

# **Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature,**

## **Lecture 23**

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Okay, well, it's time to start. It looks like we're suffering from the it's a rainy day, it's Friday, post-exam syndrome. Since you are the faithful, at least you're a majority, so we've got that much, but it's a small majority.

I've said this before, I'll say it again. Encourage your brothers and sisters, be their keepers so that, indeed, they're here for class. It's very interesting when the exam shows up, there's faces that I haven't seen before, except for the previous exam.

At any rate, that's their problem. Friday papers, a week from Friday, is that right, I think? If you've got questions about the paper, now is the time to be asking them. Not right now, but this week as opposed to Thursday night.

Let me just say this: I know I've said it before, but I'll say it again. A one-page paper means that you work really, really hard at it because it starts out as a four or a five-page paper, and then it gets boiled down and refined so that every word in that one page has a lot of punch behind it. So don't think, oh, one page, I can just dash that off in ten minutes.

It doesn't work that way. And I'll be looking at your preliminary work as well, so if you look through the assignments, you know there's a fair amount of preliminary work that you need to do, and I grade on that as well as on that final one-page product. So do put some effort into this.

I think you'll find it quite an encouraging thing to do. Don't ask if you can turn in a late paper. You have a little bit of grace from nine until five on that day, so anything beyond that time.

Since you've had the assignment since the beginning of the term, I really honestly won't accept it. I hate to be such an ogre, but that's kind of the way things go. Those of you doing extra credit, do Monday.

Don't ask me for an extension on that, either. Okay. You can see the exam statistics here.

Carrie has just an announcement slash question. Carry on, Carrie. I would encourage you, especially if things are problematic when you come to exams and you're really struggling, to take advantage of the review sessions.

They're eminently helpful, and both Carrie and Matt have a good way of boiling stuff down to make it accessible, especially in those frantic hours before the exam, but I would encourage you to do it every week as well. Okay, any questions or comments before we move on? Carrie's going to put your exams back in your boxes later on today, but if you've checked the blackboard, you already know what your grade is, so you can kind of map that out, and you can also look at the exam keys that are there, what we need to sing.

Go back to those perhaps unusual Hebrew syllables. There is really some profound meaning behind them. God is good, and his mercy is everlasting.

Let's take some time to pray together.

Father, we do thank you that you have indeed called us to be your children, that we have on a daily basis access to you through the blood of Jesus, coming very much into your presence, into your throne room, bringing the things that we want to thank you for and also our burdens before you, so we're grateful. Lord, we're thankful to be here, to be able to study together, to have heat and light, to have sufficient food, to have security.

Father, we do pray for those who don't have these things that we just so often take for granted. In your mercy, please meet the needs of your people. Father, we pray that you will help us today as we study.

May our study truly be an act of worship. Make our minds keen and our hearts burning with love for you and with desire for your presence. So, we pray these things in Christ's name with thanksgiving. Amen.

By the way, I should have prayed for this as well, but I'll just get it on your prayer radar screen. I'm from northern Minnesota.

Have you been following the news up there lately? The whole of northern Minnesota and the eastern area of North Dakota is a disaster area right now because they are having floodwaters today and tomorrow that they have not experienced for over 100 years, and it's a messy business. I spent my high school days when spring came along, usually sandbagging, because I lived in a town where a river kind of went through like this. So, I kind of know what they're going through.

I would encourage you to pray for folks because many of them are up for losing their homes and their livelihoods. Whole towns are being threatened by floodwaters well over flood stage and are now threatening to break through dikes as well. So, these are difficult times for those folks.

I know people suffer around the world. I just have that connection. And I know there are some Minnesotans on campus as well.

So, just to put that on your prayer radar screen. We're going to do a little bit of review as we talk about Solomon and Solomon's consolidating the kingdom. We have a united monarchy once David reaches the end of his reign, but it's one that has some fractures, and those fractures are going to reappear at the end of Solomon's reign.

But Solomon himself does indeed consolidate the empire in ways that we're going to talk about. I probably should say kingdom. I probably shouldn't say empire.

