a
 - (b) lying tongue, Pro. 6:17a
 - (c) murderer, Pro. 6:17b
 - (d) wicked planner, Pro. 6:18a; 15:26
 - (e) active evil, Pro. 6:18b
 - (f) false witness, Pro. 6:19a
 - (g) one who spreads strife among brothers, Pro. 6:19b
 - (3) Pro. 11:1; 20:10,23 – cheating merchants
 - (4) Pro. 11:20 – perverse in heart
 - (5) Pro. 12:22 – lying lips
 - (6) Pro. 15:8; 21:27 – sacrifices of the wicked
 - (7) Pro. 15:9 – the way of the wicked
 - (8) Pro. 16:5 – proud of heart
 - (9) Pro. 17:15
 - (a) he who justifies the wicked
 - (b) he who condemns the righteous
 - (10) Pro. 28:9 – he who violates the law

4. There is a recurrent eschatological phrase “abomination of desolation,” which is used in Daniel (cf. Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). It seems to refer to three different occasions (multiple fulfillment prophecy):

- a. Antiochus IV Epiphanes of the interbiblical Maccabean period (cf. I Macc. 1:54,59; II Macc. 6:1-2)
- b. the Roman general (later Emperor), Titus, who sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the temple in A.D. 70 (cf. Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20)
- c. an end-time world leader called “the man of lawlessness” (cf. 2 Thess. 2:3-4) or “the Antichrist” (cf. 1 John 2:18; 4:3; Revelation 13)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 36:9

“Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem, and he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

36:9

NASB, NKJV,

NRSV, JPSOA,

REB

“eight”

TEV, NJB,

LXX, Peshitta “eighteen”

The MT has “eight” which the UBS Text Project, p. 490, gives a “B” rating (some doubt). The older age comes from 2 Kgs. 24:8 and the ancient versions and some Hebrew MSS.

The MT has “eight,” which is apparently an ancient scribal error (i.e., “ten,” BDB 797 dropped out of the text).

1. eight (BDB 1032) – הנמש

2. eighteen (i.e., “eight” and “ten”) – הרשע הנמש

See Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, pp. 214-215.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 36:10

¹⁰At the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon with the valuable articles of the house of the LORD, and he made his kinsman Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

36:10 There were several deportations from Judah to Babylon (see Contextual Insights, C).

1. 605 B.C.
2. 597 B.C.
3. 586 B.C.
4. 582 B.C.

NASB, JPSOA “his kinsman”

NKJV, NRSV,

NJB, Peshitta “brother”

TEV “his uncle”

REB, LXX “his father’s brother”

The MT has “brother” (BDB 26) but 2 Kgs. 24:17 calls him “uncle.” The Hebrew term “brother” can mean “relative” (cf. Gen. 13:8; 14:14,16; 29:12,15; Num. 16:10; 18:2,6; 2 Sam. 19:12-13; 2 Chr. 22:8).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 36:11-14

¹¹Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. ¹²He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God; he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke for the LORD. ¹³He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar who had made him swear *allegiance* by God. But he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel. ¹⁴Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful *following* all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled the house of the LORD which He had sanctified in Jerusalem.

36:12 Babylon left some of the very poor farmers and herdsmen to tend the fields and herds for taxation purposes (cf. 2 Kgs. 24:14; 25:12).

“he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet” In 2 Chronicles there are two VERBS that reveal the hearts of the kings.

1. humble (see notes at 2 Chr. 7:14; 12:6,7)
2. seek (see notes at 2 Chr. 7:14; 15:4,15)

This last series of kings did neither, even though YHWH addressed them through his prophet Jeremiah. They were exactly opposite to Hezekiah (cf. 2 Chr. 32:26; 33:12,23) and Josiah (cf. 2 Chr. 34:27).

36:13 Notice the evil of Zedekiah and Judah.

