

**Introduction****1. David in Old Age**

1Ki 1:1 When King David was old and well advanced in years, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him.

1Ki 1:2 So his servants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin (*Abishag*) to attend the king and take care of him. She can lie beside him so that our lord the king may keep warm."

2. King David died from natural causes in c. 960 B.C. The Lord worked in mysterious ways to get His man Solomon into office as King.

3. The Lord worked just as mysteriously to see to it that Solomon's wisdom would serve as a witness to other Kings near and far.

1Ki 1:3 Then they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful girl and found (*Abishag*) a Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

1Ki 1:4 The girl was very beautiful; she took care of the king and waited on him, but the king had no intimate relations with her.

Footnote: Abishag was from Shunem a city located near Gibeah where Saul met the Witch of Endor and the battle of Gibeah was fought. The star of Solomon's *Song of Solomon* was also said to be a Shunammite girl who is repeatedly tempted to leave her Shepherd Lover representing Christ Jesus. See Pastor Merritt's study book entitled "Song of Solomon."

1Ki 1:5 Now Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, put himself forward and said, "I will be king." So he got chariots and horses ready, with fifty men to run ahead of him.

1Ki 1:6 (His father, (*King David*) had never interfered with him by asking, "Why do you behave as you do?" He was also very handsome and was born next after Absalom (*and by the rules of primogeniture was the rightful heir to the crown*).

1Ki 1:7 Adonijah conferred with Joab son of Zeruijah and with Abiathar the priest, and they gave him their support.

Footnote: Among the number of warriors who fought for David, there was a group of three known as the sons of Zeruijah. These three were Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. They were fiercely loyal to David and Israel. Fierce aptly describes the three for they were like wild men at times. Perhaps the reason for their unwavering stand with David was the fact that he was their uncle. Their mother, Zeruijah, was David's sister. More than once, because of their rash and wild behavior, David would ask of them, "What am I to do with you, you sons of Zeruijah?"

1Ki 1:8 But **Zadok** the priest, **Benaiah** son of Jehoiada, **Nathan** the prophet, **Shimei** and **Rei** and David's special guard did not join Adonijah.

1Ki 1:9 Adonijah then sacrificed sheep, cattle and fattened calves at the Stone of Zohelath near En Rogel (*a spring and water supply just outside of the city of Jerusalem*). He invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah who were royal officials,

1Ki 1:10 but he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the special guard or his brother Solomon.

1Ki 1:11 Then Nathan (David's personal Prophet) asked **Bathsheba**, Solomon's mother, "Have you not heard that Adonijah, the son of Haggith, has become king without our lord David's knowing it?"

1Ki 1:12 Now then, let me advise you how you can save your own life and the life of your son Solomon.

1Ki 1:13 Go in to King David and say to him, 'My lord the king, did you not swear to me your servant: "Surely Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne"? Why then has Adonijah become king?'

1Ki 1:14 While you are still there talking to the king, I will come in and confirm what you have said."

1Ki 1:15 So Bathsheba went to see the aged king in his room, where Abishag the Shunammite was attending him.

1Ki 1:16 Bathsheba bowed low and knelt before the king. "What is it you want?" the king asked.