We need to review a little bit, however, because we've had a little bit of time in between. A review question, or perhaps I should say two review questions. Let's see if we can, given the fact that you've done all this for the exam, reconstruct this.

How did David create political and religious unity in his kingdom? Nick. Excellent. He's moving the capital to a place that's going to be a little bit more appealing to those northern tribes, especially the tribe of Benjamin in the former city of Jebus, now Jerusalem.

He moves the ark there, so we've got all those religious symbols in the same place. I shouldn't say all. You've got the ark there.

We've still got that tent of meeting out in Gibeon. We're going to talk about that today. And then you're absolutely right.

David expands the boundaries of the kingdom considerably as well. Next question. Second question.

Last question. What event prepared for the future building of the temple, particularly in terms of its location? Chris. Absolutely.

Good. David has, after that sin of numbering the people and experiencing the plague and the angel of the Lord and the devastation, David, in gratitude to God, once that plague stops, buys this threshing floor of Araunah. It's in the area of Mount Moriah, as we learned from 2 Chronicles 3. And on that particular location, he's going to offer a sacrifice.

And, of course, as we said on Monday, that's what lays the groundwork for the building of the temple. So, we're all set now for another major enterprise, and that does indeed bring us to Solomon. What's Solomon best known for? And, by the way, if you need a way to remember this, you can thank one of my students about 15

years ago for suggesting this, and I just pass it along to every class since this is not originally with me; think of four W's.

Four W's. Kristen. Okay, that's good.

Wisdom and women. And women are better because we don't want to only say wives. There's a bunch of other women in there as well.

So, wisdom and women. Kaylin. Wealth. Great.  
And? Worship. That's it.

Wisdom, women, worship, wealth. Some of these have both a good side and a bad side to them, as we're going to see as we make our way along. Yeah, Susanna.

Yeah, it's a great question. What is the difference between a concubine and a wife? A wife is someone who is betrothed and actually serves in that capacity, and Solomon's wives are often there because he has made political alliances. You see the example of that with Pharaoh's daughter, which we're going to talk about a little bit later on.

So, there's a stature associated with the position of wife that is not what a concubine would enjoy. The Hebrew word for concubine is one that people have, it's pilgashah or something like that. Ted, you can probably correct me on my vowels with the consonants.

I've sort of forgotten. But there's all sorts of stuff being written on it in terms of exactly what that meant. It's a little bit uncertain.

But we do know there's a different stature, and in the cases of the kings, you've oftentimes made these political alliances. Yeah, Trevor. Yeah, well, it's a good question.

Is there ever any interchange between these terms? One of the confusion is that the Hebrew word for wife is also the Hebrew word for woman. And so, you've got a concubine who is a woman and falls into that category who's then related to this person. So, there's going to be some fuzzy boundaries.

Your questions are good ones. The little bit of study that I've done on this Hebrew word behind concubine leaves me having to say to you that I honestly don't know all the answers to what is part and parcel of that. Good questions.

Any other questions? If I don't think of it later on, please ask me about this business of having so many women as wives. I've already alluded to some of the political issues. But when we start talking about Deuteronomy 27 and what the kings weren't supposed to do, we should be coming back to that.

Here's another question for you. Do you remember our sources? 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings are in one sort of a block and a unit, and then 1 and 2 Chronicles are later, and they have a different emphasis. As you are reading for today, what difference did you see between 1 Kings materials and what you read in Chronicles? Chelsea.

Yeah, you don't see that whole thing about his idolatry at the end of Solomon's reign, do you? It's not in Chronicles. It's in Kings 1 Kings 11, but we're not going to see it in Chronicles. That's one end of the bookends.

Think of the other bookend. How about the beginning of Solomon's reign or the things that lead up to it? In Chronicles, did you read anything about Adonijah and that whole business in terms of the frustration and the tension and the attempts to get the kingdom? It wasn't there, was it? Solomon just becomes king in Chronicles. That's not the case in Kings.

You've got Adonijah, you've got his setting himself up as king, and we're going to talk about it in a minute. Just always keep your antennas up for those differences. That's what makes the reading so interesting, among many other things.