1. He broke his oath in YHWH’s name (i.e., vassal oath probably on the names of several gods; breaking an oath to God was a serious sin, cf. Ezek. 17:11-21).
2. He stiffened his neck – cf. Deut. 9:6,13; 10:16; 31:27; 2 Chr. 30:8; Neh. 9:16,17,29; Jer. 7:26; 17:23; 19:15.
3. He hardened his heart (i.e., he trusted Egypt, not YHWH).
4. All his officials of the priests were very unfaithful.
5. All the people were very unfaithful (v. 16).

The “unfaithfulness” of the priests and people is highlighted by the PARTICIPLE and NOUN of the same root (BDB 591, KB 612).

Notice how the Chronicler does not mention the unfaithfulness of the Levites. He is supportive of

them throughout the book.

36:14 “the people were very unfaithful” This is an emphatic phrase.

1. BDB 915, KB 1176, *Hiphil* PERFECT – “very” or “exceedingly”
2. BDB 591, KB 612, both *Qal* INFINITIVE CONSTRUCT and NOUN – “unfaithful”

The VERB (BDB 915, KB 1176) is used three times in 2 Chronicles to show the Judean kings’ evil (which influenced the whole nation) and caused YHWH to unleash the “curses” of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28.

1. Manasseh – 2 Chr. 33:6
2. Amon – 2 Chr. 33:23
3. Zedekiah led the priests and people to continue their idolatry – 2 Chr. 36:14

Judgment was the only option of God’s word and God’s character is true! The powerful statement in Galatians 6:7, people and nations reap what they sow!

“all the abominations of the nations” This phrase repeatedly refers to idolatry (cf. Deut. 18:9; 1 Kgs. 14:24; 2 Kgs. 16:3; 21:2; 2 Chr. 33:2; 36:14; Ezek. 8:10-16 lists the kinds of idolatry; see exegetical notes online). See the terrible list in Deut. 18:9-13,14; also Leviticus 20; see exegetical notes online.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 36:15-21

¹⁵The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; ¹⁶but they *continually* mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy. ¹⁷Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He gave *them* all into his hand. ¹⁸All the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought *them* all to Babylon. ¹⁹Then they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all its fortified buildings with fire and destroyed all its valuable articles. ²⁰Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, ²¹to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete.

36:15 The prophets (i.e., “again and again,” highlighted by the IMPERFECT VERB and INFINITIVE ABSOLUTE of the same root, BDB 1018, KB 1511) were sent in love and mercy but Judah would not listen or respond (v. 16; Jer. 5:10-13). Judgment was the only way for YHWH to purify His people and restore His plan of revelation. See Special Topic: YHWH’s Eternal Redemptive Plan at 2 Chr. 2:10-12.

36:16 “until there was no remedy” This is a sad comment. The repeated efforts of YHWH to speak to both the kings and the people had failed. There were brief periods of incomplete repentance. The only hope for His covenant people, His means of revelation to the nations, was judgment.

Notice the three PARTICIPLES that describe the people of Judah’s repeated actions in response to YHWH’s prophets.

1. mocked – BDB 541, KB 532, *Hiphil*, cf. 2 Chr. 30:10
2. despised – BDB 102, KB 117, *Qal*
3. scoffed – BDB 1073, KB 1770, *Hithpael* (rare VERB, only twice in the OT, cf. Gen. 27:12)

The reason for YHWH’s judgment is both the sins of her kings, like Manasseh, but primarily their corporate failure to worship YHWH. They, as a culture, return again and again to the high places of Canaanite fertility worship.

36:17 “the Chaldeans” See Special Topic: Chaldeans.

SPECIAL TOPIC: CHALDEANS (BDB 505, KB 501)

I. First mentioned as the Semitic group that controlled *Ur* in the second millennium B.C (cf. Gen. 11:28,31; 15:7; Acts 7:4). There were many Semitic groups migrating south and southwestward through the ANE during this time frame.

II. Isaiah 23:13 refers to the destruction of the nation of Babylon (not Neo-Babylon) by Assyria (cf. Isaiah 13-14). There are two “Babylons” mentioned in the Hebrew Prophets.

