

Unpacking the Book

#10 United Kingdom: Under Solomon

I. Introduction

- A. David is possibly 70 years old and nearing death. Solomon is around 20 and already married.

Since David did not make provision for the succession to his throne, there was a confusion about which of his sons should ascend the throne. Adonijah (the oldest son) assumed it should be him (1 Kings 1:1-5), and his claim was supported by Joab, David's military leader. When Bathsheba heard of it, she and the prophet Nathan reminded David of his earlier promise that Solomon would be King. David ordered that Solomon be anointed as King (1 Kings 1:28-37)

- B. David's gives a charge to Solomon (2:1-9) and dies (2:10-11)

- C. Adonijah fails in his treason and Solomon takes charge (2:13-46). As a wise young ruler, he asks for wisdom (3:1-15).

- D. His administration:

Solomon's reign had both great successes and great failures. He was a very prolific builder. He had to institute a system of taxation in order to pay for all the buildings...including the Temple. He also began a system of forced labor. He maintained a standing army and assured a long period of national peace through a series of political marriages. And, he established a system of administrative offices in order to effectively rule the large kingdom.

- E. His major accomplishment was the building of the Temple. David wanted to build the Temple (see 2 Sam. 7:10-13) but now that the Kingdom is settled, the deferred promise will be fulfilled in his son Solomon. (Much more details to come regarding the temple in lesson #13)

- F. Notice the dedication of the Temple (7:15-8:66 and 2 Chr. 5:1-7:10)

- G. Solomon's blessing over the Temple (8:1-66)

- H. Note that Yahweh appeared / spoke with Solomon on several occasions.