All right, shall we carry on? Let's try to carry on. As I've often said, I want you to be aware of the major events that unfold, such as Solomon getting established as king. Know the names, know the people, know how this happens.

We'll sort of zero in on a couple of points, but obviously, we can't talk about all of them. As David reaches the end of his life, he's an old person. He can't keep warm.

Abishag. That's how you pronounce it, even though it's Abishag in English. Abishag, a young woman, is brought in basically just to keep him warm.

Now, why is this significant later on in the narrative? Why do we even take those first four verses of 1 Kings to talk about keeping King David warm? Because then we go on to this incredible thing about Adonijah, and he's setting himself up to be king, and yet you've got those first four verses, Kristen. Yeah, and it's actually going to be asked, Solomon. You were right the first time.

Yeah, right. Adonijah, once he's been, to all intents and purposes, deposed from his presumed kingship, then requests to have Abishag. And why is that a political statement, perhaps? Where have we seen that maneuver before? Taking somebody's concubine.

Yeah, Katie. Absalom made a really disgusting political statement, didn't he? When he sleeps with David's concubines in full daylight, everybody can watch it happen. And so, it's making a statement.

What belonged to my father is mine. If Adonijah does it, what belonged to David in his old age, Abishag, is Adonijah's, then he's making inroads. It would be to Solomon's detriment to have that kind of thing going on and not do something about it.

And we even saw it all the way back as far as Reuben. That was considered an absolutely heinous thing for Reuben to sleep with Bilhah, his father's concubine and the handmaid of one of his wives. So that's the first thing.

Well, Adonijah indeed schemes to become king. He does it in a very interesting way. It's fascinating to find out that, yet again, we read, if we read very carefully, that David's not really the best of fathers.

It says he never corrected Adonijah. Adonijah's spoiled just as Absalom was spoiled. Kind of see mirroring things going on here.

And so, David never really sets him right. Adonijah does what he wants to do and he rounds up two very important people to come over to his side. You know who they are.

We've already seen them. Yeah, Susanna. Yeah, Abiathar, good.

However, you want to say it. And what role does he play? He's the priest who's actually been with David all along. Remember, he's the one that came and brought the ephod and so forth.

So, we've got a very key figure. And here Adonijah is figuring out he's got Abiathar now on his side. Sadok is going to be the one who stays with David.

Yeah, Chelsea. Yeah, he also gets Joab on his side. And of course, Joab has a long history.

And so Adonijah probably sees this as somebody who will successfully command any armies if he needs to have them. But David has Benaiah, who we also learn if we're reading Chronicles carefully, is a pretty important person as well. Well, Adonijah sets himself up at a place called En-Rogel, south end of the city of David.

But we have, in the meantime, Nathan and Bathsheba coming to David and saying, are you aware of what's gone on? And, of course, then we find out that not only has

David chosen Solomon, and by the way Adonijah was the next in line. Amnon's gone. We don't ever know what happens to Keliab.

He's the second born. Absalom's gone. Adonijah's the fourth born.

So, he is the next in line. But Solomon is the one who's going to be king. And that's because, if we back up to 1 Chronicles, well, go ahead, whatever.

1 Chronicles 28, verse 5, David says, of all my sons, and the Lord has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. So, David is well aware of that, and when this thing comes to the crisis, it's not only David's choice. David intimates, suggesting, stating, and declaring that it's the Lord's choice that it will be Solomon who will be king.

So, Solomon sets up his own, or sorry, David and Solomon set up the coronation of Solomon himself, and some very symbolic things happen. We're going to look at a map in a moment, but David's going to have this done at the Gihon Spring, which is the source of water for Jerusalem. Lots of water pumping out of that, and there are some very interesting levels of symbolism.

Solomon is also going to be riding on David's mule, and that's fairly significant, too. Those statements are then made as part of this whole coronation ceremony. In the meantime, we've had David, who has been told by Nathan, who's reporting the Lord's word. Of course, David's been told that he's not going to build the temple, but he doesn't just sit back.