A. small semi-autonomous region close to the mouth of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers that rebelled against Assyria and was invaded and their capital “Babylon” destroyed by Sargon II (722-705 B.C.), who took the Babylonian throne name “King of Babylon.” Then it would refer to the Babylonian kings

1. Merodach-baladan, reigned 721-710 and again 703-702 B.C. (he sent messengers to Hezekiah in 712 B.C., cf. II Kgs. 20:12-21; Isaiah 39)

2. Shamash-shum-ukim, son of Esarhaddon, 681-669 B.C. and rival brother to Ashurbanipal [669-633 B.C.] who was made king of Assyria

B. a new (i.e., “neo”) Babylon appeared on the scene in 626 B.C. with the rise of Nabopolassar (626-605 B.C.), the father of Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 B.C.). Nabopolassar was instrumental in the fall of Asshur (one Assyrian capital) in 614 B.C. and Nineveh (the main Assyrian capital) in 612 B.C. (see Special Topic: Powers of Mesopotamia).

II. A class of counselors in Daniel 9

Herodotus (450 B.C.), *Hist.* 1:181, uses this term to refer to an ethnic group (cf. 2 Kgs. 24:1-4; Dan. 5:30) as well as a priestly class (cf. Dan. 2:2; 3:8; 4:7; 5:7,11) whose usage goes back to Cyrus II. Even before this Assyrian records used the term (BDB 505) in an ethnic sense (cf. R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 1113). Also read the good discussion of the possibility of a confusion of two similar terms (i.e., Kal-du vs. Kasdu) in *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, pp. 14-15 or Robert Dick Wilson, *Studies in the Book of Daniel*, series 1.

“who slew their young men. . .in the house of their sanctuary” The temple was totally defiled by the blood of the victims (cf. Lam. 2:20; Ezek. 9:6-7). Manasseh had shed innocent blood (cf. 2 Kgs. 21:16), now YHWH allows Nebuchadnezzar to do the same (cf. 2 Kgs. 24:4).

The fall of Jerusalem affected everyone from the young to the old. YHWH gave them all to the Babylonians (cf. 2 Chr. 36:17-20).

YHWH had “compassion” on His people again and again (v. 15) but they would not humble themselves and seek Him, so now He has “no compassion” (v. 17; Ezekiel 16)!

See Special Topic: Characteristics of Israel’s God (OT) at 2 Chr. 2:10-12.

36:19

NASB “fortified buildings”

NKJV, NRSV,
TEV, NJB,

Peshitta “palaces”

JPSOA, REB “mansions”

LXX “bastions”

The MT has a word (BDB 74, KB 89) that is translated several ways but the basic meaning is a fortified large home. It could be of the king, royal family, or other wealthy person. This type of building would be

the first attacked and plundered. It became a metaphor of conquest (cf. 1 Kgs. 16:18; 2 Kgs. 15:25; Ps. 122:7; Isa. 34:13; Amos 1:4,7,10,12,14).

26:17-21 The Chronicler's account of the fall of Jerusalem is much briefer than 2 Kgs. 25:1-21; also note Jer. 39:1-4; 52:4-17; and Lamentations. It is hard for modern, non-Jewish readers to imagine what the destruction of their beloved city and temple meant to them. They surely felt no hope (i.e., Lamentations). Had YHWH abandoned His people? Israel repeatedly forgot that the Mosaic covenant (not the Abrahamic or Davidic covenants) was conditional. The blessing flowed only through obedience. Disobedience triggered the curses of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28!

YHWH had a purpose for Israel, but it was an "if. . .then" covenant. YHWH wanted to reveal His character to the nations through Israel.

See Special Topics: Covenant at 2 Chr. 6:16, and Why Do OT Covenant Promises Seem So different From NT Covenant Promises?

SPECIAL TOPIC: WHY ARE THE END-TIME EVENTS SO CONTROVERSIAL?

Through the years of my study of eschatology I have learned that most Christians do not have or want a developed, systematized, end-time chronology. There are some Christians who focus or major on this area of Christianity for theological, psychological, or denominational reasons. These Christians seem to become obsessed with how it will all end, and somehow miss the urgency of the gospel! Believers cannot affect God's eschatological (end-time) agenda, but they can participate in the gospel mandate (cf. Matt. 28:19-20; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8). Most believers affirm a Second Coming of Christ and an end-time culmination of the promises of God. The interpretive problems arising from how to understand this temporal culmination come from several biblical paradoxes.

