
a *Grace Notes* course

Old Testament History

by Alfred Edersheim

History 513

Grace Notes

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1 Kings 3, 4; 2 Chronicles 1

It is remarkable how often seemingly unimportant details in the sacred narrative gain a fresh meaning and new interest if viewed in their higher bearing and spiritual import. Nor is such application of them arbitrary. On the contrary, we conclude that Scripture was intended to be so read. This is evident from the circumstance that it is, avowedly not a secular but a prophetic history,¹ and that, being such, it is not arranged according to the chronological succession of events, but grouped so as to bring into prominence that which concerns the kingdom of God. This plan of Scripture history is not only worthy of its object, but gives it its permanent interest and application.

What has just been stated is aptly illustrated by the opening account of King Solomon's reign. Of course, no chronological arrangement could have been here intended, since the list of Solomon's officers, given in 1 Kings 4, contains the names of at least two of the king's sons-in-law (vers. 11,15), whose appointment must, therefore, date from a period considerably later than the commencement of his reign. What, then, we may ask, is the object of not only recording in a "prophetic history" such apparently unimportant details, but grouping them together irrespective of their dates? Without undervaluing them, considered as purely historical notices, we may venture to suggest a higher object in their record and arrangement.

This detailed account of all the court and government appointments serves as evidence, how thoroughly and even elaborately the kingdom of Solomon was organized - and by obvious inference, how fully God had made good in this

respect His gracious promises to King David. But may we not go even beyond this, and see in the literal fulfillment of these outward promises a pledge and assurance that the spiritual realities connected with them, and of which they were the symbol and type, would likewise become true in the Kingdom of Him Who was "David's better Son?" Thus viewed, the Divine promise made to David (2 Samuel 7) was once more like a light casting the lengthening shadows of present events towards the far-off future.

The first event of national interest that occurred was the marriage of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh. It was of almost equal political importance to Egypt and to Palestine. An alliance with the great neighboring kingdom of Egypt might have seemed an eventuality almost unthought of among the possibilities of the new and somewhat doubtful monarchy in Israel. But, on the other hand, it may have been also of importance to the then reigning Egyptian dynasty (the 21st Time), which, as we know, was rapidly declining in authority.

To Israel and to the countries around, such a union would now afford evidence of the position and influence which the Jewish monarchy had attained in the opinion of foreign politicians. All the more are we involuntarily carried back in spirit to the period when Israel was oppressed and in servitude to Egypt. As we contrast the relations in the past and in the time of Solomon, we realize how marvelously God had fulfilled His promises of deliverance to His people. And here we again turn to the great promise in 2 Samuel 7, as alike instructive to Israel as regarded their present, and as full of blessed hope for their future. The time of the Judges had been one of struggle and disorganization; that of David one of war and conflicts. But with Solomon the period of peace had begun, emblematic of the higher peace of the "Prince of Peace." Thus viewed, the account of the prosperity of the land and people, as further evidenced by the wealth displayed in the ordinary appointments of the Court; by the arrangement of the country into provinces under officers for fiscal administration and civil government; and, above all, by the wisdom of Solomon, - who, while encouraging by example literature and study of

¹ As noticed in the previous part, and even indicated by the position in the Hebrew Canon of the historical books among "the Prophets."

every kind, chiefly aimed after that higher knowledge and understanding which is God-given, and leads to the fear and service of the Lord, - acquires a new and a spiritual meaning.

But to return to the sacred narrative. This marriage of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh - to which, from its frequent mention, so much political importance seems to have been attached - took place in the first years of his reign, although some time after the building of the Temple and of his own palace had commenced.² Such a union was not forbidden by the law,³ nor was the daughter of Pharaoh apparently implicated in the charge brought against Solomon's other foreign wives of having led him into idolatry (1 Kings 11:1-7).

In fact, according to Jewish tradition, the daughter of Pharaoh actually became a Jewish proselyte. still, Solomon seems to have felt the incongruity of bringing her into the palace of David, within the bounds of which "the Ark of the Lord" appears to have been located (2 Chronicles 8:11), and she occupied a temporary abode "in the City of David," until the new palace of Solomon was ready for her reception.

But the great prosperity which, as we shall presently see, the country enjoyed during the reign of Solomon, was due to higher than merely outward causes. It was the blessing of the Lord which in this instance also made - rich that blessing which it was Solomon's chief concern to obtain. From the necessity of the case, Israel, and even Solomon, still worshipped on the ancient "high places."

Of these, the principal was naturally Gibeon - the twin height. For, right over against the city itself, on one of the two eminences ("mamelons") which gave it its name, the ancient Tabernacle which Moses had reared had been placed. Here Solomon,

at the commencement of his reign, celebrated a great festival, probably to inaugurate and consecrate his accession by a public acknowledgment of Jehovah as the God of Israel. All the people took part in what was a service of hitherto unparalleled magnificence.

But something far better than the smoke of a thousand burnt-sacrifices offered in Israel's ancient Sanctuary, attested that the God, Who had brought Israel out of Egypt and led them through the Wilderness, still watched over His people. The services of those festive days were over, and king and people were about to return to their homes. As Solomon had surveyed the vast multitude which, from all parts of the country, had gathered to Gibeon, the difficulty must have painfully forced itself on him of wisely ruling an empire so vast as that belonging to him, stretching from Tiphscach (the Greek Thapsacus), "the fords," on the western bank of the Euphrates, in the north-east, to Gaza on the border of Egypt, in the southwest (1 Kings 4:24). The conquests so lately made had not yet been consolidated the means at the king's disposal were still comparatively scanty. tribal jealousies were scarcely appeased; and Solomon himself was young and wholly inexperienced. Any false step might prove fatal; even want of some brilliant success might disintegrate what was but imperfectly welded together. On the other hand, had Israel's history not been a series of constant miracles, through the gracious Personal interposition of the LORD? What, then, might Solomon not expect from His help?

Busy with such thoughts, the king had laid him down to rest on the last night of his stay in Gibeon. Ordinarily dreams are without deeper significance. So Solomon himself afterwards taught (Ecclesiastes 5:7); and so the spiritually enlightened among other nations, and the prophets in Israel equally declared (Job 20:8; Isaiah 29:7). And yet, while most fully admitting this (as in Ecclesiasticus 34:1-6), it must have been also felt, as indeed Holy Scripture teaches by many instances, that dreams might be employed by the Most High in the time of our visitation (Ecclesiasticus 34:6). So was it with Solomon on that night. It has been well remarked, that Adonijah would not have thus dreamed after his

² From 1 Kings 11:42, comp. with 14:21, we might infer that Solomon had married the Ammonitess Naamah before the death of his father. But as this seems incompatible with 2 Chronicles 13:7, and for other reason which will-readily occur to the reader, the numeral indicating the age of Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:21) seems to be a copyist's mistake for 21.

³ The law only forbade alliance with the Canaanites (Exodus 34:16 Deuteronomy 7:3).

feast at En-rogel (1 Kings 1:9, 25), even had his attempt been crowned with the success for which he had hoped. The question which on that night the Lord put before Solomon, "Ask what I shall give thee?" was not only an answer to the unspoken entreaty for help expressed in the sacrifices that had been offered, but was also intended to search the deepest feelings of his heart. Like that of our Lord addressed to St. Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" it sounded the inmost depths of the soul. Such questions come, more or less distinctly, to us all, and that in every crisis of our lives. They may become fresh spiritual starting-points to us, seasons of greater nearness to God, and of spiritual advancement; or they may prove times of "temptation," if we allow ourselves to be "drawn away" and "enticed" of our own "lust."

The prayer of Solomon on this occasion once more combined the three elements of thanksgiving, confession, and petition. In his thanksgiving, acknowledgment of God mingled with humiliation; in his confession, a sense of inability with the expression of felt want; while his petition, evidently based on the Divine promise (Genesis 13:16; 32:12), was characterized by singleness of spiritual desire. For, in order to know what he sought, when so earnestly craving for "understanding," we have only to turn to his own "Book of Proverbs." And, as in the case of all whose spiritual aim is single, God not only granted his request, but also added to what He gave "all things" otherwise needful, thus proving that the "promise of the life that now is" is ever connected with that of the life "which is to come" (2 Timothy 4:8), just as in our present condition the soul is with the body. Perhaps we may put it otherwise in this manner. As so often, God extended the higher wisdom granted Solomon even to the lower concerns of this life, while He added to it the promise of longevity and prosperity - but only on condition of continued observance of God's statutes and commandments (1 Kings 3:14).⁴ Such gracious condescension on the part of the LORD called for the expression of fresh public

thanksgiving, which Solomon rendered on his return to Jerusalem (1 Kings 3:15).

Evidence of the reality of God's promise soon appeared, and that in a manner peculiarly calculated to impress the Eastern mind. According to the simple manners of the times, a cause too difficult for ordinary judges was carried direct to the king, who, as God's representative, was regarded as able to give help to his people in all time of need. In such paternal dispensation of justice, there was no appeal to witnesses nor to statute-books, which indeed would have been equally accessible to inferior judges; but the king was expected to strike out some new light, in which the real bearings of a case would so appear as to appeal to all men's convictions, and to command their approval of his sentence. There was here no need for anything recondite - rather the opposite. To point out to practical common sense what was there, though unperceived until suddenly brought to prominence, would more than anything else appeal to the people, as a thing within the range of all, and yet showing the wise guidance of the king. Thus sympathy and universal trust, as well as admiration, would be called forth, especially among Orientals, whose wisdom is that of common life, and whose philosophy that of proverbs.

The story of the contention of the two women for the one living child, when from the absence of witnesses it seemed impossible to determine whose it really was, is sufficiently known. The ready wisdom with which Solomon devised means for ascertaining the truth would commend itself to the popular mind. It was just what they would appreciate in their king. Such a monarch would indeed be a terror to evil-doers, and a protection and praise to them that did well. It is probably in order to explain the rapid spread of Solomon's fame that this instance of his wisdom is related in Holy Scripture (1 Kings 3:28).

The prosperity of such a reign was commensurate with the fact that it was based upon the Divine promises, and typical of far greater blessings to come. The notices in 1 Kings 4 and 5 are strung together to indicate that prosperity by presenting to our view the condition of the Israelitish

⁴ Accordingly, Solomon forfeited this promise on account of his later idolatry. He died at the age of about fifty-nine or sixty.

monarchy in the high-day of its glory. Wise and respected councilors surrounded the king.⁵

The administration of the country was orderly, and the taxation not arbitrary but regulated. The land was divided, not according to the geographical boundaries of the "tribes," but according to population and resources, into twelve provinces, over each of which a governor was appointed. Among their number we find two sons-in-law of the king (4:11, 15), and other names well-known in the land (such as those of Baana, ver. 12, probably the brother of "the recorder," ver. 3, and Baanah, the son of Hushai, probably David's councilor, ver. 16). Had this policy of re-arranging the country into provinces been sufficiently consolidated, many of the tribal jealousies would have ceased. On the other hand, the financial administration, entrusted to these governors, was of the simplest kind. Apparently, no direct taxes were levied, but all that was requisite for the royal court and government had to be provided, each province supplying in turn what was required for one month. Such a system could not indeed press heavily, so long as the country continued prosperous; but with a luxurious court, in hard times, or under harsh governors, it might easily become an instrument of oppression and a source of discontent. From 1 Kings 12:4 we gather that such was ultimately the case. It need scarcely be added, that in each province the supreme civil government was in the hands of these royal officials; and such was the general quiet prevailing, that even in the extensive district east of the Jordan, which bordered on so many turbulent tributary nations, "one sole officer" (1 Kings 4:19) was sufficient to preserve the peace of the country.

Quite in accordance with these notices are the references both to the prosperity of Israel, and to the extent of Solomon's dominions (1 Kings 4:20,

⁵ The word Cohen in 1 Kings 4:2 ("Azariah, the son of Zadok the priest") should not be rendered "priest," but refers to a civil office - that of the king's representative to the people and his most intimate adviser. The same term is used of Zabud in ver. 5, where the Authorized Version translates "principal officer," and also of David's sons, 2 Samuel 8:18. A grand. son of Zadok could not have been old enough to be high-priest (comp. 1 Chronicles 6:10.)

21). They almost read like an initial fulfillment of that promise to Abraham, "Multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Genesis 22:17).

And if, compared with the simplicity of Saul's and even of David's court, that of Solomon seems luxurious in its appointments,⁶ we must remember that it was intended to show the altered state of the Israelitish monarchy, and that even so the daily consumption was far smaller than at the court of the Persian monarchs in the high-day of their power and glory.⁷

But the fame which accrued to the kingdom of Solomon from its prosperity and wealth would have been little worthy of the Jewish monarchy, had it been uncombined with that which alone truly exalteth a nation or an individual. The views of Solomon himself on this subject are pithily

⁶ The provision made was not only for the court and its dependants, but also for the royal stables (1 Kings 4:26-28). In verse 26 the number of his horses is by a clerical error given as 40,000 instead of 4,000 (comp. 2 Chronicles 9:25). If, according to 1 Kings 10:26, 2 Chronicles 1:14, Solomon had 1,400 chariots, each with two horses, and with, in most of them, a third horse as reserve, we have the number 4,000.