And if you take some time to read through these chapters, 1 Chronicles 28 and 29, David very carefully is preparing to build the temple so that Solomon doesn't have to start from ground zero without any experience. In fact, if you read it really carefully, you see that the Holy Spirit has given David the plan for the temple. Fascinating passage.

The Spirit has given him the sense of what this temple's going to be like and the plan for it, and then he follows through, and as we're going to look at in a moment, it's reflecting, as the tabernacle did, in some ways a shadow or a semblance or a very crude copy of the heavenly realms themselves. More on that in a minute. Well, then we need to move on or back, perhaps on back, to 1 Kings.

I'd like you to have your text kind of in front of you as we see what it is that David tells Solomon to do. This is in chapter 2, and he gives him some very specific advice. First of all, in verse 3, be obedient.

The text says, Observe what the Lord your God requires, walk in his ways, keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Torah of Moses. So, a declaration. Solomon is to be obedient.

And then it goes on and says, you're supposed to build the temple as well. That's a little bit later on. And then, finally, the things we want to really note, take care of some unfinished business.

That's what I've called it here. David realizes that as he's about to die, there are some interpersonal justice issues that need to be addressed. And so, let's look at them.

First of all, verse 5 of chapter 2 of 1 Kings. You know how bad Joab is. I'm being a little bit paraphrastic here.

He's shed an awful lot of blood. Verse 6, deal with him according to your wisdom, but don't let his gray hair go down to Sheol in peace. Joab's got blood in his hands.

He's gotten away with a lot. You can put it that way. Joab's gotten away with a lot of things.

And David is saying to Solomon, you need to deal with Joab. His time's come. Then the second thing, lest we think that David's just sort of out on vendettas here.

In verse 7, he says, show kindness to the sons of Barzillai. I've just mentioned Barzillai there, but obviously, it's the sons who are going to be in the generation that David can show kindness to. Show kindness to the sons of Barley's eye of Goliath.

Let them be among those who eat at your table. They were the ones who stood by me. And you'll remember as David had to flee when Absalom was taking over the kingdom, Barzillai showed him hospitality.

And so, David instructs Solomon to do precisely the same kind of thing for Barzillai's descendants. So, there's a nice measure for measure in a good way here. And then, finally, in verse 8, you still have this guy named Shimei, the one who cursed David as he was leaving in that situation.

And he tells Solomon, deal with him. You're a man of wisdom, he says again, verse 9, you will know what to do with him. Bring his gray head down to Sheol in blood.

Now Solomon very graciously gives these two people, Joab and Shimei, chances that they abuse those concerns. Well, we've already talked about, yeah, I'm sorry, Trevor, go ahead. I don't either.



That's a really good question, and I'm going to answer it way too briefly. The Hebrew word itself, Sheol, shows up in both prose contexts, such as this one, and in poetic contexts in the Hebrew Bible. In most prose contexts, it seems to be pretty much just a parallel to the grave.

In other words, dying. Even though there's another word for grave, it seems to be that. Because we have people who, like Jacob, mention going to Sheol, and we don't really want to think of him as being in something that's commensurate with hell.

Having said that, in the poetic passages, I'm going longer than I thought I would, but I'll just do this fast. In the poetic passages, you have it used to represent the grave, just as what I've just said, but there are a few other places where it seems like it's talking about something else, and Isaiah chapter 14 is one of those key places where you have spirits of the dead who are restless in Sheol, and it doesn't sound like it's a very nice place to be. It shows up in the book of Job, too.

That's my short answer. There's a much longer one. That's a great question.

That's the best I can do for you right now. It's a great question. I think David is simply saying here, let him die, or deal with him so he dies.

Where was I? I can't remember. Oh yes, Adonijah. We've dealt with Adonijah.

As a result of this particular request that he makes for Abishag, he is transgressing into very significant territory. By the way, let me just back up a little bit. When Solomon and Bathsheba have this interaction over, if I can find it here, in chapter 1, verse 21, I'm sorry, I don't mean Solomon.