1. the tension between Old Covenant prophetic models and New Covenant apostolic models
2. the tension between the Bible's monotheism (one God for all) and the election of Israel (a special people)
3. the tension between the conditional aspect of biblical covenants and promises ("if. . .then") and the unconditional faithfulness of God to fallen mankind's redemption
4. the tension between Near Eastern literary genres and modern western literary models
5. the tension between the Kingdom of God as present, yet future
6. the tension between belief in the imminent return of Christ and the belief that some events must happen first.

Let us discuss these tensions one at a time.

FIRST TENSION (OT racial, national, and geographical categories vs. all believers over all the world)

The OT prophets predict a restoration of a Jewish kingdom in Palestine centered in Jerusalem where all the nations of the earth gather to praise and serve a Davidic ruler, but Jesus nor the NT Apostles ever focus on this agenda. Is not the OT inspired (cf. Matt. 5:17-19)? Have the NT authors omitted crucial end-time events?

There are several sources of information about the end of the world.

3. OT prophets (Isaiah, Micah, Malachi)
4. OT apocalyptic writers (cf. Ezekiel 37-39; Daniel 7-12; Zechariah)
5. intertestamental, non-canonical Jewish apocalyptic writers (like I Enoch, which is alluded to in Jude)
6. Jesus Himself (cf. Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21)

7. the writings of Paul (cf. 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5; 1 Thessalonians 4-5; 2 Thess. 2)
8. the writings of John (1 John and Revelation).

Do these all clearly teach an end-time agenda (events, chronology, persons)? If not, why? Are they not all inspired (except the Jewish intertestamental writings)?

The Spirit revealed truths to the OT writers in terms and categories they could understand. However, through progressive revelation the Spirit has expanded these OT eschatological concepts to a universal scope (“the mystery of Christ,” cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13). Here are some relevant examples:

9. The city of Jerusalem in the OT is used as a metaphor for the people of God (Zion), but is projected into the NT as a term expressing God’s acceptance of all repentant, believing humans (the new Jerusalem of Revelation 21-22). The theological expansion of a literal, physical city into the new people of God (believing Jews and Gentiles) is foreshadowed in God’s promise to redeem fallen mankind in Gen. 3:15, before there even were any Jews or a Jewish capital city. Even Abraham’s call (cf. Gen. 12:1-3) involved the Gentiles (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5).
10. In the OT the enemies of God’s people are the surrounding nations of the Ancient Near East, but in the NT they have been expanded to all unbelieving, anti-God, Satanically-inspired people. The battle has moved from a geographical, regional conflict to a worldwide, cosmic conflict (cf. Colossians).
11. The promise of a land which is so integral in the OT (the Patriarchal promises of Genesis, cf. Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:7,15,16; 17:8) has now become the whole earth. New Jerusalem comes down to a recreated earth, not the Near East only or exclusively (cf. Revelation 21-22).
12. Some other examples of OT prophetic concepts being expanded are
 - a. the seed of Abraham is now the spiritually circumcised (cf. Rom. 2:28-29)
 - b. the covenant people now include Gentiles (cf. Hos. 1:10; 2:23, quoted in Rom. 9:24-26; also Lev. 26:12; Exod. 29:45, quoted in 2 Cor. 6:16-18 and Exod. 19:5; Deut. 14:2, quoted in Titus 2:14)
 - c. the temple is now Jesus (cf. Matt. 26:61; 27:40; John 2:19-21) and through Him the local church (cf. 1 Cor. 3:16) or the individual believer (cf. 1 Cor. 6:19)
 - d. even Israel and its characteristic descriptive OT phrases now refer to the whole people of God (i.e., “Israel,” cf. Rom. 9:6; Gal. 6:16, i.e., “kingdom of priests,” cf. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9-10; Rev. 1:6)

The prophetic model has been fulfilled, expanded, and is now more inclusive. Jesus and the Apostolic writers do not present the end-time in the same way as the OT prophets (cf. Martin Wyngaarden, *The Future of The Kingdom in Prophecy and Fulfillment*). Modern interpreters who try to make the OT model literal or normative twist the Revelation into a very Jewish book and force meaning into atomized, ambiguous phrases of Jesus and Paul! The NT writers do not negate the OT prophets, but show their ultimate universal implication. There is no organized, logical system to Jesus’ or Paul’s eschatology. Their purpose is primarily redemptive or pastoral.