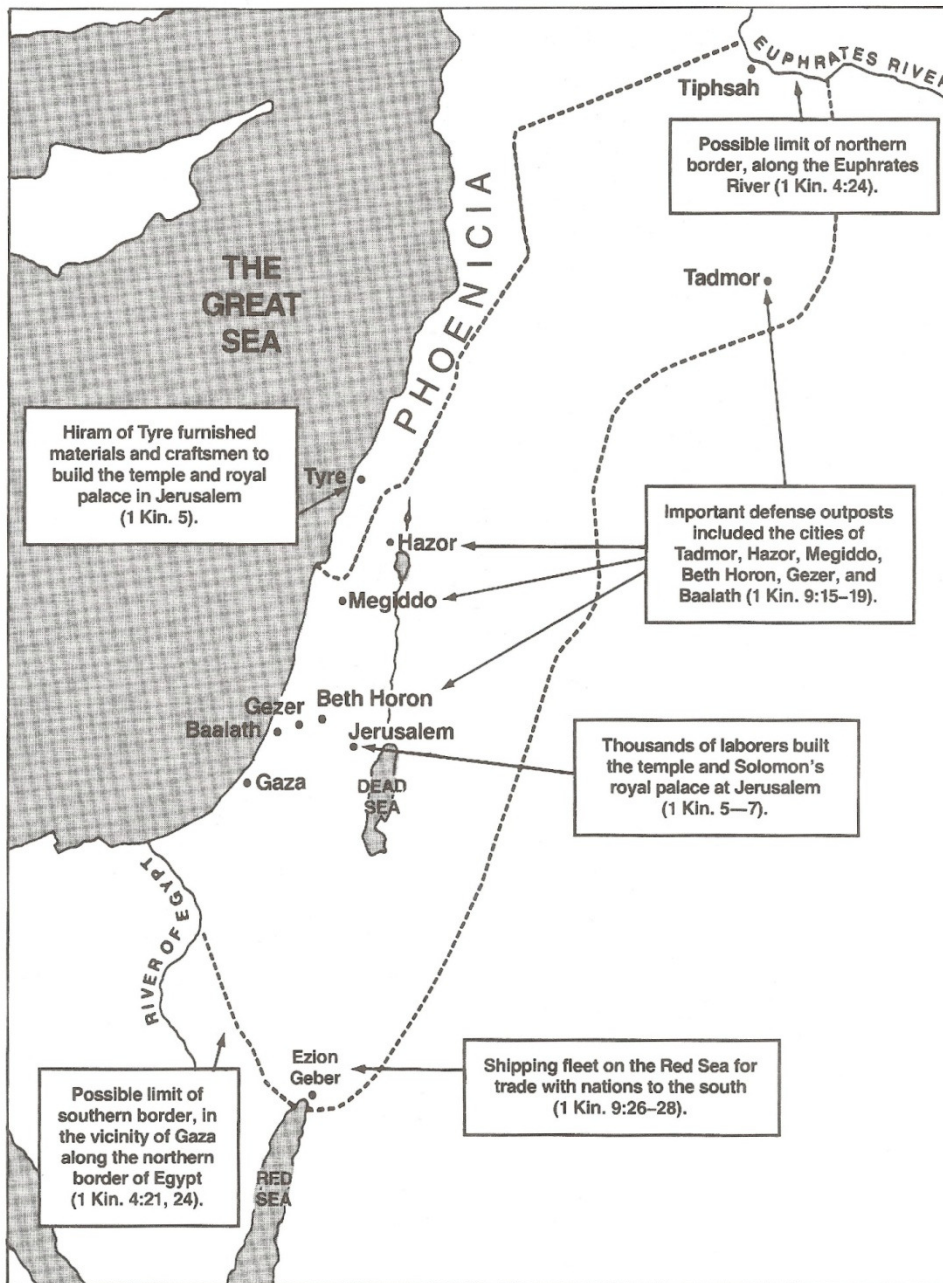
1. 3:11-14
2. 6:11-13
3. 9:1-9

- I. Solomon's public affairs (9:10-10:13)

1. Built buildings and defense works
 2. Encourage sea ventures
 3. Entertained the Queen of Sheba
- J. Note his wealth (10:14-29)
- K. An inglorious decline (11:1-43)
1. His love for women (foreign and Jewish) “who turned his heart after other gods”
 2. His turn to idolatry
 3. God raised up adversaries (11:14, 23): Hadad and Rezon who caused Solomon trouble.
 4. Jeroboam rebels against Solomon (11:26-40) and eventually leads the 10 tribes in the north to the split from the United Kingdom.
 5. Solomon reigned 40 years and his son, Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