⁷ It is difficult to give the exact equivalent of the "thirty measures of fine flour and threescore of meal" (in all, ninety measures), 1 Kings 4:22. According to the calculation of the Rabbis (Bibl. Dict. vol. 3, p. 1742) they would yield ninety-nine sacks of flour. Thenius (Studien u. Krit. for 1846, p. 73, etc.) calculates that they would yield two pounds of bread for 14,000 persons. But this computation is exaggerated. On competent authority I am informed that one bushel of flour makes up fourteen (four pound) loaves of bread; consequently, one sack (four bushels) fifty-six loaves, or 224 pounds of bread. This for ninety-nine sacks would give 22,176 pounds of bread, which at two pounds per person would supply 11,088 - or, with waste, about 11,000 persons. Of this total amount of bread, the thirty-three sacks of "fine flour" - probably for court use - would yield 1,848 loaves, or 7,392 pounds of bread. The number of persons fed daily at the court of the kings of Persia is said to have been 15,000 (see Speaker's Comm., p. 502). Thenius further calculates that, taken on an average, the thirty oxen and one hundred sheep would yield one and a half pounds of meat for each of the 14,000 persons. At the court of Cyrus, the daily provision seems to have been, 400 sheep, 300 lambs, 100 oxen, 30 horses, 30 deer, 400 fatted geese, 100 young geese, 300 pigeons, 600 small fowls, 3,750 gallons of wine, 75 gallons of new milk, and 75 of sour milk (comp. Bahr in Lange's Bibel W., vol. 7. p. 29). But here also the computation of Thenius seems too large, bearing in mind that cattle and sheep in the East are much smaller than in the West.

summed up in one of his own "Proverbs" (3:13, 14), "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that causeth understanding to go forth; for merchandise (trading) with it, is better than merchandise with silver, and the gain from it than the most fine gold."

All this the "wise king" exemplified in his own person. God gave him "wisdom" not only far wider in its range, but far other in its character (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10) than that of the East, or of far-famed Egypt, or even of those deemed wisest in Israel,⁸ "and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore"⁹ (1 Kings 4:29). Not satisfied with the idle life of an Eastern monarch, he set the example of, and gave encouragement to study and literature, the range of his inquiries extending not only to philosophy and poetry,¹⁰ but also to natural science in all its branches.¹¹ It must have been a mighty intellectual impulse which proceeded from such a king; it must have been a reign unparalleled in that age, as well as among that people, which Solomon inaugurated.

V_06 The building of Solomon's temple — preparations for it — plan and structure of the temple, internal fittings — history of the temple — jewish traditions.

1 Kings 5, 6, 7:13-51, 8:6-9; 2 Chronicles 2, 3, 4, 5:7-10

WHILE Solomon thus wisely and in the fear of God ordered his government, and the country enjoyed a measure of prosperity, wealth, and

⁸ Comp. 1 Chronicles 2:6. Ethan, 1 Chronicles 6:44; 15:17, 19; Psalm 89 (inscr.) Heman, 1 Chronicles 6:33; 25:5; Psalm 88 (inscr.) Chalcol and Darda, sons of Mahol, perhaps "sacras choreas ducendi periti."

⁹ A hyperbole not uncommon in antiquity. I feel tempted here to quote the similar expression of Horace (Odes, 1:28): "Te maris et terrae numeroque carentis arenae Mensorem cohibent, Archyta."

¹⁰ Of these "Proverbs" only 915 verses have been preserved in the Book of that name; of "the Songs," besides the Song of Songs, only Psalm 72 and 127.

¹¹ The word rendered "hyssop" in the Authorized Version is either the mint, the marjoram, the Orthotricum saxatile, or, according to Tristram (Nat. Hist. of the Bible, p. 457), the caper (Capparis spinosa).

power never before or afterwards attained, the grand work of his reign yet remained to be done. This was the building of an "house unto the Name of Jehovah God." We have already seen how earnestly David had this at heart; how fully it corresponded with the Divine promise; and how fitly its execution was assigned to Solomon as the great task of his reign, viewing it as typical of that of "David's greater Son." As might be expected, all outward circumstances contributed to further the work. Israel, as a nation, was not intended to attain pre-eminence either in art or science. If we may venture to pronounce on such a matter, this was the part assigned, in the Providence of God, to the Gentile world. To Israel was specially entrusted the guardianship of that spiritual truth, which in the course of ages would develop in all its proportions, until finally it became the common property of the whole world. On the other hand, it was the task assigned to that world, to develop knowledge and thought so as to prepare a fitting reception for the truth, that thus it might be presented in all its aspects, and carried from land to land in a form adapted to every nation, meeting every want and aspiration. This was symbolically indicated even in the building of Solomon's Temple. For, if that Temple had been exclusively the workmanship of Jewish hands, both the materials for it and their artistic preparation would have been sadly defective, as compared with what it actually became. But it was not so; and, while in the co-operation of Gentiles with Israel in the rearing of the Temple we see a symbol of their higher union in the glorious architecture of that "spiritual house built up" of "lively stones," we also recognize the gracious Providence of God, which rendered it possible to employ in that work the best materials and the best artificers of the ancient world.

For it was in the good Providence of God that the throne of Tyre was at the time occupied by Hiram,¹² who had not only been a friend and ally of David, but to whom the latter had communicated his plans of the projected Temple-buildings. Indeed, Hiram had already furnished David with a

¹² Also written Hirom. (1 Kings 5:10, 18 - in the Hebrew, 4:24, 32), and in 2 Chronicles 2. Hiram.

certain proportion of the necessary materials for the work (1 Chronicles 22:4). The extraordinary mechanical skill of the Phoenicians - especially of the Sidonians - was universally famed in the ancient world. Similarly, the best materials were at their command. On the slopes of Lebanon, which belonged to their territory, grew those world-famed cedars with which the palaces of Assyria were adorned, and, close by, at Gebal (the ancient Byblos, the modern Jebeil) were the most skilled workmen¹³ (Ezekiel 27:9).

On the same slopes grew also the cypress,¹⁴ so suitable for flooring, its wood being almost indestructible, and impervious to rot and worms; while the Phoenician merchantmen brought to Tyre that "almug," "algum," or red sandal-wood which was so valued in antiquity (comp. 1 Kings 10:11)¹⁵

The same skill as in the preparation of woodwork distinguished the Phoenician carvers, stone-cutters, dyers, modelers, and other craftsmen. To have at his disposal the best artificers of Phoenicia, and these under a trained and celebrated "master" (2 Chronicles 2:13, 14), must have been of immense advantage to Solomon. At the same time the extensive preparations which David had made rendered the work comparatively so easy, that the Temple-buildings, with their

elaborate internal fittings, were completed in the short space of seven years (1 Kings 6:37, 38), while the later rearing of the king's palace occupied not less than thirteen years (1 Kings 7:1). But, although Solomon thus availed himself of Phoenician skill in the execution of the work, the plan and design were strictly Jewish, having, in fact, been drawn long before, in the time of King David.

The building of the Temple commenced in the second month ("Siv," "splendor" - the month of opening beauty of nature) of the fourth year of Solomon's reign, being the 480th from the Exodus¹⁶ (1 Kings 6:1).

But there was this peculiarity about the work, that no sound of ax, hammer, or chisel was heard on Mount Moriah while the Holy House was rising, day by day, in beauty and glory. As Jewish tradition has it, "The iron is created to shorten the days of man, and the altar to lengthen them; therefore it is not right that that which shortens should be lifted upon that which lengthens" (Midd. 3:4). The massive timber used was not merely prepared but dressed before it was brought to the sea, to be conveyed in floats to Joppa, whence the distance to Jerusalem was only about forty miles (1 Kings 5:9). Similarly, those great, splendid (not "costly," as in the Authorized Version) hewed stones (1 Kings 5:17), beveled at the edges, of which to this day some are seen in what remains of the ancient Temple-wall - the largest of them being more than thirty feet long by seven and a half high, and weighing above one hundred tons - were all chiseled and carefully marked before being sent to Jerusalem (1 Kings 6:7). An undertaking of such magnitude would require, especially in the absence of modern mechanical appliances, a very large number of workmen. They amounted in all to 60,000 Palestinians, who were divided into two classes. The first comprised native Israelites, of whom 30,000 were raised by a "levy," which, taking the census of David as our basis, would be at the rate of considerably less than one in forty-four of the able-bodied male

¹³ Our Authorized Version translates wrongly, "stone-squarers" (1 Kings 5:18), where the original has "Gebalites," i.e., inhabitants of Gebal.

¹⁴ There has been much controversy as to the meaning of the word *berosh*, rendered in the Authorized Version (1 Kings 5:8, and many other passages) by "fir." Differing from Canon Rawlinson, it seems to me, for many reasons, most improbable that it was "the juniper," and on the grounds explained in Gesenius' Thesaurus 1. 946 b, 247 a, I regard it, with almost all authorities, as the cypress. The Targumim and the Talmud have the words *berotha* and *beratha*, with apparently the same signification. Comp. Levy, Chald. Worterb. 2 d. Targ. p. I 18 b. Canon Tristram, who is always trustworthy (Nat. Hist. of the Bible), speaks of it with caution.

¹⁵ Most commentators are agreed that it was the "red sandal" wood. It is curious to notice that this was apparently an article of ordinary commerce. The "Ophir" (or Red Sea) fleet of King Solomon, on the other hand, is only said to have brought "gold" (1 Kings 9:28; 2 Chronicles 8:17, 18). Remembering that this wood had to come from Tyre, there is not the slightest inaccuracy in 2 Chronicles 2:8, as Zockler and even Keil seem to imagine.

¹⁶ Doubt has been thrown on the accuracy of this date, which indeed is altered by the LXX; but this, as it seems to us, on wholly insufficient grounds.

population. These 30,000 men worked by relays, 10,000 being employed during one month, after which they returned for two months to their homes. The second class of workmen, which consisted of strangers resident in Palestine (1 Kings 5:15; 2 Chronicles 2:17,18), amounted to 150,000, of whom 70,000 were burden-bearers, and 80,000 "hewers in the mountains," or rather, as the expression always means, "stonecutters."

The two classes are carefully distinguished the Israelites being free laborers, who worked under the direction of Hiram's skilled men; while the others, who were the representatives of the ancient heathen inhabitants of Palestine, were really held to "bond-service" (1 Kings 9:20, 21; 2 Chronicles 2:17, 18; 8:7-9). The total number of men employed (160,000), though large, cannot be considered excessive, when compared, for example, with the 360,000 persons engaged for twenty years on the building of one pyramid (Pliny, Hist. Nat. 36. 12. apud Bahr u.s.) Over these men 3,300 officers were appointed (1 Kings 5:16), with 550 "chiefs" (1 Kings 9:23), of whom 250 were apparently native Israelites (2 Chronicles 8:10.)¹⁷ The number of skilled artificers furnished by Hiram is not mentioned, though probably the proportion was comparatively small. A very vivid impression is left on our minds of the transaction between the two kings.

When Hiram sent a friendly embassy to congratulate Solomon on his accession, the latter replied by another, which was charged formally to ask help in the building about to be undertaken. The request was entertained by Hiram in the most cordial manner. At the same time, bearing in mind Eastern phraseology, and that a Phoenician ally of David would readily recognize the God of Israel as a "national Deity," there is no reason for inferring, from the terms of his reply, that Hiram was personally a worshipper of Jehovah (1 Kings 5:7; 2 Chronicles 2:12). The agreement seems to have been, that Solomon would undertake to provide

for the support of Hiram's men, wheat, barley, and oil, to the amount specified in 2 Chronicles 2:10; while, so long as building materials were required, Hiram charged for them at an annual rate of 20,000 measures of wheat, and twenty measures (about ten hogsheads) of "beaten oil," - that is, the best in the market, which derived its name from its manufacture, the oil being extracted by beating the olives before they were quite ripe (1 Kings 5:11). In regard to these terms, it should be remembered that Phoenicia was chiefly dependent on Palestine for its supply of grain and oil (Ezekiel 27:17; Acts 12:20). Lastly, the name of the "master-workman" whom Hiram sent, has also been preserved to us as Hiram, or rather Chiram,¹⁸ a man of Jewish descent by the mother's side (2 Chronicles 2:13, 14; comp. 1 Kings 7:14; 2 Chronicles 4:16).¹⁹ Even the completeness and entirely satisfactory character of these arrangements proved, that in this respect also "Jehovah gave Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him" (1 Kings 5:12).

Without entering into details, the general appearance and proportions of the Temple which Solomon built can be described without much difficulty.

The Temple itself faced east - that is to say, the worshippers entered by the east, and, turning to the Most Holy Place, would look west; while, if the veil had been drawn aside, the Ark in the innermost Sanctuary would have been seen to face eastwards. Entering then by the east, the worshipper would find himself in front of "a porch," which extended along the whole width of the Temple, - that is, twenty cubits, or about thirty feet - and went back a depth of ten cubits, or fifteen feet. The Sanctuary itself was sixty cubits (ninety feet) long, twenty cubits (thirty feet) wide, and thirty cubits (forty-five feet) high. The height of the porch is not mentioned in the Book of Kings, and the numeral given for it in 2 Chronicles

¹⁷ There is no real discrepancy between the number of the "officers," as given respectively in Chronicles and in Kings. The sum total (3,850) is in both cases the same - the arrangement in Chronicles being apparently according to nationality, and in the Book of Kings according to office (1 Kings, 3,300,550; 2 Chronicles, 3600 + 2501)

¹⁸ The name is the same as that of the king himself.

¹⁹ Our Authorized Version of 2 Chronicles 2:13 is entirely misleading. The sacred text mentions "Hiram" as "Abi" "my father," - not the father of King Hiram, but a title of distinction given to this able man (comp. the use of the word "Ab" in regard to Joseph, Genesis 45:8), and equivalent to "master."