I mean David. David and Bathsheba are talking about what's forthcoming. Bathsheba says to David, you need to do something about this. Otherwise, as soon as you, she calls him my lord the king, is laid to rest with his fathers, my son Solomon and I will be treated as criminals, which means that Adonijah would get rid of Solomon and probably everybody else, too, that posed any kind of a potential threat to Adonijah's kingdom.

We're going to see this as the historical books continue to unfold, that when somebody becomes king, and the circumstances aren't really very nice or good, that somebody will often wipe out all the opposition, just like that, sweeping them out of the way as if with a broom. That's what Bathsheba is terribly afraid that Adonijah would do to Solomon. It probably would have happened.

For Solomon to actually give Adonijah a bit of a chance and then Adonijah transgresses this by saying, give me Abishag, you can see how that's all beginning to

unfold. Well, that moves us back to Solomon's prayer for wisdom. And notice, by the way, that Solomon's already wise.

That's why I read you a couple of those things that David says to him, where he says, you are a man of wisdom. You are a man of wisdom. Solomon's got enough brains to know that he needs a whole lot more wisdom.

And notice what he says. I'm in chapter 3. He goes to Gibeon, where they're sacrificing. It's where the tabernacle seems to have been at that point.

And he says, verse 9 of chapter 3, Lord, give your servant a heart that hears. I've translated the NIV's discerning heart more literally. It's a heart that hears and is kind of bound up in that hearing is obeying.

The Hebrew word for hear often has connotations of obedience as well. Give your servant an obedient heart to govern your people and to distinguish between what is right and wrong, for who's able to govern this great person? So, Solomon knows to ask for wisdom.

He focuses his request on a particular area, and it's that area of help! I don't know how to govern this people. Now we're going to see that in that area, he's really very smart. In fact, the very next section of chapter 3 gives us a test case to illustrate how wise Solomon is.

The two women come to him, the child dead, and so forth. You see Solomon's wisdom in terms of governance and in terms of making judicial decisions. Where he's not so wise, it seems his prayer didn't necessarily cover his personal life because he makes some very abysmal choices in that way that we're going to be looking at a little bit later on.

His prayer for wisdom, in terms of governing the people, is one that God, in his mercy and grace, answers, and also, as the Lord says, will give him the wealth and the security and all those good things that go along with that. Well, this gets us to what I've sort of simplistically labeled geopolitics because we learn some things about what happens with Solomon, but we need to keep in mind what Deuteronomy 17 said about kings. Does anybody remember some of the key issues that show up in that particular passage? I'll read it in a minute.

Yes. The king needs to write himself a copy of the law, and he needs to have it in a place where he's going to read it. Good.

What else is the king responsible to do or not do? Yeah, Trevor. You're cheating. Cheat.

Cheat and read it for us. Yeah, let me do that one. Not many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away.

If you've read the material for today, you know that Solomon has really transgressed that. Right, and we learn that silver and gold are, I mean, silver is so much of it, you don't even count it anymore in Solomon's reign. There's lots and lots and lots of wealth, and they're not supposed to acquire horses.

As you notice, Solomon does that, too, and even tells us where some of them and the chariots come from. Solomon is pushing the edge in some of this stuff. Of course, I think we can read between the lines, and guess why? He's becoming powerful.

We're going to look at a map in a moment to show the extent of his kingdom. In becoming powerful, as I said earlier, political alliances need to be made. Women were political capital, whether we like it or not, that is one of the things that happened.

So, Solomon will cement his political relationships by getting wives from these various small little kingdoms, and very small kingdoms could probably be in quotation marks. He's also going to build up the kinds of things that he has that are marks of political success. Horses, chariots, sort of the equivalent of having all the arsenal that the Pentagon oversees in our particular context.

And he's going to make lots and lots of money. How does he make his money? Well, look at it this way. He's got, here's where the geography comes back to haunt us, he's got the international coastal highway going through his reign, his kingdom.

He doesn't just let it go through. He's probably taxing left and right. As stuff goes along there, caravans and so forth, he's got some major cities, Megiddo, Hazor, Gezer, I'm going to talk about in a moment.