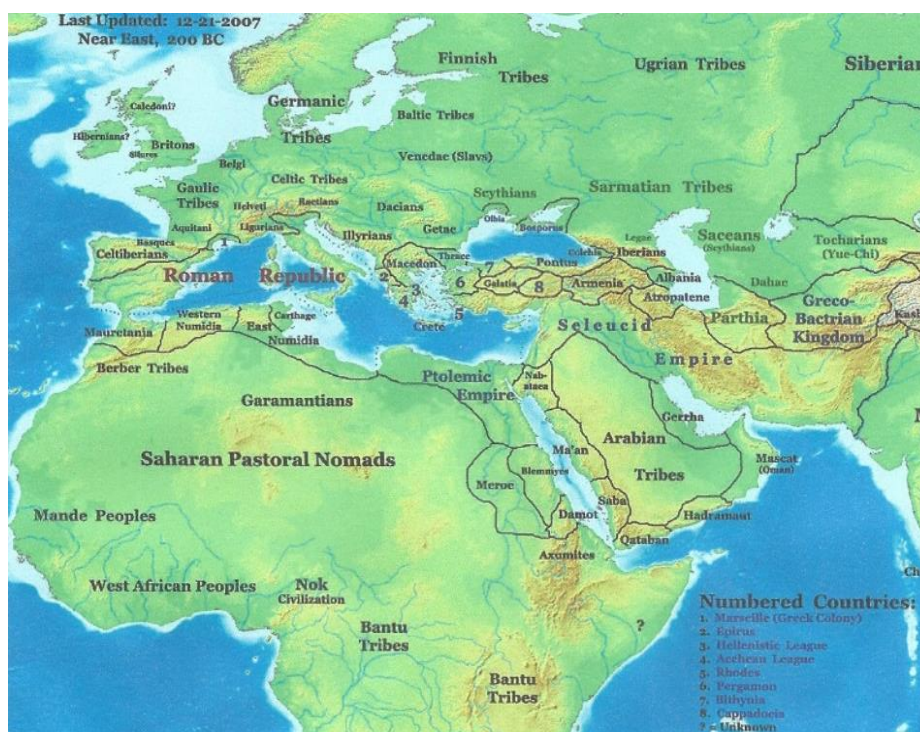
1Ki 1:17 She said to him, "My lord, you yourself swore to me your servant by the LORD your God: 'Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne.'

1Ki 1:18 But now Adonijah has become king, and you, my lord the king, do not know about it.

1Ki 1:19 He has sacrificed great numbers of cattle, fattened calves, and sheep, and has invited all the king's sons, **Abiathar** (*a priest*) the priest and Joab the commander of the army, but Solomon he has not invited.

Footnote: The above verses require several explanations: David had two priests: Zadok and Abiathar, the unusual situation came as a result his earlier contemps with Saul and the events at Nob. He also had two prophets: his personal one, Nathan and Ahimelech who served as the prophet for the nation of Israel. Rei was a member of the royal guard. Benaiah was the commander of the Cherethites and Pelethites serving both David and Solomon. Benaiah would later execute at Solomon's command Adonijah, Joab and Shemei.

4. There is a plot to foil God's plan to get His man (*Solomon*) on the throne. Solomon a servant who will one day impress the regal Sheba from the Horn of Africa.



1Ki 1:20 My lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to learn from you who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

1Ki 1:21 Otherwise, as soon as my lord the king is laid to rest with his fathers, I and my son Solomon will be treated as criminals."

1Ki 1:22 While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet arrived.

1Ki 1:23 And they told the king, "Nathan the prophet is here." So he went before the king and bowed with his face to the ground.

1Ki 1:24 Nathan said, "Have you, my lord the king, declared that Adonijah shall be king after you, and that he will sit on your throne?"

1Ki 1:25 Today he has gone down and sacrificed great numbers of cattle, fattened calves, and sheep. He has invited all the king's sons, the commanders of the army and Abiathar the priest. Right now, they are eating and drinking with him and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!'

1Ki 1:26 But me your servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon he did not invite.

1Ki 1:27 Is this something my lord the king has done without letting his servants know who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

1Ki 1:28 Then King David said, "Call in Bathsheba." So she came into the king's presence and stood before him.

1Ki 1:29 The king then took an oath: "As surely as the LORD lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble,

1Ki 1:30 I will surely carry out today what I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel: Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place."

1Ki 1:31 Then Bathsheba bowed low with her face to the ground and, kneeling before the king, said, "May my lord King David live forever!"

1Ki 1:32 King David said, "Call in Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came before the king,

1Ki 1:33 he said to them: "Take your lord's servants with you and set Solomon my son on my own mule and take him down to Gihon.

1Ki 1:34 There have Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel. Blow the trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!'

## **Civil War Looms**

1. The threat of **civil war** and Adonijah's execution as a traitor was averted for a time; however, Adonijah attempted to possess King David's former sexual concubine, further enraging Solomon.

2. Thereafter, "King Solomon sent Benaiah, son of Jehoiada' who executed Adonijah" (1<sup>st</sup> Kings chapter one). King Solomon would later have the other ringleaders of the coup punished. General Joab David's chief of staff would be executed and Abiathar Israel's Priest, would be exiled.