However, even within the NT there is tension. There is no clear systemization of eschatological events. In many ways the Revelation surprisingly uses OT allusions in describing the end instead of the teachings of Jesus (cf. Matthew 24; Mark 13)! It follows the literary genre initiated by Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah, but developed during the intertestamental period (Jewish apocalyptic literature). This may have been John’s way of linking the Old and New Covenants. It shows the age-old pattern of human rebellion and God’s commitment to redemption! But it must be noted that although Revelation uses OT language, persons, and events, it reinterprets them in light of first century Rome (cf. Rev. 1:7).

SECOND TENSION (monotheism vs. an elect people)

The biblical emphasis is on one personal, spiritual, creator-redeemer, God (cf. Exod. 8:10; Isa. 44:24; 45:5-7,14,18,21-22; 46:9; Jer. 10:6-7). The OT’s uniqueness in its own day was its monotheism. All of the surrounding nations were polytheists. The oneness of God is the heart of OT revelation (cf. Deut. 6:4). Creation is a stage for the purpose of fellowship between God and mankind, made in His image and likeness (cf. Gen.1:26-27). However, mankind rebelled, sinning against God’s love, leadership, and purpose (cf. Genesis 3). God’s love and purpose was so strong and sure that He promised to redeem fallen humanity (cf. Gen. 3:15)!

The tension arises when God chooses to use one man, one family, one nation to reach the rest of mankind. God's election of Abraham and the Jews as a kingdom of priests (cf. Exod. 19:4-6) caused pride instead of service, exclusion instead of inclusion. God's call of Abraham involved the intentional blessing of all mankind (cf. Gen. 12:3). It must be remembered and emphasized that OT election was for service, not salvation. All Israel was never right with God, never eternally saved based solely on her birthright (cf. John 8:31-59; Matt. 3:9), but by personal faith and obedience (cf. Gen. 15:6, quoted in Rom. 4:2,9,22; Gal. 3:6). Israel lost her mission (the church is now a kingdom of priests, cf. Rev. 1:6; 2 Pet.2:5,9), turned mandate into privilege, service into a special standing! God chose one to choose all!

THIRD TENSION (conditional covenants vs. unconditional covenants)

There is a theological tension or paradox between conditional and unconditional covenants. It is surely true that God's redemptive purpose/plan is unconditional (cf. Gen. 15:12-21). However, the mandated human response is always conditional!

The "if. . .then" pattern appears in both OT and NT. God is faithful; mankind is unfaithful. This tension has caused much confusion. Interpreters have tended to focus on only one "horn of the dilemma," God's faithfulness or human effort, God's sovereignty or mankind's free will. Both are biblical and necessary.

This relates to eschatology, to God's OT promises to Israel. If God promises it, that settles it! God is bound to His promises; His reputation is involved (cf. Ezek. 36:22-38). The unconditional and conditional covenants meet in Christ (cf. Isaiah 53), not Israel! God's ultimate faithfulness lies in the redemption of all who will repent and believe, not in who was your father/mother! Christ, not Israel, is the key to all of God's covenants and promises. If there is a theological parenthesis in the Bible, it is not the Church, but Israel (cf. Acts 7 and Galatians 3).

The world mission of gospel proclamation has passed to the Church (cf. Matt. 28:19-20; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8). It is still a conditional covenant! This is not to imply that God has totally rejected the Jews (cf. Romans 9-11). There may be a place and purpose for end-time, believing Israel (cf. Zech. 12:10).