3:4, is evidently a copyist's error.²⁰ Probably it rose to a height of about thirty cubits.²¹

Of the total length of the Sanctuary, forty cubits were apportioned to the Holy Place, (which was thus sixty feet long, thirty wide, and forty-five high), and twenty cubits (thirty feet) to the Most Holy Place, which (1 Kings 6:20) is described as measuring twenty cubits²² (thirty feet) in length, width, and height. The ten cubits (fifteen feet) left above the Most Holy Place were apparently occupied by an empty room. Perhaps, as in the Temple of Herod, this space was used for letting down the workmen through an aperture, when repairs were required in the innermost Sanctuary. In that case the access to it would have been from the roof. The latter was, no doubt, flat.²³

The measurements just given apply, of course, only to the interior of these buildings. As regards their exterior we have to add not only the thickness of the walls on either side, and the height of the roof, but also a row of side-buildings, which

²⁰ A height of 120 cubits would be out of all proportion, and, indeed, considering the width and length, almost impossible.

²¹ Of the textual alterations proposed, the first (ham, 100, into hwma "cubits") seems the easiest, although it involves the elimination of the w with which the next word in the Hebrew begins. On the other hand, "thirty cubits" seems a more suitable height, especially as the absence of its measurement in 1 Kings seems to convey that the "porch" had the same height as the main building. But this implies two alterations in the text, it being difficult to understand how, if the numeral 30 was originally written by a letter (l, of which, it is supposed, the blotting out of the upper half made it appear like k =20), the copyist finding twma written in full could have mistaken it for ham, 100, which also ought to have been written with a letter (q). It is, however, possible that instead of the full word, twma, the MS. may have borne yma, and the copyist have been thus misled.

²² Thus the Most Holy Place would have had exactly double the proportions of that in the Tabernacle, while the height of the Holy Place was ten cubits (fifteen feet) higher.

²³ It is with great reluctance and becoming modesty - though without misgiving - that I differ from so justly famous an authority as Mr. Ferguson (Smith's Bibl. Dict. vol. 3., Art. "Temple"). Mr. Ferguson, and after him most English writers, have maintained that the roof, both of the Tabernacle and of the Temple, was sloping, and not flat. This view is, to say the least, wholly unsupported by the text of Holy Scripture. Canon Rawlinson, indeed, speaks of Mr. Ferguson's view as "demonstrated," but, surely, without weighing the meaning of the word which he has italicized.

have, not inaptly, been designated as a "lean-to." These side-buildings consisted of three tiers of chambers, which surrounded the Temple, south, west, and north - the east front being covered by the "porch." On the side where these chambers abutted on the Temple they seem to have had no separate wall. The beams, which formed at the same time the ceiling of the first and the floor of the second tier of chambers, and similarly those which formed the ceiling of the second and the floor of the third tier, as also those on which the roof over the third tier rested, were not inserted within the Temple wall, but were laid on graduated buttresses which formed part of the main wall of the Temple.

These buttresses receded successively one cubit in each of the two higher tiers of chambers, and for the roofing of the third, thus forming, as it were, narrowing steps, or receding rests on which the beams of the chambers were laid. The effect was that, while the walls of the Temple decreased one cubit in thickness with each tier, the chambers increased one cubit in width, as they ascended. Thus, if at the lowest tier the wall including the buttress was, say, six cubits thick, at the next tier of chambers it was, owing to the decrease in the buttress, only five cubits thick, and at the third only four cubits, while above the roof, where the buttress ceased, the walls would be only three cubits thick. For the same reason each tier of chambers, built on gradually narrowing or receding rebatements, would be one cubit wider than that below, the chambers on the lowest tier being five cubits wide, on the second six cubits, and on the third seven cubits. If we suppose these tiers with their roof to have been altogether sixteen to eighteen cubits high (1 Kings 6:10), and allow a height of two cubits for the roof of the Temple, whose walls were thirty cubits high (the total height, including roof, thirty-two cubits), this would leave an elevation of twelve to fourteen cubits (eighteen to twenty-one feet) for the wall of the Temple above the roof of "the chambers." Within this space of twelve to fourteen cubits we suppose the "windows" to have been inserted - south and north, the back of the Most Holy Place (west) having no windows, and the front (east) being covered by the "porch." The use of the "chambers" is not mentioned in the sacred text, but

it seems more probable that they served for the deposit of relics of the ancient Tabernacle, and for the storage of sacred vessels, than that they were the sleeping apartments of the ministering priesthood. Access to these "chambers" was gained by a door in the middle of the southern facade, whence also a winding stair led to the upper tiers (1 Kings 6:8). The windows of the Temple itself, which we have supposed to have been above the roof of the "chambers," were with "fixed lattices" (1 Kings 6:4), which could not be opened, as in private dwellings, and were probably constructed, like the windows of old castles and churches, broad within, but mere slits externally.

While these protracted works were progressing, the LORD in His mercy gave special encouragement alike to Solomon and to the people. The word of the LORD, which on this occasion came to the king (1 Kings 6:11-13) - no doubt through a prophet, not only fully confirmed the promise made to David (2 Samuel 7:12, etc.), but also connected the "house" that was being built to the LORD with the ancient promise (Exodus 25:8; 29:45) that God would dwell in Israel as among His people. Thus it pointed king and people beyond that outward building which, rising in such magnificence, might have excited only national pride, to its spiritual meaning, and to the conditions under which alone it would fulfill its great purpose.²⁴

Thus far we have given a description of the exterior of the Temple.²⁵ It still remains to convey some idea of its internal arrangements. If we may judge by the description of Ezekiel's Temple (Ezekiel 40:49), and by what we know of the Temple of Herod, some steps would lead up to the porch, which, as we imagine, presented the appearance of an open colonnade of cedar, set in a

pavement of hewn stones, and supporting a cedar-roof covered with marble.

The most prominent objects here were the two great pillars, Jachin and Boaz, which Hiram cast by order of Solomon (1 Kings 7:15-22). These pillars stood, as we are expressly told, within "the porch" (1 Kings 7:21), and must have served alike architectural, artistic, and symbolical purposes. Added after the completion of the "House," perhaps for the better support of the roof of the "porch," their singular beauty must have attracted the eye, while their symbolical meaning appeared in their names. Jachin ("He supports"), Boaz ("in Him is strength"), pointed beyond the outward support and strength which these pillars gave, to Him on Whom not only the Sanctuary but every one who would truly enter it must rest for support and strength. Some difficulty has been experienced in computing the height of these pillars, including their "chapiters," or "capitals" (1 Kings 7:15-22). It seems most likely that they consisted of single shafts, each eighteen cubits high and twelve in circumference, surmounted by a twofold "chapter" - the lower of five cubits, with fretted network depending, and ornamented with two rows of one hundred pomegranates; the higher chapter four cubits high (1 Kings 7:19), and in the form of an opening lily. The symbolical significance of the pomegranate and of the lily - the one the flower, the other the fruit of the Land of Promise, and both emblematic of the pure beauty and rich sweetness of holiness - need scarcely be pointed out. If we compute the height of these pillars with their chapiters at twenty-seven cubits, we have three cubits left for the entablature and, the roofing of the porch ($18 + 5 + 4 + 3 = 30$). "The porch," which (in its tabature) was overlaid with gold (2 Chronicles 3:4), opened into the Holy Place by folding doors, each of two leaves, folding back upon each other. These doors, which were the width of a fourth of the wall (1 Kings 6:33), or five cubits, were made of cypress-wood, and hung by golden hinges on door-posts of olive-wood. They were decorated with carved figures of cherubim between palm-trees,²⁶ and above them

²⁴ A fuller description of the Temple, and a detailed discussion of the various points in controversy among writers on the subject, would lead beyond the limit which we must here assign ourselves.

²⁵ Some have imagined that the Most Holy Place was, like the chancel in most churches, lower than the Holy Place (ten feet). Lundius has drawn the porch to the height of a gigantic steeple. Many (mostly fanciful) sketch-plans of the Temple have been drawn; but it would be out of place here to enter into further details.

²⁶ Probably they were in panels, each having two cherubs and a palm tree.

opening flower-buds and garlands, the whole being covered with thin plates of gold, which showed the design beneath. Within the Sanctuary all the sacred furniture was of gold, while that outside of it was of brass.

In truth, the Sanctuary was a golden house. The floor, which was of cypress-wood, was overlaid with gold; the walls, which were paneled with cedar, on which the same designs were carved as on the doors, were covered with gold, and so was the ceiling. It need scarcely be said, how it must have glittered and shone in the light of the sacred candlesticks, especially as the walls were encrusted with gems (2 Chronicles 3:6). There were ten candlesticks in the Holy Place, each seven-branched, and of pure gold. They were ranged right and left before the Most Holy Place ²⁷ (1 Kings 7:49).

The entrance to the Most Holy Place was covered by a veil "of blue and purple, and crimson, and byssus," with "wrought cherubs thereon" (2 Chronicles 3:14). Between the candlesticks stood the "altar of incense," made of cedar-wood and overlaid with gold (1 Kings 6:20, 22; 7:48); while ten golden tables of shewbread (2 Chronicles 4:8) were ranged right and left. The implements necessary for the use of this sacred furniture were also of pure gold (1 Kings 7:49, 50).

Two folding-doors, similar in all respects to those already described, except that they were of oleaster wood, and not a fourth, but a fifth of the wall (= 4 cubits), opened from the Holy Place into the Most Holy. These doors we suppose to have always stood open, the entrance being concealed by the great veil, which the High-priest lifted, when on the Day of Atonement he went into the innermost Sanctuary. ²⁸

²⁷ Keil supposes that only two of these candlesticks stood before the Most Holy Place, while the other eight were ranged, four and four, along the side walls, five tables of shewbread being placed in the interstices behind them, along each of the side walls. In that case, however, it would not have been easy to go round the tables.

²⁸ This we conclude from the circumstance, that otherwise there would have been no use of a veil, and that we do not read of the High-priest opening the doors on the Day of Atonement.

Considerable difficulty attaches to a notice in 1 Kings 6:21, which has been variously translated and understood. Two interpretations here specially deserve attention. The first regards the "chains of gold before the Oracle," as chain-work that fastened together the cedar-planks forming the partition between the Holy and the Most Holy Place - somewhat like the bars that held together the boards in the Tabernacle. The other, which to us seems the more likely, ²⁹ represents the partition boards between the Holy and the Most Holy Place, as not reaching quite to the ceiling, and this "chain-work" as running along the top of the boarding.

For some opening of this kind seems almost necessary for ventilation, for letting out the smoke of the incense on the Day of Atonement, and to admit at least a gleam of light, without which the ministrations of the High-priest on that day, limited though they were, would have been almost impossible. The only object within the Most Holy Place was the Ark overshadowed by the Cherubim. It was the same which had stood in the Tabernacle. But Solomon placed on either side of it (south and north) a gigantic figure of a Cherub, carved out of oleaster wood, and overlaid with gold. Each was ten cubits high; and the two, with their outspread wings, which touched over the Mercy-Seat, ten cubits wide. Thus, the two cherubim with their outspread wings reached (south and north) from one wall of the Sanctuary to the other (1 Kings 6:23-28). But, whereas the Mosaic Cherubim looked inwards and downwards towards the Mercy-Seat, those made by Solomon looked outwards towards the Holy Place, with probably a slight inclination downwards (2 Chronicles 3:13). Another notice has raised differences of opinion. From 1 Kings 8:8, we learn that the "staves" by which the Ark was carried were "drawn forward" ("lengthened," not "drawn out," as in the Authorized Version), so that their heads were visible from the Holy Place. As these "staves" were never to be drawn out (Exodus 25:15), and as all view of the interior of the Most

²⁹ Most writers suppose that these chains were drawn inside to further bar access to the Most Holy Place. But no mention is made of their existence or removal on the Day of Atonement. The view we have expressed is that of the Rabbis.

Holy Place was precluded, this could only have been effected (as the Rabbis suggest) by drawing the staves forward, so that their heads would slightly bulge out on the veil. Of course this would imply that the staves faced east and west - not, as is generally supposed, south and north. Nor is there any valid objection to this supposition.

Descending from "the Porch," we stand in the "inner" (1 Kings 6:36) or "Court of the Priests" (2 Chronicles 4:9). This was paved with great stones, as was also the outer or "Great Court" (2 Chronicles 4:9) of the people. Within the "inner" or Priests' Court, facing the entrance to the Sanctuary, was "the altar of burnt-offering" (1 Kings 8:64), made of brass, and probably filled within with earth and unhewn stones. It was ten cubits high, and twenty cubits in length and breadth at the base - probably narrowing as it ascended, like receding buttresses³⁰ (2 Chronicles 4:1).

Between the altar and the porch stood the colossal "sea of brass," five cubits high, and thirty cubits in circumference (1 Kings 7:23-26; 2 Chronicles 4:2-5). Its upper rim was bent outwards, "like the work of the brim of a cup, in the shape of a lily-flower." Under the brim it was ornamented by two rows of opening flower-buds, ten to a cubit. This immense basin rested on a pedestal of twelve oxen, three looking to each point of the compass. Its object was to hold the water in which the priests and Levites performed their ablutions. For the washing of the inwards and of the pieces of the sacrifices, ten smaller "lavers" of brass were provided, which stood on the right and left "side of the House" (1 Kings 7:38; 2 Chronicles 4:6). They were placed on square "bases," or, rather, wagons of brass, four cubits long and broad, and three cubits high, which rested on "four feet" (not "corners," as in the Authorized Version, 1 Kings 7:30) upon wheels, so as to bring them readily to the altar. Bearing in mind the height of the altar, this

accounts for their being four cubits high (4 cubits for the laver itself). The sides of these wagons were richly ornamented with figures of lions, oxen, and cherubs, and beneath them were "garlands, pensile work."