3. Perhaps one of the more fantastical yet pivotal parts of the biblical story of Solomon and Sheba is the divine gift of wisdom.

4. The gift was provided at Solomon's request. "Now, O Lord God, let your promise to David my father be established, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. Now give me wisdom and knowledge that I might properly rule your people."

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2Ch 1:9 “Now, O Lord God, let your promise to David my father be established, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. Now give me wisdom and knowledge that I might properly rule your people.”

5. Let's see what the unknown author of Chronicles writes about Solomon's worship at Gibeon and particularly His request for wisdom—the same wisdom that will impress Sheba. The life of Solomon and his wisdom will be a marvelous witness to an important queen from the Horn of Africa.

2Ch 1:1 Solomon son of David established himself firmly over his kingdom, for the LORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.

2Ch 1:2 Then Solomon spoke to all Israel-- to the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, to the judges and to all the leaders in Israel, the heads of families --

2Ch 1:3 and Solomon and the whole assembly went to the high place at Gibeon, for God's Tent of Meeting was there, which Moses the LORD'S servant had made in the desert.

6. Now David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim to the place he had prepared for it, because he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.

7. But the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made was in Gibeon in front of the tabernacle of the LORD; so Solomon and the assembly inquired of him there.

8. Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

### **Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom**

1. Solomon answered God, "You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place.

2. Now, LORD God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth.

3. Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?"

4. God in His omniscience knows Queen of the South is going to need more than wisdom to impress her majesty.

### **God Speaks Again**

1. "Since this is your heart's desire and you have not asked for wealth, riches or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king.

2. Therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, riches and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have."

3. Then Solomon went to Jerusalem from the high place at Gibeon, from before the Tent of Meeting. And he reigned over Israel as a wise King but more than that, though he did not ask for wealth—wealth he shall have.

### **Solomon's Wealth**

1. Solomon accumulated chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he kept in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem.

2. The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills.

3. Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue-- the royal merchants purchased them from Kue (Tarsus).

4. Solomon imported chariots and horses from Egypt. He also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and of the Arameans.

5. Solomon received not only knowledge and wisdom, but also "riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings before him."

6. The stage is being set for the historical meeting mentioned in the Old and New Testaments.

7. Solomon's prosperity and success were also achieved through ingenious reforms and innovations such as:

the improvement of defense measures,

the expansion of the royal court,

the financial windfall from more sophisticated taxation,

labor conscriptions of Canaanites and Israelites,

tributes and gifts from foreign countries under the influence of Solomon,

and a land and sea trading system that utilized a powerful military to protect assets and trade routes.

### **King Solomon and Sheba**

1. King Solomon was also famous for his international relationships, forming alliances with other nearby powerful nations such as **Egypt**, **Moab**, **Tyre**, and **Arabia**.

2. One of King Solomon's more famous political-amorous relationships was with the **Queen of Sheba** (which some speculate to be modern-day Yemen), who visited Israel with a lavish tribute of 120 talents of gold (in US dollars maybe somewhere around \$826,000 to \$1,000,000).

3. The Hebrew scriptures state, "And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers and their apparel, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her." (2 Chronicles 9:1-4).

4. Clearly, the Queen was impressed with Solomon and his accomplishments, and the two cultivated an intimate relationship, with Sheba helping create, foster, and maintain Solomon's trading with other Arabian kings.

2Ch 9:1 When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions. Arriving with a very great caravan ... carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones -- she came to Solomon and talked with him about all she had on her mind.

2Ch 9:2 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for him to explain to her.

2Ch 9:3 When the queen of Sheba saw the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the palace he had built,

2Ch 9:4 the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, the cupbearers in their robes and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed.

5. Additionally, according to the Rastafarian faith, Solomon and Sheba conceived a child together, whose descendants included Haile Selassie I, "the God of the Black race." If such was true, Selassie would then be related to both King David and **Jesus Christ** of Nazareth.

6. King Solomon is credited in the Hebrew scriptures as sponsoring, planning, funding, and executing the building of the Temple to house the Ark of the Covenant, *per* the wishes of his father, King David, and God.

7. The building of the Temple is recorded in 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles, with the ground-breaking beginning in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, and construction was completed seven years later with an ostentatious dedication. In a seven-day celebration, Solomon sacrificed 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep to celebrate the Temple's completion and God's willingness to dwell among them, therein.