And so, he's able to affect some taxes on all this merchandise moving back and forth. He's also able to grab tribute, probably shouldn't use the term grab, exact tribute from the people that are coming under his reign and his expanded kingdom. So, the wealth is coming in from those particular sources.

And Solomon is becoming someone who probably is succumbing, I shouldn't even say probably, is succumbing to the temptations that hit anybody when they get into a position of power. If you don't know how to pray for your national leaders, maybe you don't like them, I don't know. If you don't know how to pray for them, pray that they will not succumb to the horrors that accompany pride.

You saw it as you did the essay question on Saul that it affects anybody in any kind of position that has leadership and power. Pride is a horrendous thing. And it rises really easily.

And I would suggest Solomon is going in that direction, right along with others. Well, there is Pete, yeah, I'm sorry, Rebecca. Yeah, good question.

Why is it that if the acquired wealth is bad, going back to Deuteronomy 17, then why does the Lord say, I'll give you wealth? Well, you know, there's going to be a good answer; this is my answer; you can take it or leave it. You know, God is blessing him in the position that he has. And he's saying, I'll give you wealth.

When the wealth seems to become your focus, that's when it becomes a problem. And we learn that Solomon did indeed exact tribute, you know, and he puts labor, conscripted labor to work to do some of his building projects. So, there's always going to be a tipping point with wealth, and how you use it.

You know, thank the Lord for people who are wealthy, whom God has blessed, and they use that wealth for good things. When it gets used for other kinds of things, and I'm not even going to go in the direction of our current economic situation, greed comes in there, and then it goes a whole different direction. So, it can have both good and bad valences to it.

Peace in the expanded kingdom. You've got a lovely little expression here. In chapter 4, verse 21, Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the river to the land of the Philistines as far as the border of Egypt. They brought tribute, they're Solomon's subjects.

In verse 25, it says that during Solomon's lifetime, everybody lived in safety, each man under his own vine and fig tree. That's a figure for saying things are safe, living under your vine and your fig tree. Nobody's ravaging your crops.

Do you remember when we talked about the book of Judges, and Gideon had to thresh his grain in a little wine press because of the Midianites? Well, that's not the problem now. You're just living with the produce and all your economic resources, and you're secure with them. It's a good thing.

International trade relations. All these chapters, all these chapters, all two of them, are talking about the kinds of trade establishments that Solomon has, and of course, the high point is the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, and the fact that she can come and test him with hard questions, and he answers them. They have a very interesting exchange back and forth, and a lot of wealth goes back and forth in that context as well.

Going back to 1 Kings 3, it says Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and married his daughter. Now, of course, as I said a moment ago, that's going to be kind of the paradigm example of what he does with lots of other things. He brings her to the city of David.

Now, if you skip over to chapter 9, I think it is. We see a little bit more about this. In verse 16, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had attacked and captured Gezer. Do you remember where Gezer is on the map? We're going to get back to it in a moment.

I'm going to show you the map. It is one of those three cities. Let's just get the next thing out here.

It's one of those three cities, verse 15 of this very chapter that I'm reading, that it says Solomon is going to fortify because it's on, guess what? The international trade route. Everything that's going through Israel goes past Gezer, goes past Megiddo, goes past Hazor. Solomon fortified those cities and made them major cities that were probably store cities as well as places where he kept his little arsenal of horses and chariots.

Now, having said that, here's how Solomon gets Gezer. It's sort of interesting. Verse 16, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had attacked and captured Gezer.

He set it on fire. He killed its Canaanite inhabitants. Israel hadn't had it up until this point.

And then he gave it as a wedding gift to his daughter, Solomon's wife, and you're thinking, what kind of a wedding gift is that? A burned-up city? Give me a break. Couldn't he have given her something better? But this is actually a good present. In fact, it's a perfect present.

Because what Solomon can do is start from ground zero and build exactly what he wants in that context. And he's going to build a major fortified city there. For reasons that I'm going to point out on the map in a moment, this is also very wise and very strategic on his part.