Although it is not easy to make out all the other details, it seems that the tops of these "bases" or wagons had covers, which bulged inwards to receive the lavers, the latter being further steadied by supports ("undersetters" in the Authorized Version, or rather "shoulder-pieces"). The covers of the wagons were also richly ornamented. Lastly, in the Priests' Court, and probably within full view of the principal gate, stood the brazen scaffold or stand (2 Chronicles 6:13) from which King Solomon offered his dedicatory prayer, and which seems to have always been the place occupied in the Temple by the kings (2 Kings 11:14; 23:3). To this a special "ascent" led from the palace (1 Kings 10:5), which was, perhaps afterwards, roofed over for protection from the weather.³¹ The Priests' Court was enclosed by a wall consisting of three tiers of hewn stones and a row of cedar beams (1 Kings 6:36).

From the court of the priests steps led down to the "outer court" of the people (comp. Jeremiah 36:10), which³² was surrounded by a solid wall, from which four massive gates, covered with brass, opened upon the Temple-mount (2 Chronicles 4:9).

In this court were large colonnades and chambers, and rooms for the use of the priests and Levites, for the storage of what was required in the services, and for other purposes. The principal gate was, no doubt, the eastern (Ezekiel 11:1), corresponding to the "Beautiful Gate" of New Testament times. To judge by the analogy of the other measurements, as compared with those of the Tabernacle, the Court of the Priests would be 100 cubits broad, and 200 cubits long, and the Outer Court double these proportions (comp. also

³⁰ This was certainly the structure of the altar in the Temple of Herod (comp. Midd. 3. 1.) In general, I must here refer the reader to the description of that Temple in *The Temple, its Ministry and Services at the Time of Jesus Christ*, and to my translation of the Mishnic Tractate Middoth, in the Appendix to *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*. Our present limits prevent more than the briefest outline.

³¹ This was "the covert for the Sabbath" (2 Kings 16:18). The Rabbis hold it to have been the exclusive privilege of the kings to sit down within the Priests' Court.

³² This appears from 1 Chronicles 26:13-16.

Ezekiel 40:27).³³ Such, in its structure and fittings, was the Temple which Solomon built to the Name of Jehovah God. Its further history to its destruction, 416 years after its building, is traced in the following passages of Holy Scripture, 1 Kings 14:26; 15:18, etc.; 2 Chronicles 20:5; 2 Kings 12:5, etc.; 14:14; 15:35; 2 Chronicles 27:3; 2 Kings 16:8; 18:15, etc.; 21:4, 5, 7; 23:4, 7, 11; 24:13; 25:9, 13-17).³⁴

We add a few remarks which may interest the reader. From being so largely constructed of cedar-wood, the Temple is also figuratively called "Lebanon" (Zechariah 11:1). Among the Jewish legends connected with the Temple, one of the strangest is that about a certain worm Shamir, which, according to Aboth 5:6, was among the ten things created on the eve of the world's first Sabbath, just before sunset (see also Sifre on Deut. p. 147, a). In Gitt. 86, a and b, we are informed by what artifices Solomon obtained possession of this worm from Ashmedai, the prince of the demons. This worm possessed the power, by his touch, to cut the thickest stones, and was therefore used by Solomon for this purpose (comp. also generally Gitt. 68 a, and Sotah 48 b). According to Joma 53b, 54b, the Ark was placed upon what is called the "foundation stone of the world." So early as in the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Exodus 28:30, we read that the ineffable Name of God was engraved upon this stone, and that God at the first sealed up with it the mouth of the great deep. This may serve as a specimen of these legends. Perhaps we should add that, according to later Rabbis, the roof of the Temple was not quite flat, but slightly sloping, yet probably not higher in any part than the parapet around.

V_07 Dedication of the temple — when it took place — connection with the feast of tabernacles — the consecration services — the king's part in them — symbolical meaning of

³³ It is with exceeding reluctance that I forbear entering on the symbolical import of the Temple, of its materials, structure, and arrangements. But such discussions would evidently be outside the plan and limits of this Bible History.

³⁴ Comparing the Temple of Solomon with that of Herod, the latter was, of course, much superior, not only as regards size, but architectural beauty. To understand the difference, plans of the two should be placed side by side.

the great institutions in Israel — the prayer of consecration — analogy to the Lord's prayer — the consecration — thanksgiving and offerings.

1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles 5:1 to 7:11

AT length the great and beautiful house, which Solomon had raised to the Name of Jehovah, and to which so many ardent thoughts and hopes attached, was finished. Its solemn dedication took place in the year following its completion, and, very significantly, immediately before, and in connection with, the Feast of Tabernacles. Two questions, of some difficulty and importance, here arise. The first concerns the circumstance that the sacred text (1 Kings 7:1-12) records the building of Solomon's palace immediately after that of the Temple, and, indeed, almost intermingles the two accounts. This may partly have been due to a very natural desire on the part of the writer not to break the continuity of the account of Solomon's great buildings, the more so as they were all completed by the aid of Tyrian workmen, and under the supervision of Hiram. But another and more important consideration may also have influenced the arrangement of the narrative. For, as has been suggested, these two great undertakings of Solomon bore a close relation to each other. It was not an ordinary Sanctuary, nor was it an ordinary royal residence which Solomon reared. The building of the Temple marked that the preparatory period of Israel's unsettledness had passed, when God had walked with them "in tent and tabernacle" - or, in other words, that the Theocracy had attained not only fixedness, but its highest point, when God would set "His Name forever" in its chosen center. But this new stage of the Theocracy was connected with the establishment of a firm and settled kingdom in Israel, when He would "establish the throne of that kingdom forever" (compare 2 Samuel 7:5-16). Thus the dwelling of God in His Temple and that of Solomon in his house were events between which there was deep internal connection, even as between the final establishment of the Theocracy and that of David's royal line in Israel. Moreover, the king was not to be a monarch in the usual Oriental, or even in the ancient Western sense. He was to be regarded, not as the Vicegerent or Representative of God, but as His Servant, to do

His behest and to guard His covenant. And this might well be marked, even by the conjunction of these two buildings in the Scripture narrative.

These considerations will also help us to understand why the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple was connected with that of Tabernacles (of course, in the year following). It was not only that, after "the eighth month," when the Temple was completed, it would have been almost impossible, considering the season of the year, to have gathered the people from all parts of the country, or to have celebrated for eight days a great popular festival; nor yet that of all feasts, that of Tabernacles, when agricultural labor was at an end, probably witnessed the largest concourse in Jerusalem.³⁵

But the Feast of Tabernacles had a threefold meaning. It pointed back to the time when, "strangers and pilgrims" on their way to the Land of Promise, Israel, under its Divine leadership, had dwelt in tents. The full import of this memorial would be best realized at the dedication of the Temple, when, instead of tent and tabernacle, the glorious house of God was standing in all its beauty, while the stately palace of Israel's king was rising. Again, the Feast of Tabernacles was essentially one of thanksgiving, when at the completion, not only of the harvest, but of the ingathering of the fruits, a grateful people presented its homage to the God to Whom they owed all, and to Whom all really belonged. But what could raise this hymn of praise to its loudest strains, if not that they uplifted it within those sacred walls, symbolical of God's gracious Presence as King in His palace in the midst of His people, whose kingdom He had established. Lastly, the Feast of Tabernacles - the only still unfulfilled Old Testament type - pointed forward to the time of which the present state of Israel was an initial realization, when the name of the LORD should be known far and wide to earth's utmost bounds, and all nations seek after Him and offer worship in His Temple. Thus, however viewed, there was the deepest significance in the

³⁵ The Temple was completed in the eighth month; its dedication took place in the seventh of the next year. Ewald suggests that it was dedicated before it was quite finished, But this idea can scarcely be maintained.

conjunction of the dedication of the Temple with the Feast of Tabernacles.

But, as previously stated, there is yet another question of somewhat greater difficulty which claims our attention. To judge by the arrangement of the narrative, the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8) might seem to have taken place after the completion of Solomon's palace, the building of which, as we know, occupied further thirteen years (1 Kings 7:1). Moreover, from the circumstance that the second vision of God was vouchsafed "when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do" (1 Kings 9:1), it has been argued, that the dedication of the Temple must have taken place immediately before this vision, especially as what was said to him seems to contain pointed reference to the consecration prayer of Solomon (1 Kings 9:3, 7, 8). But, even if that vision took place at the time just indicated,³⁶ the supposed inference from it cannot be maintained.

For, although part of the sacred vessels may have been made during the time that Hiram was engaged upon Solomon's palace, it is not credible that the Temple should, after its completion, have stood deserted and unused for thirteen years. Nor are the arguments in favor of this most improbable assumption valid. The appeal to 1 Kings 9:1 would oblige us to date the dedication of the Temple even later than the completion of Solomon's palace, viz., after he had finished all his other building operations. As for the words which the LORD spake to Solomon in vision (2 Kings 9:3-9), although bearing reference to the Temple and the king's dedication prayer, they are evidently intended rather as a general warning, than as an answer to his petition, and are such as would befit the period of temptation, before Solomon, carried away by the splendor of his success, yielded himself to the luxury, weakness, and sin of his older age. From all these considerations we

³⁶ At the same time, I confess that I am by no means convinced that such was the case. The language of 1 Kings 9:1 should not be too closely pressed, and may be intended as a sort of general transition from the subject previously treated to that in hand. The brief notices in 2 Chronicles 7 seem rather to favor this idea.

conclude that the Feast of the Dedication, which lasted seven days, took place in the seventh month, that of Ethanim, or of "flowing brooks," (the later Tishri), of the year after the completion of the Temple (eleven months after it), and immediately before the Feast of Tabernacles, which, with the concluding solemnity, lasted eight days.

The account of the dedication of the Temple may be conveniently ranged under these three particulars, the Consecration-Services, the Consecration-Prayer, and the Consecration-Thanksgiving and Festive Offerings. But before describing them, it is necessary to call attention to the remarkable circumstance that the chief, if not almost the sole prominent agent in these services, was the king, the high-priest not being even mentioned. Not that Solomon in any way interfered with, or arrogated to himself the functions of the priesthood, but that, in the part which he took, he fully acted up to the spirit of the monarchical institution as founded in Israel. Solomon was not "king" according to the Saxon idea of cuning - cunning, mighty, illustrious, the embodiment of strength. According to the terms of the Covenant, all Israel were God's servants (Leviticus 25:42, 55; comp. Isaiah 41:8, 9; 44:1, 2, 21; 45:4; 49:3, 6; Jeremiah 30:10 and others). As such they were to be "a kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6) "the priest," in the stricter sense of the term, being only the representative of the people, with certain distinctive functions ad hoc. But what the nation was, as a whole, that Israel's theocratic king was pre-eminently the servant of the LORD (1 Kings 8:25, 28, 29, 52, 59). It was in this capacity that Solomon acted at the dedication of the Temple, as his own words frequently indicate (see the passages just quoted). In this manner the innermost and deepest idea of the character of Israel and of Israel's king as "the servant" of the LORD, became, so to speak, more and more individualized during the progress of the Old Testament dispensation, until it stood out in all its fullness in the Messiah - the climax of Israel and of Israelitish institutions - Who is the Servant of Jehovah. Thus we perceive that the common underlying idea of the three great institutions in Israel, which connected them all, was that of the Servant of Jehovah. The prophet who uttered the voice of heaven upon earth was the servant of

Jehovah (comp., for example, Numbers 12:7, 8; Joshua 1:2; Isaiah 20:3, etc.).³⁷

So was the priest, who spake the voice of earth to heaven; and the king, who made heaven's voice to be heard on earth. That which gave its real meaning equally to this threefold function; downwards, upwards, outwards - was the grand fact that in each of them it was the Servant of Jehovah who was acting, or, in other words, that God was all in all. With these general principles in view we shall be better able to understand what follows.

1. The Consecration-Services (1 Kings 8:1-21). - These commenced with the transference of the Ark and of the other holy vessels from Mount Zion, and of the ancient Mosaic Tabernacle from Gibeon. The latter and the various other relics of those earlier services were, as we have suggested, placed in the chambers built around the new Sanctuary. In accordance with the Divine direction, the whole of this part of the service was performed by the Priests and Levites, attended by the king, "the elders of Israel, the heads of the tribes, and the princes (of the houses) of the fathers of Israel," who, as representatives of the people, had been specially summoned for the purpose. As this solemn procession entered the sacred courts, amidst a vast concourse of people, numberless offerings were brought. Then the Ark was carried to its place in the innermost Sanctuary.³⁸ As the priests reverently retired from it, and were about to minister in the Holy Place,³⁹ - perhaps to burn incense on the Golden Altar - "the

³⁷ It is impossible here to do more than indicate this train of thought. The reader will be able to make out a perfect catena of confirmatory passages, extending over almost all the books of Holy Scripture, or from age to age.

³⁸ The expression, 1 Kings 8:9, seems to be incompatible with the notice in Hebrews 9:4. But not only according to the Talmud (Joma 52. b), but according to uniform Jewish tradition (see apud Delitzsch Comm. z. Br. an die Hebr. p. 361), what is mentioned in Hebrews 9:4 had been really placed in the Ark, although the emphatic notice in 1 Kings 8:9 indicates that it was no longer there in the time of Solomon. It may have been removed previous to, or after the capture of the Ark by the Philistines.