FOURTH TENSION (Near Eastern literary models vs. western models)

Genre is a critical element in correctly interpreting the Bible. The Church developed in a western (Greek) cultural setting. Eastern literature is much more figurative, metaphorical, and symbolic than modern, western culture's literary models. It focuses on people, encounters, and events more than succinct propositional truths. Christians have been guilty of using their history and literary models to interpret biblical prophecy (both OT and NT). Each generation and geographical entity has used its culture, history, and literalness to interpret Revelation. Every one of them has been wrong! It is arrogant to think that modern western culture is the focus of biblical prophecy!

The genre in which the original, inspired author chooses to write is a literary contract with the reader. The book of Revelation is not historical narrative. It is a combination of letter (chapters 1-3), prophecy, and mostly apocalyptic literature. It is as wrong to make the Bible say more than was intended by the original author as it is to make it say less than what he intended! Interpreters' arrogance and dogmatism are even more inappropriate in a book like Revelation.

The Church has never agreed on a proper interpretation of Revelation. My concern is to hear and deal with the whole Bible, not some selected part(s). The Bible's eastern mind-set presents truth in tension-filled pairs. Our western trend toward propositional truth is not invalid, but unbalanced! I think it is possible to remove at least some of the impasse in interpreting Revelation by noting its changing purpose to successive generations of believers. It is obvious to most interpreters that Revelation must be interpreted in light of its own day and its genre. An historical approach to Revelation must deal with what the first readers would have, and could have, understood. In many ways modern interpreters have lost the meaning of many of the symbols of the book. Revelation's initial main thrust was to encourage persecuted believers. It showed God's control of history (as did the OT prophets); it affirmed that history is moving toward an appointed terminus, judgment or blessing (as did the OT prophets). It affirmed in first century Jewish apocalyptic terms God's love, presence, power, and sovereignty!

It functions in these same theological ways to every generation of believers. It depicts the cosmic struggle of good and evil. The first century details may have been lost to us, but not the powerful, comforting truths. When modern, western interpreters try to force the details of Revelation into their contemporary history, the pattern of false interpretations continues!

It is quite possible that the details of the book may become strikingly literal again (as did the OT in relation to the birth, life, and death of Christ) for the last generation of believers as they face the onslaught of an anti-God leader (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2) and culture. No one can know these literal fulfillments of the Revelation until the words of Jesus (cf. Matthew 24; Mark 13; and Luke 21) and Paul (cf. 1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4-5; and 2 Thessalonians 2) also become historically evident. Guessing, speculation, and dogmatism are all inappropriate. Apocalyptic literature allows this flexibility. Thank God for images and symbols that surpass historical narrative! God is in control; He reigns; He comes!

Most modern commentaries miss the point of the genre! Modern western interpreters often seek a clear, logical system of theology rather than being fair with an ambiguous, symbolic, dramatic genre of Jewish apocalyptic literature. This truth is expressed well by Ralph P. Martin in his article, "Approaches to New Testament Exegesis," in the book *New Testament Interpretation*, edited by I. Howard Marshall:

"Unless we recognize the dramatic quality of this writing and recall the way in which language is being used as a vehicle to express religious truth, we shall grievously err in our understanding

of the Apocalypse, and mistakenly try to interpret its visions as though it were a book of literal prose and concerned to describe events of empirical and datable history. To attempt the latter course is to run into all manner of problems of interpretation. More seriously it leads to a distortion of the essential meaning of apocalyptic and so misses the great value of this part of the New Testament as a dramatic assertion in mythopoetic language of the sovereignty of God in Christ and the paradox of his rule which blends might and love (cf. Rev. 5:5,6; the Lion is the Lamb)" (p. 235).