II. Solmon's Empire

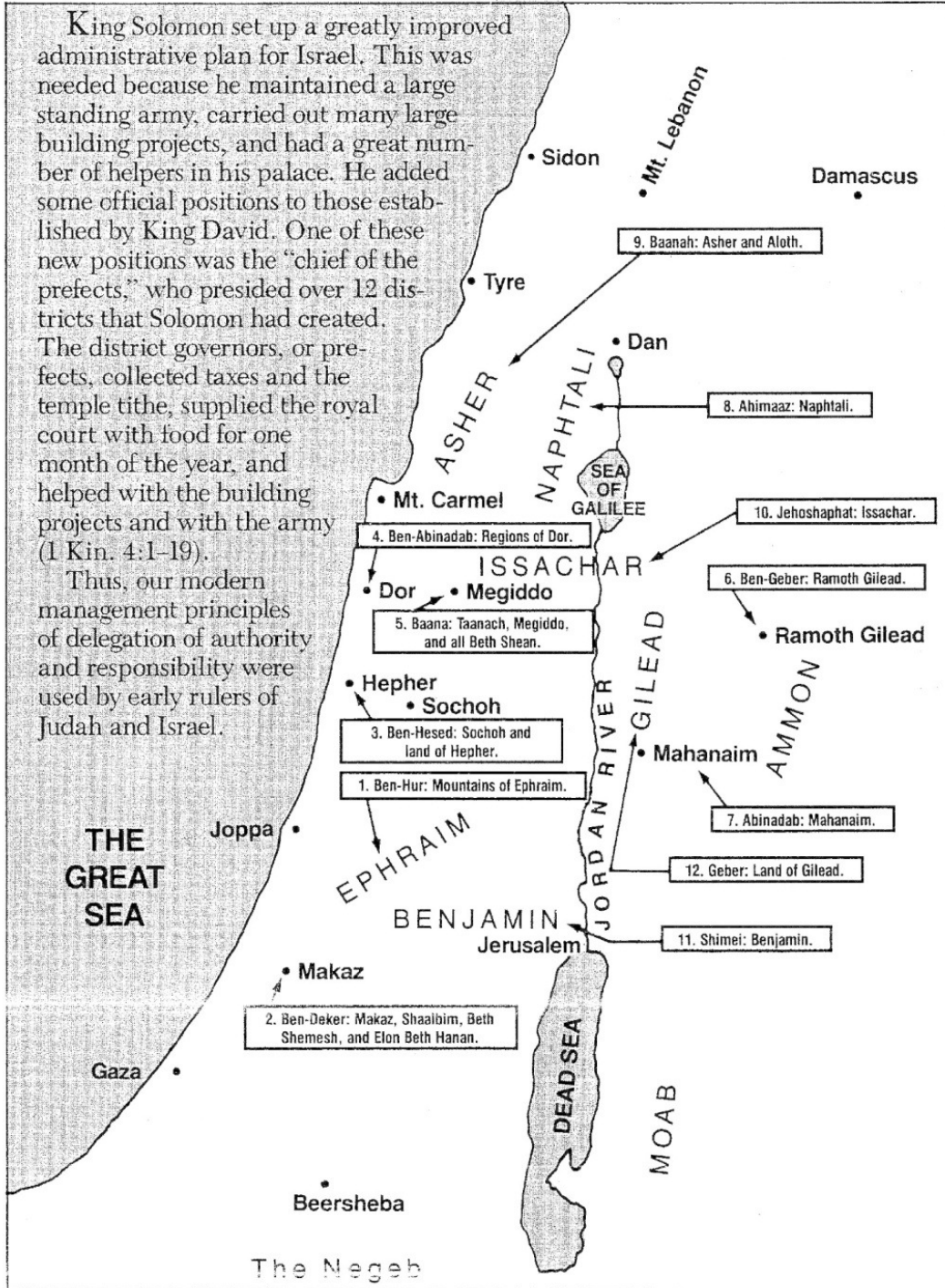
Solomon's Empire



(Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts, . 115)

III. Solomon's Twelve Districts

Solomon's Twelve Districts



(Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts, p. 116)

IV. A word about Proverbs

“Proverbs is perhaps the most practical book in the Old Testament because it teaches wisdom (lit., “skillful living”) in the multiple aspects of everyday life. In short pithy statements, maxims, and stories, Solomon and other contributors set forth about nine hundred proverbs – inspired precepts dealing with wisdom and folly, pride and humility, justice and vengeance, laziness and work, poverty and wealth, friends and neighbors, love and lust, anger and strife, masters and servants, life and death. These maxims are not theoretical but practical; they are easily memorized, timeless truths that touch on every facet of human relationships. Reading a proverb takes only a few seconds; applying a proverb can take a lifetime!”

(Talk thru the Bible, p. 161)

V. A word about Ecclesiastes

“Ecclesiastes is a profound book recording an intense search by the Preacher (traditionally understood to be Solomon) for meaning and satisfaction in life – in spite of the inequities, inconsistencies, and seeming absurdities of life on earth.

The key word in Ecclesiastes is vanity, the futile emptiness of trying to make sense out of life apart from God. Looked at ‘under the sun’ (8:17), life’s pursuits lead only to frustration. Power, prestige, pleasure – nothing can fill the God-shaped void in man’s life – except God Himself. But seen from His perspective, life becomes meaningful and fulfilling. Skepticism and despair melt away when each day is viewed as a gift from God.”

(Talk thru the Bible, p. 168)

VI. A word about Song of Solomon

“Song of Solomon is a love song written by Solomon (1:1) and abounding in metaphors and oriental imagery. Historically, it depicts the wooing and wedding of a shepherdess by King Solomon, and the joys and heartaches of wedded love.

Allegorically, it pictures Israel as God’s espoused bride (see Hosea 2:19-20), and the church as the bride of Christ. As human life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of man and woman, so spiritual life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of God for His people and Christ for His church.

The book is arranged like scenes in a drama with three main speakers: the bride (Shulamite), the king (Solomon), and a chorus (daughters of Jerusalem).”

(Talk thru the Bible, p. 176)

VII. So What?

In God's unfathomable grace, He chooses to use imperfect people who's "hearts are stayed on Him."

Discussion Question:

In many ways, Solomon's "fame, glory, wealth and honor foreshadow Christ in His Kingdom. His rulership brought knowledge, peace and worship." What was his downfall? How can we avoid similar pitfalls?