³⁹ The Book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 5:12-14) characteristically notes that the Priests and Levites were raising holy chant and music.

cloud," as the visible symbol of God's Presence, came down, as formerly at the consecration of the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34, 35), and so filled the whole of the Temple itself, that the priests, unable to bear "the glory," had to retire from their ministry.

But even here also we mark the characteristic difference between the Old and the New Dispensations, to which St. Paul calls attention in another connection (2 Corinthians 3:13-18). For whereas, under the preparatory dispensation God dwelt in a "cloud" and in "thick darkness," we all now behold "the glory of God" in the Face of His Anointed.

This was the real consecration of the Temple. And now the king, turning towards the Most Holy Place, filled with the Sacred Presence, spake these words of dedication, brief as became the solemnity, "Jehovah hath said, to dwell in darkness - Building, I have built an house of habitation to Thee, and a settling-place for Thy dwelling ever!" In this reference to what Jehovah had said, it would not be any single utterance which presented itself to Solomon's mind. Rather would he think of them in their connection and totality - as it were, a golden chain of precious promises welded one to the other, of which the last link seemed riveted to the solemnity then enacting. Such sayings as Exodus 19:9; 20:21; Leviticus 16:2; Deuteronomy 4:11; 5:22 would crowd upon his memory, and seem fully realized as he beheld the Cloudy Presence in the Holy House. Thus it is often not one particular promise or prophecy which is referred to when we read in Holy Scripture these words, "That it might be fulfilled," but rather a whole series which culminate in some one great fact (as, for example, in Matthew 2:15, 23). Nor should we forget that, when the king spoke of the Temple as God's dwelling forever, the symbolical character alike of the manifestation of His Presence and of its place could not have been absent from his mind. But the symbolical necessarily implies the temporary, being of the nature of an accommodation to circumstances, persons, and times. What was forever was not the form, but the substance - not the manner nor the place, but the fact of God's Presence in the midst of His people. And what is real and eternal is the

Kingdom of God in its widest sense, and God's Presence in grace among His worshipping people, as fully realized in Jesus Christ.

When the king had spoken these words, he turned from the Sanctuary to the people who reverently stood to hear his benedictory "address."⁴⁰ Briefly recounting the gracious promises and experiences of the past, he pointed to the present as their fulfillment, specially applying to it, in the manner already described, what God had said to David (2 Samuel 7:7, 8).⁴¹

2. The Prayer of Consecration. - This brief address concluded, the king ascended the brazen pulpit-like platform "before the altar" (of burnt offering), and with his face, probably sideways, towards the people, knelt down with hands outspread in prayer (comp. 2 Chronicles 6:12, 13).

It seems like presumption and impertinence to refer in laudatory terms to what for comprehensiveness, sublimeness, humility, faith, and earnestness has no parallel in the Old Testament, and can only be compared with the prayer which our Lord taught His disciples.⁴²

Like the latter, it consists of an introduction (1 Kings 8:23-30), of seven petitions (the covenant-number, vers. 31-53), and of a eulogetic close (2 Chronicles 6:40-42). The Introduction sounds like an Old Testament version of the words "Our

⁴⁰ It is thus, and not as implying any actual benediction, either uttered or silent, that I understand the words 1 Kings 8:14.

⁴¹ Compare the fuller account in 2 Chronicles 6:5, 6.

⁴² It is one of its many extraordinary instances of "begging the question," that modern criticism boldly declares this whole prayer spurious, or rather relegates its composition to a much later date, even so far as the Babylonish exile! The only objective ground by which this dictum is supported, is the circumstance that the prayer is full of references to the Book of Deuteronomy - which modern criticism has ruled to be non-Mosaic, and of much later date - ergo, this prayer must share its fate! This kind of reasoning is, in fact, to derive from one unproved hypothesis another even more unlikely! For we have here, first, the accordant accounts (with but slight variations) in 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles; while, secondly (as Bleek has remarked), the wording of the prayer implies a time and conditions when the Temple, Jerusalem, and the Davidic throne were still extant. To this we may add, that the whole tone and conception is not at all in accordance with, or what we would have expected at, the time of the exile.

Father" (vers. 23-26), "which art in heaven" (vers. 27-30). It would be out of place here to enter into any detailed analysis. Suffice it to indicate the leading Scriptural references in it, as it were, the spiritual stepping-stones of the prayer and one or another of its outstanding points. Marking how a review of the gracious dealings in the past should lead to confidence in present petitions (comp. Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24; James 1:6), reference should be made in connection with verses 23-26 to the following passages: Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 4:39; 7:9; Joshua 2:11; 2 Samuel 7:12-22; 22:32; Psalm 86:8. In regard to the second part of the Introduction (vers. 27-30), we specially note the emphatic assertion, that He, Whose Presence they saw in the cloud, was really in "heaven," and yet "our Father," who art upon earth. These two ideas seem carried out in it, (1) not as heathenism does, do we locate God here; nor yet will we, as carnal Israel did (Jeremiah 7:4; Micah 3:11), imagine that ex opere operato (by any mere deed of ours) God will necessarily attend even to His own appointed services in His house. Our faith rises higher - from the Seen to the Unseen - from the God of Israel to our Father; it realizes the spiritual relationship of children, which alone contains the pledge of His blessing; and through which, though He be in heaven, yet faith knows and addresses Him as an ever-present help. Thus Solomon's prayer avoided alike the two extremes of unspiritual realism and of unreal spiritualism.

The first petition (vers. 31, 32) in the stricter sense opens the prayer, which in ver. 28 had been outlined, according to its prevailing characteristics, as "petition," "prayer for mercy" (forgiveness and grace), and "thanksgiving" (praise).

It is essentially an Old Testament "Hallowed be Thy Name," in its application to the sanctity of an oath as its highest expression, inasmuch as thereby the reality of God's holiness is challenged. The analogy between the second petition (vers. 33, 34) and that in the Lord's Prayer is not so evident at first sight. But it is none the less real, since its ideal fulfillment would mark the coming of the kingdom of God, which neither sin from within nor enemy from without could endanger. The

references in this petition seem to be to Leviticus 26:3, 7, 14, 17; Deuteronomy 28:1-7, 15-25; and again to Leviticus 26:33, and 40-42, and Deuteronomy 4:26-28; 28:64-68, and 4:29-31; 30:1-5. The organic connection, so to speak, between heaven and earth, which lies at the basis of the third petition in the Lord's Prayer, is also expressed in that of Solomon (vers. 35, 36). Only in the one case we have the New Testament realization of that grand idea, or rather ideal, while in the other we have its Old Testament aspect. The references here are to Leviticus 26:19; Deuteronomy 11:17; 28:23, 24. At the same time the rendering of our Authorized Version (1 Kings 8:35): "When Thou afflictest them," should be altered to, "Because Thou humblest them," which indicates the moral effect of God's discipline, and the last link in the chain of true repentance.

The correspondence between the fourth petition in the Solomonic (vers. 37-40) and in our Lord's Prayer will be evident - always keeping in view the difference between the Old and the New Testament standpoint. But perhaps verses 38-40 may mark the transition from, and connection between the first and second parts of the prayer. The fifth petition (vers. 41-43), which concerns the acceptance of the prayers of strangers (not proselytes), is based on the idea of the great mutual forgiveness by those who are forgiven of God, fully realized in the abolition of the great enmity and separation, which was to give place to a common brotherhood of love and service - "that all the people of the earth may know Thy Name, to fear Thee, as Thy people Israel." Here also we note the difference between the Old and the New Testament form of the petition - a remark which must equally be kept in view in regard to the other two petitions. These, indeed, seem to bear only a very distant analogy to the concluding portion of the Lord's Prayer. Yet that there was real "temptation" to Israel, and real "deliverance from evil" sought in these petitions, appears from the language of confession put into the mouth of the captives (ver. 47), which, as we know, was

literally adopted by those in Babylon ⁴³ (Daniel 9:5; Psalm 106:6).

Here sin is presented in its threefold aspect as failure, so far as regards the goal, or stumbling and falling (in the Authorized Version "we have sinned"); then as perversion (literally, making crooked); and, lastly, as tumultuous rebellion (in the Authorized Version "committed wickedness"). Lastly, the three concluding verses (vers. 51-53) may be regarded either as the argument for the last petitions, or else as an Old Testament version of "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." But the whole prayer is the opening of the door into heaven - a door moving, if the expression be lawful, on the two hinges of sin and of grace, of need and of provision.

3. The Consecration-Thanksgiving and Offerings. - To the prayer of Solomon, the descent of fire upon the great altar - probably from out the Cloudy Presence ⁴⁴ - which is recorded in 2 Chronicles 7:1, seems a most appropriate answer, ⁴⁵ (comp. Leviticus 9:24).

Little requires to be added to the simple account of what followed. Rising from his knees, the king turned once more to the people, and expressed the feelings of all in terms of mingled praise and prayer, basing them on such Scriptural passages as Deuteronomy 12:9, 10; Joshua 21:44, etc.; 23:14, and, in the second part of his address, on Leviticus 26:3-13; Deuteronomy 28:1-14. But it deserves special notice, that throughout (as Thenius has well remarked) the tone is of the loftiest spirituality. For, if the king asks for continued help and blessing from the Lord, it is for the express purpose "that He may incline our hearts to Him" (comp. Psalm 119:36; 141:4), "to keep His

⁴³ It would seem almost too great a demand upon our credence, even by "advanced criticism," that, because these expressions were taken up by the exiles in Babylon, they originated at that time.

⁴⁴ 2 Chronicles 7:1 does not necessarily imply that there was a second manifestation of "the glory of Jehovah."

⁴⁵ It is certainly a fact, that this circumstance is not mentioned in the narrative in the Book of Kings. But from this it is a very long and venturesome step to the conclusion, that this is an addition or interpolation on the part of the writer or editor of the Books of Chronicles, the more so as "Kings" and "Chronicles" alternately record or omit other important events.

commandments" (1 Kings 8:58); and, if he looks for answers to prayer (ver. 59), it is "that all the people of the earth may know that Jehovah is God, and that there is none else" (ver. 60).

Lastly, we have an account of the vast number ⁴⁶ of festive offerings which Solomon and all Israel ⁴⁷ brought, and of the Feast of Tabernacles ⁴⁸ with which the solemn dedication-services concluded.

V_08 The surroundings of the temple — description of Jerusalem at the time of solomon — the palace of solomon — Solomon's fortified cities — external relations of the kingdom — internal state — trade — wealth — luxury — the visit of the queen of Sheba.

1 Kings 9, 10.; 2 Chronicles 7:11 to 9:28

WE have now reached the period of Solomon's greatest worldly splendor, which, as alas! so often, marks also that of spiritual decay. The building of the Temple was not the first, nor yet the last, of his architectural undertakings. Mount Moriah was too small to hold on its summit the Temple itself, even without its courts and other buildings.

Accordingly, as we learn from Josephus (Ant. 15. 11, 3), extensive substructures had to be reared. Thus, the level of the Temple-mount was enlarged both east and west, in order to obtain a sufficient area for the extensive buildings upon it. These rose terrace upon terrace - each court higher than the other, and the Sanctuary itself higher than its

⁴⁶ Canon Rawlinson (Speaker's Commentary, 2. p. 533) has shown, by numerous quotations, that these sacrifices were not out of proportion to others recorded in antiquity. As to the time necessarily occupied in these sacrifices, we have the historical notice of Josephus (Jewish War, 6. 9, 3), that on one occasion not fewer than 256,000 Passover lambs were offered, the time occupied being just three hours of an afternoon. It is also to be borne in mind that the killing and preparing of the sacrifices was not necessarily the duty of priests or even Levites, the strictly priestly function being only that of sprinkling the blood. Lastly, we are distinctly informed (1 Kings 8:64) that supplementary altars - besides the great altar of burnt offering - were used on this occasion.

⁴⁷ We are expressly told in ver. 62, that these offerings were brought not only by the king but by all Israel.

⁴⁸ The Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days and closed on the afternoon of the eighth with the clausura or solemn dismissal (comp. Leviticus 23:33-39).

courts. We are probably correct in the supposition that the modern Mosque of Omar occupies the very site of the ancient Temple of Solomon, and that over the celebrated rock in it - according to Jewish tradition, the very spot where Abraham offered up Isaac - the great altar of burnt-offering had risen. Before the building of the Sanctuary itself could have been commenced, the massive substructures of the Temple must have been at least partially completed, although these and the outbuildings were probably continued during many years, perhaps many reigns, after the completion of the Temple.

The same remarks apply to another structure connected with the Temple, called "Parbar" (1 Chronicles 26:18). As already explained, the outer court of the Temple had four massive gates (1 Chronicles 26:13-16), of which the western-most opened upon "Parbar" or "Parvarim" (perhaps "colonnade"). This seems to have been an annex to the western side of the Temple, fitted up as chambers, stables for sacrificial animals, etc. (2 Kings 23:11, where our Authorized Version wrongly renders "Parvarim" by "suburbs"). From Parbar steps led down to the Tyropoeon, or deep valley which intersected the city east and west.