W. Randolph Tate in his book *Biblical Interpretations*:

"No other genre of the Bible has been so fervently read with such depressing results as apocalypse, especially the books of Daniel and Revelation. This genre had suffered from a disastrous history of misinterpretation due to a fundamental misunderstanding of its literary forms, structure, and purpose. Because of its very claim to reveal what is shortly to happen, apocalypse has been viewed as a road map into and a blueprint of the future. The tragic flaw in this view is the assumption that the books' frame of reference is the reader's contemporary age rather than the author's. This misguided approach to apocalypse (particularly Revelation) treats the work as if it were a cryptogram by which contemporary events can be used to interpret the symbol of the text. . . First, the interpreter must recognize that apocalyptic communicates its messages through symbolism. To interpret a symbol literally when it is metaphoric is simply to misinterpret. The

issue is not whether the events in apocalyptic are historical. The events may be historical; they may have really happened, or might happen, but the author presents events and communicates meaning through images and archetypes" (p. 137).

From *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, edited by Ryken, Wilhoit and Longman III:

"Today's readers are often puzzled and frustrated by this genre. The unexpected imagery and out-of-this-world experiences seem bizarre and out of sync with most of Scripture. Taking this literature at face value leaves many readers scrambling to determine 'what will happen when,' thus missing the intent of the apocalyptic message" (p. 35).

FIFTH TENSION (the Kingdom of God as present yet future)

The kingdom of God is present, yet future. This theological paradox becomes focused at the point

of eschatology. If one expects a literal fulfillment of all OT prophecies to Israel then the Kingdom becomes mostly a restoration of Israel to a geographical locality and a theological pre-eminence! This would necessitate that the Church is secretly raptured out at chapter 5 and the remaining chapters relate to Israel (but note Rev. 22:16).

However, if the focus is on the kingdom being inaugurated by the promised OT Messiah, then it is present with Christ's first coming, and then the focus becomes the incarnation, life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Christ. The theological emphasis is on a current salvation. The kingdom has come, the OT is fulfilled in Christ's offer of salvation to all, not His millennial reign over some!

It is surely true that the Bible speaks of both of Christ's comings, but where is the emphasis to be placed? It seems to me that most OT prophecies focus on the first coming, the establishment of the Messianic kingdom (cf. Daniel 2). In many ways this is analogous to the eternal reign of God (cf. Daniel 7). In the OT the focus is on the eternal reign of God, yet the mechanism for that reign's manifestation is the ministry of the Messiah (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26-27). It is not a question of which is true; both are true, but where is the emphasis? It must be said that some interpreters become so focused on the millennial reign of the Messiah (cf. Revelation 20) that they have missed the biblical focus on the eternal reign of the Father. Christ's reign is a preliminary event. As the two comings of Christ were not obvious in the OT, neither is a temporal reign of the Messiah!

The key to Jesus' preaching and teaching is the kingdom of God. It is both present (in salvation and service), and future (in pervasiveness and power). Revelation, if it focuses on a Messianic millennial reign (cf. Revelation 20), is preliminary, not ultimate (cf. Revelation 21-22). It is not obvious from the OT that a temporal reign is necessary; as a matter of fact, the Messianic reign of Daniel 7 is eternal, not millennial.

SIXTH TENSION (imminent return of Christ vs. the delayed *Parousia*)

Most believers have been taught that Jesus is coming soon, suddenly, and unexpectedly (cf. Matt. 10:23; 24:27,34,44; Mark 9:1; 13:30; Rev. 1:1,3; 2:16; 3:11; 22:7,10,12,20). But every expectant generation of believers so far has been wrong! The soonness (immediacy) of Jesus' return is a powerful promised hope of every generation, but a reality to only one (and that one a persecuted one). Believers must live as if He were coming tomorrow, but plan and implement the Great Commission (cf. Matt. 28:19-20) if He tarries.

Some passages in the Gospels and 1 and 2 Thessalonians are based on a delayed Second Coming (*Parousia*). There are some historical events that must happen first:

13. world-wide evangelization (cf. Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10)
14. the revelation of "the man of Sin" (cf. Matt. 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2; Revelation 13)
15. the great persecution (cf. Matt. 24:21,24; Revelation 13)

There is a purposeful ambiguity (cf. Matt. 24:42-51; Mark 13:32-36)! Live every day as if it were your last but plan and train for future ministry!