So, he gets a burned-out city and you're thinking, nothing. No, it's everything. He's got a free plan, ready to go.

Well, as I've also said, he conscripts lots of people to be stone cutters and water carriers and all that kind of thing. So, we see some of the somewhat negative sides of this. Here is a map.

And let's see if we can find what we need to find on here. The shaded area, for those of you in back who may be having trouble seeing this, is now Solomon's reign. His reign.

His kingdom. Going all the way down here, all the way down to the north end of the Gulf of Eilat or Aqaba, coming up, taking in Transjordan, all those areas. Way up here, even touching the Euphrates River.

So, he's gotten an awful lot of stuff. And again, keep in mind, not big kingdoms. Little kingdom-itis, if you will, are part of this.

And that's going to be part of, I know, that's not in the dictionary. If we use it enough, we can get it entered into Wikipedia, and then we can write an article on it. Right? Yeah, right.

Okay, so here's the thing to think about. A little bit hard to see this on here, but Gezer is right there. Okay? International Coastal Highway's going to run right through the land.

There it is, Gezer. Where's Megiddo? Megiddo's right here. Again, on the International Coastal Highway.

Where's Hazor? It's right there. So, all traffic that's going to run from Mesopotamia, down through this area down to Egypt, going past those three cities. Can't avoid it.

So, Solomon's pretty smart in what he's doing. Well, that's kind of geopolitics, and we talk a little bit about wealth and so forth and so on, and the wives come into that context as well.

Worship is our next W, and we need to spend just a little bit of time talking about worship and where Solomon does what he does in terms of building things.

But let me just kind of refresh our memories of City of David stuff and what happened in terms of Solomon's accession to the throne. You may recall from previous discussions this little area right here is the City of David. That's it.

Ten, eleven acres, something like that. It's not big, but it's important because here's the Gihon Spring right down here. And that's, of course, where Solomon gets himself proclaimed king, and they arrange that whole thing.

David's palace area would have been right up in this area, but no temple yet. As Solomon builds the temple, he's going to expand up onto the higher region up here. Elevation difference, for those of you who just love trivia for the day, coming from this area right down to the bottom of the City of David is about 350 feet.

So, you're looking up as you're looking up at this section right here. We talked about that when we talked about the psalms on Monday. So, this will be the area where Solomon will build his temple in this general thing.

Under our dome of the rock, see if we can get that to go. Under the dome of the rock right now is bedrock. You can actually see bedrock in that context. Another little place where bedrock shows up right about here.

But most of this is a huge, huge temple platform built by Herod the Great. In New Testament you probably did look at these kinds of things in the New Testament. We've got City of David, we've got the Kidron Valley right over here, of course, and the Gihon Spring and the temple.

Deuteronomy 12, kind of backing up a little bit, when Moses is addressing the people in Deuteronomy, he says, when the time comes, you are to bring your sacrifices, you are to come on these pilgrim festivals to the place where I will choose to put my name. It doesn't name it Jerusalem; it's the place where God will choose to put his name, and that will be Jerusalem. So, fulfillment of Deuteronomy 12.

Talk a little bit about the temple itself. As you read this stuff, one of the things that probably struck you was how much bigger all this is than the tabernacle. Tabernacle was God's condescension in mercy, tenting right along with his people.

The people were tending their way through Sinai, and God tents his way right along with them. Now that they're stationary, now that they've got a kingdom, now we're going to build a temple. And don't think for a moment it's not like some of the other nations round about.

They had temples too, and oftentimes the structure is similar. But let's get some of the purposes down pat first. This will be a central place of worship.

Now, when we talked about the tabernacle, our key thing was it was going to represent God's dwelling in their midst. Because they were a smaller group of people, they were making their way through Sinai, they were mobile, and God was with them. Here, of course, they've got a land, the various tribes have been apportioned all over the land, and so it's not so much God's still dwelling there, don't get me wrong, but the people are more spread.

Now they need to come on pilgrim festivals. What are our three pilgrim festivals? Tabernacles, Passover, spit out the last one, Feast of Weeks, right, got them, good. By the way, I've got to tell you, this is a total tangent, are you ready for a total tangent? There's a wonderful rabbinic proverb, wonderful rabbinic proverb, and it runs like this.