Although anything like an attempt at detailed description would here be out of place, it seems desirable, in order to realize the whole circumstances, to give at least a brief sketch of Jerusalem, as Solomon found, and as he left it. Speaking generally, Jerusalem was built on the two opposite hills (east and west), between which the Tyropoeon runs south-east and then south. The eastern hill is about 100 feet lower than the western. Its northern summit is Mount Moriah, which slopes down into Ophel (about 50 feet lower), afterwards the suburb of the priests. Some modern writers have regarded this as the ancient fort of the Jebusites, and as the site of the "City of David," the original Mount Zion. Although this is opposed to the common traditional view, which regards the western hill as Mount Zion, the arguments in favor of identifying it with the eastern hill seem very strong. These it would, of course, be impossible here to detail. But we may say that the history of David's purchase of the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite (2 Samuel

24:16-24; 1 Chronicles 21:15-25) conveys these two facts, that the Jebusites had settlements on the western hill, and that David's palace (which, as we know, was in the City of David) was close by, only a little lower than Mount Moriah, since David so clearly saw from his palace the destroying Angel over the threshing-floor of Ornan. All this agrees with the idea, that the original stronghold of the Jebusites was on the slopes of Moriah and Ophel, and that David built his palace in that neighborhood, below the summit of Moriah.⁴⁹

Lastly, if the term "Mount Zion" included Moriah, we can understand the peculiar sacredness which throughout Holy Scripture attaches to that name. Be this as it may, the regular quarter of the Jebusites was on the western hill, towards the slope of the Tyropoeon, while the Jewish Benjamite quarter (the Upper City) was on the higher terrace above it (eastwards). Fort Millo was on the north-eastern angle of the Western City. Here King David had continued the wall, which had formerly enclosed the western hill northward and westward, drawing it eastward, so as to make (the western) Jerusalem a complete fortress (2 Samuel 5:9; 1 Chronicles 11:8). On the opposite (eastern) side of the Tyropoeon was the equally fortified (later) Ophel. Solomon now connected these two fortresses by enlarging Millo and continuing the wall across the Tyropoeon (1 Kings 3:1; 9:15; 11:27).

Without referring to the various buildings which Solomon reared, it may be safely asserted that the city must have rapidly increased in population. Indeed, during the prosperous reign of Solomon it probably attained as large, if not larger, proportions than at any time before the Exile. The wealthier part of the population occupied the

⁴⁹ The above would give a new view of the taking of the fortress of Jebus by Joab. There undoubtedly existed a subterranean watercourse dug through the solid rock on which Jebus stood on Ophel, leading down to the "En-Rogel," or "Fountain of the Virgin." It is suggested, that with the connivance of Araunah, Joab undertook the daring feat of climbing up into Jebus by this "gutter," and opening the gates to his comrades. This would also account for the presence of the Jebusite Araunah on the neighboring Moriah during the later years of David's reign, and explain the somewhat difficult passage, 2 Samuel 5:8. Comp. Warren's *Recovery of Jerusalem* pp. 244-255.

western terraces of the west hill - the Upper City - the streets running north and south. The eastern slopes of the west hill were covered by "the middle city" (2 Kings 20:4, marginal rendering). It will have been noticed, that as yet only the southern parts of both the eastern and western hills of Jerusalem had been built over King Solomon now reared the Temple on Mount Moriah, which formed the northern slope of the eastern hill, while the increase of the population soon led to building operations on the side of the western hill opposite to it. Here the city extended beyond the old wall, north of "the middle city," occupying the northern part of the Tyropoeon. This was "the other" or "second part of the city" (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 34:22; Nehemiah 11:9, the "maktesh" or "mortar" of Zephaniah 1:11). Here was the real business quarter, with its markets, "fishgate," "sheepgate," and bazaars, such as the "Baker Street" (Jeremiah 37:21), the quarters of the goldsmiths and other merchants (Nehemiah 3:8, 32), the "valley of the cheesemongers," etc. This suburb must have been soon enclosed by a wall. We do not know when or by whom the latter was commenced, but we have notices of its partial destruction (2 Kings 14:13; 2 Chronicles 25:23), and of its repair (2 Chronicles 32:5).

We have purposely not taken account of the towers and gates of the city, since what has been described will sufficiently explain the location of the great palace which Solomon built during the thirteen years after the completion of the Temple (1 Kings 7:1-12; 2 Chronicles 8:1). Its site was the eastern terrace of the western hill, probably the same as that afterwards occupied by the palace of the Asmonaeans (Maccabees) and of Agrippa II. The area covered by this magnificent building was four times that of the Holy House (not including its courts). It stood right over against the Temple. A descent led from the Palace into the Tyropoeon, and thence a special magnificent "ascent" (2 Chronicles 9:4) to the royal entrance (2 Kings 16:18), probably at the south-western angle of the Temple. The site was happily chosen - protected by Fort Millo, and looking out upon the Temple-Mount, while south of it stretched the wealthy quarter of the city. Ascending from the Tyropoeon, one would pass through a kind of ante-building into a porch, and thence into a

splendid colonnade. This colonnade connected "the house of the forest of Lebanon," so called from the costly cedars used in its construction, with "the porch for the throne," where Solomon pronounced judgment (1 Kings 7:6, 7). Finally, there was in the inner court, still further west, "the house where Solomon dwelt," and "the house for Pharaoh's daughter," with, of course, the necessary side and outbuildings (1 Kings 7:8). Thus, the royal palace really consisted of three separate buildings. Externally it was simply of "costly stones" (ver. 9), the beauty of its design only appearing in its interior. Here the building extended along three sides. The ground-floor consisted of colonnades of costly cedar, the beams being fastened into the outer walls. These colonnades would be hung with tapestry, so as to be capable of being formed into apartments. Above these rose, on each side of the court, three tiers of chambers, fifteen on each tier, with large windows looking out upon each other. Here were the State apartments for court feasts, and in them were kept, among other precious things, the golden targets and shields (1 Kings 10:16, 17). Passing through another colonnade, one would next reach the grand Judgment- and Audience-halls, with the magnificent throne of ivory, described in 1 Kings 10:18-20; 2 Chronicles 9:17-19. And, lastly, the innermost court contained the royal dwellings themselves.

But this great Palace, the Temple, and the enlargement of Millo and of the city wall, were not the only architectural undertakings of King Solomon. Remembering that there were watchful foes on all sides, he either built or repaired a number of strong places. In the north, as defense against Syria, rose the ancient stronghold of Hazor (Joshua 11:13; Judges 4:2). The plain of Jezreel, the traditional battlefield of, as well as the highway into Palestine from the west and the north, was protected by Megiddo; while the southern approach from Egypt and the Philistine plain was guarded by Gezer, which Pharaoh had before this taken from the Canaanites and burnt, but afterwards given to his daughter as dowry on her marriage with Solomon. Not far from Gezer, and serving a similar defensive purpose, rose the fortress of Baalath, in the possession of Dan (comp. Josephus, *Ant.* 8, 6, 1). The eastern and

northeastern parts of Solomon's dominions were protected by Tamar or Tadmor, probably the Palmyra of the ancients, and by Hamath-Zobah (2 Chronicles 8:4), while access to Jerusalem and irruptions from the north-western plain were barred by the fortification of Upper and Nether Bethhoron (1 Kings 9:15-19; 2 Chronicles 8:3-6).

Besides these fortresses, the king provided magazine-cities, and others where his chariots and cavalry were stationed - most of them, probably, towards the north. In all such undertakings Solomon employed the forced labor of the descendants of the ancient Canaanite inhabitants of Palestine, his Jewish subjects being chiefly engaged as overseers and officers in various departments (1 Kings 9:20-23). But even thus, the diversion of so much labor and the taxation which his undertakings must have involved were felt as a "grievous service" and "heavy yoke" (1 Kings 12:4), all the more that Solomon's love of building and of Oriental splendor seems to have rapidly grown upon him. Thus, once more by a natural process of causation, the inner decay marked by luxury led to the weakening of the kingdom of Solomon, and scattered the seeds of that disaffection which, in the days of his degenerate son, ripened into open rebellion. So true is it, that in the history of Israel the inner and the outer always keep pace. But as yet Solomon's devotion to the services of Jehovah had not lessened. For we read that on the great festivals of the year (2 Chronicles 8:12, 13) he was wont to bring numerous special offerings.⁵⁰

As regards the foreign relations of Solomon, reference has already been made (in ch. 5) to his marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings 3:1), which took place in the first years of his reign. In all likelihood this Pharaoh was one of the last rulers of the (21st) Tanite dynasty. We know

⁵⁰ The expression "he burnt incense" (1 Kings 9:25) has been regarded by Keil as a mistranslation - the text only implying the burning of the sacrifices. Bahr, more satisfactorily, refers it to the burning of incense on the great altar which accompanied all meat-offerings (Leviticus 2:1, 2). But on no consideration can it be supposed to imply, that Solomon arrogated to himself the priestly function of burning incense on the golden altar in the Holy Place (Thenius). How such an idea can be harmonized with the theory of the later origin of these books may be left to its advocates to explain.

that their power had of late greatly declined, and Pharaoh may have been glad to ally himself with the now powerful ruler of the neighboring country. On the new kingdom, however, such an alliance would shed great luster, especially in the eyes of the Jews themselves. The frequent references to Pharaoh's daughter show what importance the nation attached to this union. It may be well here again to note, that the Egyptian princess, who brought to her husband the dowry of an important border-fortress (Gezer), was not in any way responsible for Solomon's later idolatry, no Egyptian deities being named among those towards whom he turned (1 Kings 11:5-7).

Solomon's relations to Hiram, king of Tyre, at one time threatened to become less friendly than they had been at first, and afterwards again became. It appears that, besides furnishing him with wood, Hiram had also advanced gold to Solomon (1 Kings 9:11), amounting, if we may connect with this the notice in ver. 14, to 120 talents of gold, variously computed at £1,250,000 (Poole), £720,000 (S. Clarke), and £471,240 (Keil, whose estimate seems the most probable). We suppose it was in repayment of this sum that Solomon ceded to Hiram twenty cities in Northern Galilee, adjoining the possessions of Tyre. With these he might the more readily part, since the district was partially "Gentile" (Isaiah 9:1). But Hiram, who probably covered a strip of land along the coast, was dissatisfied with his new acquisition, and gave it the contemptuous designation of "the land of Cabul." The district seems, however, to have been afterwards restored to Solomon (2 Chronicles 8:2), no doubt on repayment of the loan and other compensation.

The later relations between Hiram and Solomon consisted chiefly in mercantile alliances. Although most writers regard the fleet which sailed to Ophir (1 Kings 9:27, 28) as identical with "the navy of Tarshish" (1 Kings 10:22), yet the names, the imports, as well as the regularity in the passages of the latter ("every three years"), and the express statement that its destiny was Tarshish (2 Chronicles 9:21) seem opposed to this view. Opinions are also divergent as to the exact location of Ophir, and the share which Hiram had in the outfit of this expedition, whether he only furnished

sailors (1 Kings 9:27), or also the ships (2 Chronicles 8:28). In all probability the wood for these ships was cut in Lebanon by order of Hiram, and floated to Joppa, whence it would be transported by land (comp. 2 Chronicles 2:16) to Ezion-Geber and Elath, at the head of the Gulf of Akabah (the Red Sea), where the vessels would be built under the direction of Phoenician shipwrights. Upon the whole, it seems most likely that the Ophir whence they fetched gold was Arabia. The sacred text does not inform us whether these expeditions were periodical, the absence of such notice rather leading to the supposition that this was not the case, or at least that they were not continued. The total result of these expeditions was an importation of gold to the amount of 420 talents (according to Keil about 1 _ million sterling).

It was not only the prospect of such addition to the wealth of the country, but that this was the first Jewish maritime expedition - in fact, the first great national trading undertaking, which gave it such importance in public estimation that Solomon went in person to visit the two harbors where the fleet was fitting out (2 Chronicles 8:17). According to 1 Kings 10:11, the Phoenician fleet also brought from "Ophir" "precious stones" and "almug-trees," or sandal-wood, which King Solomon used for "balustrades" in the Temple, for his own palace, and for making musical instruments.

The success of this trading adventure may have led to another similar undertaking, in company with the Phoenicians, to Tartessus (Tarshish),⁵¹ the well-known great mercantile emporium on the south coast of Spain. The duration of such an expedition is stated in round numbers as three years; and the trade became so regular that afterwards all the large merchantmen were popularly known as "Tarshish-ships" (comp. 1

Kings 22:48; Psalm 48:7; Isaiah 2:16).⁵² The imports from Tarshish consisted of gold, silver, ivory,⁵³ apes, and peacocks (1 Kings 10:22).

The two last-mentioned articles of import indicate the commencement of a very dangerous decline towards Oriental luxury. It has been well observed (by Ewald), that there was a moment in Israel's history when it seemed possible that David might have laid the foundation of an empire like that of Rome, and another when Solomon might have led the way to a philosophy as sovereign as that of Greece.

But it was an equally, if not more dangerous path on which to enter, and one even more opposed to the Divine purpose concerning Israel, when foreign trade, and with it foreign luxury, became the object of king and people. The danger was only too real, and the public display appeared in what the Queen of Sheba saw of Solomon's court (1 Kings 10:5), in the magnificence of his throne (vers. 19, 20), and in the sumptuousness of all his appointments (ver. 21). Two hundred large targets and three hundred smaller shields, all covered with beaten gold,⁵⁴ hung around the house of the forest of Lebanon; all the king's drinking vessels, and all the other appurtenances for State receptions were of pure gold; the merchants brought the spices of the East into the country (ver. 15); while traders, importers, and vassal chiefs swelled the immense revenue, which in one year⁵⁵ rose to the almost incredible sum of 666 talents of gold, which at the lowest computation amounts to upwards of 2 _ millions of our money,

⁵² From this passage Bahr and others have concluded that the Tarshish fleet of King Solomon went to Ophir; but the inference is incorrect.

⁵³ The Hebrew terms are not easy to render. Most critics have, by a slight alteration, translated them "ivory, ebony." But Keil and Bahr have shown that this rendering is not sufficiently supported.