CONSISTENCY AND BALANCE

It must be said that the different schools of modern eschatological interpretation all contain half truths. They explain and interpret well some texts. The problem lies in consistency and balance. Often there is a set of presuppositions which use the biblical text to fill in the pre-set theological skeleton. The Bible does not reveal a logical, chronological, systematic eschatology. It is like a family album. The pictures are true, but not always in order, in context, in a logical sequence. Some of the pictures have fallen out of the album and later generations of family members do not know exactly how to put them back. The key to proper interpretation of Revelation is the intent of the original author as revealed in his choice of literary genre. Most interpreters try to carry their exegetical tools and procedures from other genres of the NT into their interpretations of Revelation. They focus on the OT instead of allowing the teachings of Jesus and Paul to set the theological structure and let Revelation act as illustrative.

I must admit that I approach this commentary on Revelation with some fear and trepidation, not because of the curse of Rev. 22:18-19, but because of the level of controversy the interpretation of this book has caused and continues to cause among God's people. I love God's revelation. It is true when all

men are liars (cf. Rom. 3:4)! Please use this commentary as an attempt to be thought provoking and not definitive, as a sign post and not a road map, as a “what if,” not a “thus says the Lord.” I have come face to face with my own inadequacies, biases, and theological agenda. I have also seen those of other interpreters. It almost seems that people find in Revelation what they expect to find. The genre lends itself to abuse! However, it is in the Bible for a purpose. Its placement as the concluding “word” is not by accident. It has a message from God to His children of each and every generation. God wants us to understand! Let us join hands, not form camps; let us affirm what is clear and central, not all that may be, might be, could be true. God help us all!

36:21 See exegetical notes on Jeremiah 29:10 online. See Special Topic: Seventy Years.

SPECIAL TOPIC: SEVENTY YEARS

The time designation appears to allude to a “completed time” (from 7 x 10, see Special Topic: Symbolic Numbers in Scripture). Notice its usages in Scripture.

1. revenge, Gen. 4:24
2. age of Terah when Abram was born, Gen. 11:26
3. seventy in Jacob’s family moved to Egypt, Exod. 1:5
4. seventy elders during the Wilderness Wandering Period, Exod. 24:1,9; Num. 11:16,24,25 (also Ezek. 8:11)
5. number of Abimelech’s brothers who were killed, Jdgs. 9:56
6. expected life span, Ps. 90:10 (double is a special blessing from God, Job 42:16)
7. Ahab’s seventy sons, 2 Kgs. 10:1,6,7
8. seventy year judgment
 - a. Judah in Babylon, 2 Chr. 36:21; Ezra 1:1; Jer. 25:11; 29:10; Dan. 9:2; Zech. 7:5
 - b. Tyre, Isa. 23:15
9. Jesus sent out seventy, Luke 10:1,17 (possibly symbolically reflects Jewish belief that there were 70 languages spoken in all the world)
10. forgiveness 70 times 7, Matt. 18:22

See note at Zech 1:12 online for more information.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 36:22-23

²²Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia—in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah—the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also *put* it in writing, saying, ²³“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!’”

36:22-23 This new ANE power is revealed by name (i.e., Cyrus) in Isa. 44:28 and 45:1. See The exegetical notes online.

Cyrus was a superstitious person. He rebuilt all the temples of the gods of the nations at his expense, so that the peoples could pray to their god for him and his successors. Judah was not the only exiled people who returned home under Cyrus II’s decree of 538 B.C.

Ezra starts with 2 Chr. 36:22-23, which shows they are connected. 2 Chronicles is the judgment but Ezra – Nehemiah the hope, as is Zechariah.

36:23 “the God of heaven” See full note at Ezra 1:2.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Who are “the people of the land” in 2 Chr. 36:1?
2. What did Nebuchadnezzar do with the articles from YHWH’s temple?
3. What does the phrase “did evil in the sight of the LORD” refer to?
4. Why is 2 Chr. 36:14-16 so devastating?
5. Is 2 Chr. 36:17 an example of “holy war”?
6. Where does Jeremiah predict a seventy year exile? Why 70 years?
7. How does 2 Chr. 36:22-23 clearly show YHWH knows the future and controls it for His purposes?