8. The architectural design of the Temple was modeled after the tabernacle that had housed the Ark of the Covenant for decades. Quite lavish, it was double the size and built mainly from stone, with cedar paneling to hide all masonry, which was overlaid with gold.

9. The inside of the Temple was decorated with elaborate carvings (gourds and open flowers), golden lampstands, an altar of incense (also called "the golden altar"), and two **bronze** pillars among other embellishments.

9.1 In a less-advanced architectural age, at over 100 feet long by 40 feet wide by 60 feet high with outer doors of ivory, the first Temple must have seemed an impossibility, a miraculous achievement, for most visitors.

10. According to the Old Testament, after the Temple was completed, Solomon had the Ark of the Covenant moved from the tent that King David had made for it and placed it in its specialized chamber on the most western end of the Temple called, "The Holy of Holies."



11. A perfect 20 x 20 x 20 ft. cube, this was the most sacred room that no one besides the Chief Priest could enter (and that on the Day of Atonement) without dying. Institutionally and nationally, it was the intersection of the Divine with his people through his mediator.

12. The Temple did not just house the Levitical priests of God. Side rooms and a courtyard were constructed around the whole building, with areas sectioned off for both the priests and the common people of Israel.

13. Being a builder, King Solomon also engaged in other construction projects such as his personal palace, the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon, the Hall of the Pillars, and the Hall of Justice. Yet, Solomon did not restrict his projects to Jerusalem alone.

14. He also rebuilt several cities; he commissioned fleets of ships and built numerous harbors to accommodate the bounty of the trade routes; and he constructed stables to house his thousands of horses and chariots.

15. It is even possible that he helped erect (or financed with plunder from the Temple by the Assyrians or Babylonians) the famous Hanging Gardens (one of the legendary Seven Wonders of the World).

### **Solomon's Literature**

1. King Solomon is also credited for contributing several books and literary works to the Hebrew scriptures including the *Book of Proverbs*, *Song of Songs*, and *Ecclesiastes*.

2. Although theology is a component of Solomon's writings, the wisdom genre (also seen in Egyptian and Akkadian literature) focuses more on areas outside of theology - providing advice on the created world, relationships, practical matters, and assorted personal topics or challenges.

3. Thus, Proverbs deals with the art of living, with how to make intelligent choices for one's future well-being. The Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon) is a romantic poem that presents the ultimate union between the bride and the bridegroom, focusing on themes of love, wisdom, beauty, power, desire, sex, loyalty, etc.

4. The Book of Ecclesiastes is a royal testament that includes personal reflections, meditations, and instructions on the meaning and purposes of life.

5. It alludes to several aspects that would have been relevant to Solomon's own personal experiences - wisdom, futility, riches, servants, hedonism, productivity, and humble self-realization.

### **Solomon Loses Favor with God**

1. Despite all these great accomplishments, the Old Testament indicates that the decline of Solomon was similar to the fall of the previous kings of United Israel - similar, in that personal vanity and religious/moral compromise led to social disintegration and strife.

2. Solomon slowly deprioritized his relationship and obligations to God in order to appease his many foreign wives and in order to protect the prosperity and longevity of his rule. Ultimately, "[Solomon's] wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been."

1Ki 11:1 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter -- Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites.

1Ki 11:2 They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love.

1Ki 11:3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.

1Ki 11:4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

1Ki 11:5 He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites.

1Ki 11:6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.

3. Solomon's ungrateful, disloyal actions and attitude - despite being the wisest and most blessed man on the earth - provoked the anger and judgment of the Lord.

4. Thus, although still able to keep control of the nation of Israel because of God's promise to King David, Solomon lost the protection and favor of God that earlier had provided remarkable peace and prosperity when he was obedient to God.

5. King Solomon died of natural causes in c. 930 B.C. at the age of 80.

6. His son, Rehoboam, inherited the throne, which led to a civil war and the end of the United Kingdom of Israel in B.C. 930. Jeroboam took control of the north and Rehoboam the south.

7. Prayer

8. Now in preparation for the Lord's Table get your hymnals, stand and turn to hymn number 99 *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. Ken come and lead as we sing.