⁵⁴ These shields were made of wood or of twisted material, and covered with gold, the amount of the latter being calculated for the targets at 91lbs., and for the smaller shields at 4_ lbs (Keil).

⁵⁵ 1 Kings 10:14 does not necessarily imply that this was the annual revenue, only that it came to him in one year. The 666 talents may perhaps be a round sum.

⁵¹ Critics are generally agreed that Tarshish is the Tartessus of Spain. This was the great place for the export of silver, and a central depot whence the imports from Africa, such as sandal-wood, ivory, ebony, apes, and peacocks, would be shipped to all parts of the world. Compare here the very conclusive reasoning of Canon Rawlinson, u.s. pp. 545, 546.

or only one million less than that of the Persian kings (Herod 3. 95).

Add to this the number of Solomon's chariots and horsemen, the general wealth of the country, and the importation of horses ⁵⁶ from Egypt, which made Palestine almost an emporium for chariots and horses; ⁵⁷ and it will not be difficult to perceive on what a giddy height king and people stood during the later years of Solomon's reign.

It was this scene of wealth and magnificence, unexampled even in the East, as well as the undisputed political influence and supremacy of the king, combined with the highest intellectual activity and civilization in the country, which so much astounded the Queen of Sheba on her visit to Solomon's dominions. Many, indeed, were the strangers who had been attracted to Jerusalem by the fame of its king (1 Kings 10:24). But none of them had been so distinguished as she, whose appearance was deeply symbolical of the glorious spiritual destiny of Israel (Psalm 72:10, 11; Isaiah 60:6), and indicative of the future judgment on the unbelief of those who were even more highly favored (Matthew 12:42; Luke 11:31). Sheba, which is to be distinguished from Seba, or Meroi in Ethiopia, was a kingdom in Southern Arabia, ⁵⁸ on the shores of the Red Sea, and seems to have been chiefly governed by Queens.

Owing to its trade, the population was regarded as the wealthiest in Arabia. It may have been that Solomon's fame had first reached the ears of the

Queen through the fleet of Ophir. In consequence, she resolved to visit Jerusalem, to see, to test, and to learn for herself whether the extraordinary reports which had reached her were true. But, whatever may have specially influenced her to undertake so novel a pilgrimage, three things in regard to it are beyond question. She was attracted by the fame of Solomon's wisdom; she viewed that wisdom in connection with "the Name of Jehovah" (1 Kings 10:1 ⁵⁹); and she came to learn. What the higher import of this "wisdom" was, is explained by Solomon himself in Proverbs 3:14-18, while its source is indicated in Proverbs 2:4-6.

Thus viewing it, no event could have been more important, alike typically and in its present bearing on the ancient world. The Queen had come, scarcely daring to hope that Eastern exaggeration had not led her to expect more than she would find. It proved the contrary. Whatever difficulty, doubt, or question she propounded, in the favorite Oriental form of "riddles," ⁶⁰ "whatever was with her heart," "Solomon showed (disclosed to) her all her words" (the spoken and unspoken).

And here she would learn chiefly this, that all the prosperity she witnessed, all the intellectual culture and civilization with which she was brought into contact, had their spring above, with "the Father of lights." She had come at the head of a large retinue, bearing richest presents, which she left in remembrance and also in perpetuation of her visit - at least, if we may trust the account of Josephus, that the cultivation of balsam in the gardens of Jericho owed its origin to plants which the Queen had brought (Jos., Ant. 8. 6, 6). The notice is at least deeply symbolical. The spices of

⁵⁶ Our Authorized Version renders 1 Kings 10:28 "linen yarn," but this is a mistranslation for: "And the bringing out of horses which was for Solomon from Egypt - and the troop of the merchants of the king brought a troop (of horses) for a (definite) price." This would imply that there was a regular trading company which purchased the horses by contract. But the text seems to be here corrupt, and the LXX render, "From Egypt and from Koa" (doubtfully Thekoa), and that "the royal merchants fetched them from Koa for a definite price." In this case there would seem to have been annual horse fairs at Koa, at which the royal merchants bought at a contract price.

⁵⁷ The price mentioned in 1 Kings 10:29 amounts (according to Keil) for a chariot - of course, complete, with two or rather three horses, to £78, and for a (cavalry) horse, to £19 10s.

⁵⁸ Accordingly the story of the descent of the Ethiopian royal line from Solomon and the Queen of Sheba must be dismissed as unhistorical, although Judaism may have spread into Ethiopia from the opposite shores of Arabia.

⁵⁹ Without here entering on a detailed criticism of the precise meaning of the Hebrew expression *leShem Jehovah* ("to the name of Jehovah"), our inference from it can scarcely be called in question.

⁶⁰ Our Authorized Version renders "hard questions" - accurately as regards the import, but not the literal meaning of the word. Josephus relates, on the authority of Dios and Menander, some curious legends about "problems" propounded by Solomon to Hiram, which the latter could not solve, and had to pay heavy fines in consequence, - a like fate, however, overtaking Solomon in regard to the problems propounded to him by Abdemon (Ag. Ap. 1. 17, 18). The love of the Easterns - especially the Arabs - for "riddles" is well known.

Sheba, so sweet and strong that, according to ancient accounts, their perfume was carried out far to sea, were to be brought to Jerusalem, and their plants to strike root in sacred soil (Psalm 72:10, 11; Isaiah 60:6). But now the balsam-gardens of Jericho, into which they were transplanted, are lying bare and desolate - for "the Queen of the South" hath risen up in judgment with that "generation;" and what further "sign" can or need be given to the generation that turned from Him Who was "greater than Solomon?"

V_09 Solomon's court — his polygamy — spread of foreign ideas in the country — imitation of foreign manners — growing luxury — Solomon's spiritual decline — judgment predicted — Solomon's enemies: Hadad, Rezon, Jeroboam — causes of popular discontent — Ahijah's prediction of the disruption — Jeroboam's rebellion and flight into egypt — death of Solomon.

1 Kings 11

GREATER contrast could scarcely be imagined than that between the state of Solomon's court and of the country generally, and the directions and restrictions laid down in Deuteronomy 17:16, 17 for the regulation of the Jewish monarchy. The first and most prominent circumstance which here presents itself to the mind, is the direct contravention of the Divine command as regarded the number of "princesses" and concubines which formed the harem of Solomon. Granting that the notice in Cant. 6. 8 affords reason for believing that the numerals in 1 Kings 11:3 may have been due to a mistake on the part of a copyist, still the sacred narrative expressly states, that the polygamy of Solomon, and especially his alliances with nations excluded from intermarriage with Israel, was the occasion, if not the cause, of his later sin and punishment.⁶¹

While on this subject we may go back a step further, and mark (with Ewald) what sad consequences the infringement of the primitive

Divine order in regard to marriage wrought throughout the history of Israel. It is undoubtedly to polygamy that we have to trace the troubles in the family of David; and to the same cause were due many of those which came on David's successors. If Moses was obliged to tolerate the infringement of the original institution of God, "the hardness of heart" which had necessitated it brought its own punishment, especially when the offender was an Eastern king. Thus the sin of the people, embodied, as it were, in the person of their representative, carried national judgment as its consequence.

But the elements which caused the fall of Solomon lay deeper than polygamy. Indeed, the latter was among the effects, as well as one of the further causes of his spiritual decline. First among these elements of evil at work, we reckon the growing luxury of the court. The whole atmosphere around, so to speak, was different from what it had been in the primitive times which preceded the reign of Solomon, and still more from the ideal of monarchy as sketched in the Book of Deuteronomy. Everything had become un-Jewish, foreign, purely Asiatic. Closely connected with this was the evident desire to emulate, and even outdo neighboring nations. Such wisdom, such splendor, such riches, and finally, such luxury, and such a court were not to be found elsewhere, as in the kingdom of which Jerusalem was the capital. An ominous beginning this of that long course of Jewish pride and self-exaltation which led to such fearful consequences. It is to this desire of surpassing other Eastern courts that the size of Solomon's harem must be attributed. Had it been coarse sensuality which influenced him, the earlier, not the later years of his reign, would have witnessed the introduction of so many strange wives. Moreover, it deserves special notice that the 700 wives of Solomon are designated as "princesses" (1 Kings 11:3). Without pressing this word in its most literal meaning, we may at least infer that Solomon courted influential connections with the reigning and other leading families of the clans around, and that the chief object of his great harem was, in a worldly sense, to strengthen his position, to give evidence of his wealth and power as an Eastern monarch, and to form promising alliances, no matter what spiritual elements were

⁶¹ Properly speaking, only Canaanite women were excluded by the Law (Exodus 34:11-16; Deuteronomy 7:1-3). But alliance with those of other nations was contrary to the spirit of the law, at any rate so long as they continued idolaters. Comp. Ezra 9:1; Nehemiah 13:23. There is a legend that Solomon married a daughter of Hiram, king of Tyre.

thus introduced into the country. Closely connected with all this was the rapidly growing intercourse between Israel and foreign nations. For one reason or another, strangers, whom Israel hitherto had only considered as heathens, crowded to Jerusalem. By their presence king and people would not only become familiar with foreign ideas, but so-called toleration would extend to these strangers the right of public worship, or rather, of public idolatry. And so strong was this feeling, that, although Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, and Hezekiah put an end to all idolatry, yet the high places which Solomon had built on the southern acclivity of the Mount of Olives remained in use until the time of Josiah (2 Kings 23:13), avowedly for the worship of those foreigners who came to, or were resident in, Jerusalem. Viewed in connection with what has just been stated, even the intellectual culture in the time of Solomon may have proved a source of serious danger.

All this may help us to form a more correct conception of the causes which led to the terrible decline in the spiritual history of Solomon, and this without either extenuating his guilt or, as is more commonly the case, exaggerating his sin. As Holy Scripture puts it, when Solomon was old, and less able to resist influences around, he so far yielded to his foreign wives as to build altars for their worship. This in the Scriptural and real sense was already to "go after Ashtoreth and Milcom" (1 Kings 11:5). But the sacred text does not state that Solomon personally "served them;" ⁶² nor is there any reason for supposing that he either relinquished the service of Jehovah, or personally took part in heathen rites. To have built altars to "the abominations of the Gentiles," ⁶³ and to have

tolerated, if not encouraged, the idolatrous rites openly enacted there by his wives, implied great public guilt.

In the language of Scripture, "Solomon's heart was not perfect with Jehovah his God;" he "did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and went not fully after Jehovah." His sin was the more inexcusable, that he had in this respect the irreproachable example of David. Besides, even closer allegiance to the LORD might have been expected from Solomon than from David, since he had been privileged to build the Temple, and had on two occasions received personal communication from the Lord, whereas God had never appeared to David, but only employed prophets as intermediaries to make known His good pleasure.

It need scarcely be said, that public sin such as that of Solomon would soon bring down judgment. As preparatory to it we regard that solemn warning, when the LORD a second time appeared in vision to Solomon (1 Kings 9:4-9). This being misunderstood or neglected, the actual announcement of judgment followed, probably through Ahijah. The terms of the sentence were terribly explicit. Solomon's kingdom would be rent from him, and given to his servant. Yet even so Divine mercy would accord a twofold limitation—the event foretold should not happen in the days of Solomon himself, and when it took place the kingdom should not be wholly taken away, but partially remain in his line. And this for the sake of David - that is, not from partiality for him, nor on account of any supposed superabundant merit, but because of God's promise to David (2 Samuel 7:14-16), and for God's own glory, since He had made choice of Jerusalem as the place where He would forever reveal His Name (1 Kings 9:3).

But although execution of the judgment was stayed, indications of its reality and nearness soon appeared. Once more we mark a succession of natural and intelligible causes, of which the final outcome was the fulfillment of the Divine prediction. It will be remembered that, of the two great wars in which David was involved after his accession, the most formidable was that against

⁶² Whenever the Jewish kings were personally guilty of idolatry, the Hebrew word *avad*, "served," is used. Comp. 1 Kings 16:31; 22:53; 2 Kings 16:3; 21:2-6, 20-22. Jewish tradition also emphatically asserts (Shab. 56 b.) that Solomon was not personally guilty of idolatry. The account of Josephus (Ant. 8:7, 5) is worthless.

⁶³ Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Phoenicians, was worshipped with impure rites. Milcom, Malcom, or Molech, was the principal deity of the Ammonites, but must be distinguished from Moloch, whose terrible rites were only introduced at a later period (2 Kings 16:3). Chemosh was the

sun-god and war-god of the Moabites; his name frequently occurs on the celebrated Moabite Stone.

the hostile combination of tribes along the eastern boundary of his kingdom.

The distance, the character of the country, the habits of the enemy - the alliance of so many nationalities, their determination, and the stubborn resistance which they offered, made this a really great war. We know that the armies of David, under the leadership of Joab and Abishai, were victorious at all points (2 Samuel 8; 10; 1 Chronicles 19.). But, although the enemy may have been subdued and even crushed for a time, it was, in the nature of things, impossible wholly to remove the elements of resistance. In the far southeast, terrible, almost savage, vengeance had been taken on Edom (1 Chronicles 18:12).

From the slaughter of the people a trusty band of Edomites had rescued one of the youthful royal princes, Hadad⁶⁴ (or Adad), and brought him ultimately to Egypt, where he met a hospitable reception from the then reigning Pharaoh - probably the predecessor of Solomon's father-in-law. If Pharaoh had at first been influenced by political motives in keeping near him one who might become a source of trouble to the growing Israelitish power, the young prince of Edom soon enlisted the sympathy and affection of his host (1 Kings 11:14-19). He married the sister of Tahpenes,⁶⁵ the Gevirah, or queen dominant (principal) of Pharaoh's harem; and their child was acknowledged and brought up among the royal princes of Egypt.

When tidings of the death of David and afterwards of Joab reached Hadad, he insisted on returning to Edom, even against the friendly remonstrances of Pharaoh, who by this time would rather have seen him enjoying his peaceful retreat in Egypt than entering upon difficult and dangerous enterprises. But, although Hadad returned to his own country

in the beginning of Solomon's reign, it was only towards its close - when growing luxury had enervated king and people - that his presence there became a source of trouble and anxiety.⁶⁶ This we infer, not only from 1 Kings 4:24, but from such a notice as that in 1 Kings 9:26.

But in the extreme northeast, as well as in the far southeast, a dark cloud gathered on the horizon. At the defeat of Hadadezer by the troops of David (2 Samuel 8:3; 10:18) one of the Syrian captains, Rezon by name, had "fled from his lord." In the then disorganized state of the country he gradually gathered around him a band of followers, and ultimately fell back upon Damascus, of which he became king. The sacred text leads us to infer that, although he probably did not venture on open warfare with Solomon, he cast off the Jewish suzerainty, and generally "was an adversary" - or, to use the pictorial language of the Bible, "abhorred Israel."⁶⁷

Ill-suppressed enmity in Edom (far southeast), and more active opposition and intrigue at Damascus (in the northeast) - in short, the danger of a combination like that which had so severely taxed the resources of David, such, then, so far as concerned external politics, were the darkening prospects of Solomon's later years. But the terms in which Holy Scripture speaks of these events deserve special notice. We are told, that "Jehovah stirred up" or, rather, "raised up" these adversaries unto Solomon (1 Kings 11:14, 23). The expression clearly points to Divine Causality in the matter (comp. Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; Judges 2:18; 1 Samuel 2:35; Jeremiah 29:15; Ezra 34:23). Not, indeed, that the ambitious or evil passions of men's hearts are incited of God, but that while each, in the exercise of his free will, chooses his own

⁶⁴ Hadad, "the Sun," or "Sun-god" - an ancient name, perhaps a royal title among the Edomite princes (comp. Genesis 36:35). But it seems an ungrounded inference (by Ewald, Thenius, and even Canon Rawlinson) to connect him (as grandson) with the last king of the Edomites, who in 1 Chronicles 1:50 is by a clerical error called Hadad instead of Hadar (comp. Genesis 36:39.)

⁶⁵ The name occurs also on Egyptian monuments. Tahpenes, or rather Thacpenes, was also the name of an Egyptian goddess (Gesenius, Thesaurus, vol. 3., p. 1500 a.).

⁶⁶ The LXX have here an addition, upon which Josephus bases a notice (Ant. 8. 7, 6), to the effect that Hadad (Ader) raised the standard of revolt in Edom, but, being unsuccessful, combined with Rezon, and became king of part of Syria. The notice cannot be regarded as of historical authority.

⁶⁷ Canon Rawlinson (in the Speaker's Commentary, vol. ii., p. 550) arranges the succession of the Damascus kings as follows: Hadad-Ezer (Hadad I.), contemporary of David; Rezon (usurper), contemporary of Solomon; Hezion (Hadad II.), contemporary of Rehoboam; Tabrimon (Hadad III.), contemporary of Abijam; Ben-hadad (Hadad IV.), contemporary of Asa.

course, the LORD overrules all, so as to serve for the chastisement of sin and the carrying out of His own purposes (comp. Psalm 2:1, 2; Isaiah 10:1-3).

But yet another and far more serious danger threatened Solomon's throne. Besides "adversaries" without, elements of dissatisfaction were at work within Palestine, which only needed favoring circumstances to lead to open revolt. First, there was the old tribal jealousy between Ephraim and Judah. The high destiny foretold to Ephraim (Genesis 48:17-22; 49:22-26) must have excited hopes which the leadership of Joshua, himself an Ephraimite (Numbers 13:8), seemed for a time to warrant. Commanding, perhaps, the most important territorial position in the land, Ephraim claimed a dominating power over the tribes in the days of Gideon and of Jephthah (Judges 8:1; 12:1). In fact, one of the successors of these Judges, Abdon, was an Ephraimite (Judges 12:13). But, besides, Ephraim could boast not only of secular, but of ecclesiastical supremacy since Shiloh and Kirjath-jearim were within its tribal possession. And had not Samuel, the greatest of the Judges, the one outstanding personality in the history of a decrepit priesthood, been, though a Levite, yet "from Mount Ephraim" (1 Samuel 1:1)? Even the authority of Samuel could not secure the undisputed acknowledgment of Saul, who was only too painfully conscious of the objections which tribal jealousy would raise to his elevation (1 Samuel 9:21). It needed that glorious God-given victory at Jabesh-Gilead to hush, under strong religious convictions, those discordant voices, and to unite all Israel in acclamation of their new king. And yet the tribe of Benjamin, to which Saul belonged, was closely allied to that of Ephraim (Judges 21:19-23). Again, it was the tribe of Ephraim which mainly upheld the cause of Ishbosheth (2 Samuel 2:9); and though the strong hand of David afterwards kept down all active opposition, no sooner did his power seem on the wane than "a man of Mount Ephraim" (2 Samuel 20:21) roused the tribal jealousies, and raised the standard of rebellion against him. And now, with the reign of King Solomon, all hope of tribal pre-eminence seemed to have passed from Ephraim. There was a new capital for the whole country, and that in the possession of Judah. The glory of the ancient Sanctuary had also been taken away.

Jerusalem was the ecclesiastical as well as the political capital, and Ephraim had to contribute its wealth and even its forced labor to promote the schemes, to support the luxury, and to advance the glory of a new monarchy, taken from, and resident in, Judah!

But, secondly, the burden which the new monarchy imposed on the people must, in the course of time, have weighed very heavily on them (1 Kings 12:4). The building of a great national Sanctuary was, indeed, an exceptional work which might enlist the highest and best sympathies, and make the people willing to submit to any sacrifices. But this was followed by the construction of a magnificent palace, and then by a succession of architectural undertakings (1 Kings 9:15, 17-19) on an unprecedented scale. However useful some of these might be, they not only marked an innovation, but involved a continuance of forced labor (1 Kings 4:6; 5:13, 14; 11:28), wholly foreign to the spirit of a free people, and which diverted from their proper channels the industrial forces of the country. Nor was this all. The support of such a king and court must have proved a heavy demand on the resources of the nation (1 Kings 4:21-27). To have to pay enormous taxes, and for many long years to be deprived during so many months of the heads and the bread-winners of the family, that they might do what seemed slaves' labor for the glorification of a king, whose rule was every year becoming weaker, would have excited dissatisfaction even among a more enduring people than those tribes who had so long enjoyed the freedom and the privileges of a federated Republic.

It only needed a leader - and once more Ephraim furnished him. Jeroboam, the son of Nebat and of a widow named Zeruah, was a native of Zereda or Zererath ⁶⁸ (Judges 7:22), within the territory of Ephraim.

The sacred text describes him as a "mighty man of valor." His energy, talent, and aptitude pointed him out as a fit permanent overseer of the forced labor of his tribe. It was a dangerous post to assign

⁶⁸ Most critics erroneously identify it with Zarthan (1 Kings 7:46), or Zeredathah (2 Chronicles 4:17), which, however, lay outside the possession of Ephraim.

to a man of such power and ambition. His tribesmen, as a matter of course, came to know him as their chief and leader, while in daily close intercourse he would learn their grievances and sentiments. In such circumstances the result which followed was natural. The bold, strong, and ambitious Ephraimite, "ruler over all the burden of the house of Joseph," became the leader of the popular movement against Solomon.

It was, no doubt, in order to foment the elements of discontent already existing, as well as because his position in the city must have become untenable, that "Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem" (1 Kings 11:29). When "the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way," Jeroboam had already planned, or rather commenced, his revolt against Solomon. Himself an Ephraimite (from Shiloh), the prophet would not only be acquainted with Jeroboam, but also know the sentiments of his tribesmen and the views of their new leader. It was not, therefore, Ahijah who incited Jeroboam to rebellion by the symbolical act of rending his new garment in twelve pieces,⁶⁹ giving him ten of the pieces, while those retained were emblematic of what would be left to the house of David.

Rather did he act simply as the Divine messenger to Jeroboam, after the latter had resolved on his own course. The event was, indeed, ordered of God in punishment of the sin of Solomon (vers. 11-13); and the intimation of this fact, with its lessons of warning, was the principal object of Ahijah's mission and message. But the chief actor had long before chosen his own part, being prompted, as Holy Scripture puts it, by a settled ambition to usurp the throne (1 Kings 11:37); while the movement of which he took advantage was not only the result of causes long at work, but might almost have been forecast by any observer acquainted with the state of matters. Thus we learn once more how, in the Providence of God, a result which, when predicted, seems miraculous, and is really such, so far as the Divine operation is

⁶⁹ Much needless ingenuity has been employed to show in what sense Jeroboam had ten "pieces" or tribes, and Rehoboam "one" - or rather two - assigned to him. The language must not be too closely pressed. The "one" tribe left to the house of David was no doubt Judah, including "little Benjamin" as the second of the twelve "pieces" or tribes.

concerned, is brought about, not only through the free agency of man, but by a series of natural causes, while at the same time all is guided and overruled of God for His own wise and holy purposes.

Indeed, closely considered, the words of the prophet, so far from inciting Jeroboam to rebellion against Solomon, should rather have deterred him from it. The scene is sketched in vivid outline. Jeroboam, in whose soul tribal pride, disgust at his work, contempt for the king, irrepressible energy, and high-reaching ambition, combined with a knowledge of the feelings of his tribesmen, have ripened into stern resolve, has left Jerusalem. The time for secret intrigue and dissimulation is past; that for action has arrived. As he leaves the hated city-walls - memorials of Ephraim's servitude - and ascends towards the heights of Benjamin and Ephraim, a strange figure meets him. It is his countryman from Shiloh, the prophet Ahijah. No salutation passes between them, but Ahijah takes hold of the new square cloth or upper mantle in which he has been wrapped, and rends it in twelve pieces. It is not, as usually, in token of mourning (Genesis 37:29; 44:13; 2 Samuel 13:19), though sadness must have been in the prophet's heart, but as symbol of what is to happen - as it were, God's answer to Jeroboam's thoughts. Yet the judgment predicted is not to take effect in Solomon's lifetime (1 Kings 11:34, 35); and any attempt at revolt, such as Jeroboam seems to have made (vers. 26, 40),⁷⁰ was in direct contravention of God's declared will.

There were other parts of the prophet's message which Jeroboam would have done well to have borne in mind. David was always to "have a light before God" in Jerusalem, the city "which He had chosen to put His Name there" (1 Kings 11:36). In other words, David was always to have a descendant on the throne,⁷¹ and Jerusalem with its Temple was always to be God's chosen place; that is, Israel's worship was to continue in the great

⁷⁰ The expression "to lift up the hand," means actual revolt. Comp. 2 Samuel 18:28; 20:21.

⁷¹ That this is the meaning of the figurative expression "light," may be gathered from 1 Kings 15:4; 2 Kings 8:19; 2 Chronicles 21:7; Psalm 18:28; 72:17.

central Sanctuary, and the descendants of David were to be the rightful occupants of the throne until He came Who was David's greater Son.

God had linked the Son of David with His City and the Temple, so that the final destruction of the latter marked the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the house of David. Thus gloriously did the promise stretch beyond the immediate future, with its troubles and afflictions. Lastly, so far as regarded Jeroboam, the promise of succession to the kingdom of Israel in his family was made conditional on his observance of the statutes and commandments of God, as David had kept them (ver. 38). But Jeroboam was of far other spirit than David. His main motive had been personal ambition. Unlike David, who, though anointed king, would make no attempt upon the crown during Saul's lifetime, Jeroboam, despite the express warning of God, "lifted up his hand against the king." The result was failure and flight into Egypt.

Nor did Jeroboam keep the statutes and commandments of the LORD; and after a brief reign his son fell by the hand of the assassin (1 Kings 15:28). Lastly, and most important of all - the Messianic beating of the promise to David, and the Divine choice of Jerusalem and its Temple, were fatally put aside or forgotten by Jeroboam and his successors on the throne of Israel. The schism in the kingdom became one from the Theocracy; and the rejection of the central Sanctuary resulted, as might have been expected, in the establishment of idolatry in Israel.

Nor did King Solomon either live or die as his father David. A feeble attempt - perhaps justifiable - to rid himself of Jeroboam, and no more is told of him than that, at the close of a reign of forty years, ⁷² he "slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father."

So far as we know, in that death-chamber no words of earnest, loving entreaty to serve Jehovah

were spoken to his successor, such as David had uttered; no joyous testimony here as regarded the past, nor yet strong faith and hope as concerned the future, such as had brightened the last hours of David. It is to us a silent death-chamber in which King Solomon lay. No bright sunset here, to be followed by a yet more glorious morning. He had done more than any king to denationalize Israel. And on the morrow of his death, rebellion within the land; outside its borders - Edom and Syria ready to spring to arms, Egypt under Shishak gathering up its might; and only a Rehoboam to hold the rudder of the State in the rising storm.

⁷² Josephus (Ant. 7, 8) assigns him a reign of eighty years. But this must either be a clerical error, or depend on one in Josephus' copy of the LXX. Solomon probably died at the age of about sixty. The question of his final repentance, so largely discussed at one time by theologians, may be safely left - where the Bible has left it.