He, because the rabbis were talking to he's who studied, he who studies Torah and forgets what he has studied is like a woman who gives birth to a child and goes out and buries it. Do you like that? It's rather graphic, isn't it? Because giving birth to a child is a painful process. It's a lot of work.

No one in her right mind, after going through all that pain and anguish, is going to go out and bury your kid. But forgetting what you've studied, because you put lots of work into it, don't forget it. Because all that pain and anguish of studying is then just gone, it's not worth it.

So, remember our wonderful rabbinic proverb, and realize that as we're talking about history, we need to recall what's in, believe it or not, Torah. I'll say this again when we get to our prophets. Alright, that is our tangent.

The central place of worship is where people are going to come to pilgrim festivals to worship God, and all those things that apply to those pilgrim festivals are going to be things that are important now. It's also representative of sacred space. And in some ways, actually does give us a sense of presence of God.

Now, we've said that already, but we're going to see it even more dramatically in Chronicles. I won't read these passages because I'm kind of looking at the time right now, but Chronicles, unlike Kings, does something else, and that is to emphasize the presence of God even more. So, you have, in chapter 5, this cloud of glory.

Now, it shows up in Kings, but not quite so immediately, not quite so compellingly. Then, the fire descends from heaven, so it's sacred space. It's also designed to be in some way that is very simplified, of course, and I'll use the term crude not in a bad way, but in a saying that is a rough way, a very rugged way, a reflection of God's dwelling in heaven.

And I do really want to look at these passages because they're significant. 1 Chronicles 28 1st. Part of David's plans for the temple, as you may remember, and notice, by the way, that as I said, verse 12 of 1 Chronicles 28 says, David gave Solomon the plans of all the spirit had put in his mind.

I mentioned that earlier. And now, of course, in verse 18, we have the thing I'm getting at here. He gave him the plan for the chariot.

That is the cherubim of gold that spread their wings and shelter the ark of the covenant of the Lord. Well, what's this chariot and cherubim all about? We've seen cherubim before, but now let's look at Ezekiel chapter 1. Again, not going to spend a lot of time here, but just sort of a prelude to what we do when we actually do Ezekiel. In chapter 1, Ezekiel has a remarkable vision.



And, of course, it's these four creatures. And it says in verse 5, four living creatures. The form was like a man.

Each had four faces and four wings. Legs were straight, feet like those of a calf. Hold that.

Gleaned with burnished bronze. Under their wings, on four sides, they had the hands of a man. Faces and wings and wings touch each other.

And then if you look down a little further on, if I can see it here, verse 15, wheels as well. So as Ezekiel is allowed to see into heaven, he's seeing something that has wheels. There are eyes all over the wheels.

And it's this again, in words that can be articulated in some very simplified, rough way, that represents vision into heaven, I would suggest. We're seeing something that's called the chariot. When you read the Psalms, it talks about God's chariot and wheels bearing him along.

Also, when the Israelites crossed the Sea of Reeds, there was mention of a chariot there, too. So, something about God's presence has some of those features to it. And please keep in mind that it is put in terms that our very simple, finite minds can understand and that our language system can accommodate.

Yet what's being made to put into the temple courtyard has features that are representative in a very simple way of things in heaven. And you're immediately thinking, or at least you should be, I thought they weren't supposed to do that. Second Commandment, right? These are not idols for worship.

These are things that God has said to represent symbolically what's going on in the heavenly realms. And I'll show you a picture in a moment, or sorry, a representation in a moment. Hebrews chapter 8 and chapter 9 also, I think these are passages we've already talked about, talk about the things that are in the temple being shadows and copies, very imperfect copies, of what we have in the heavenly realms.

Well, to be very mundane after all that commentary, this is also the storage place for the nation's wealth, and it makes perfect sense. If you've got a people who at least should protect more than anything else their sacred symbols, the Ark of the Covenant being, of course, central to this, then that's going to be in a place where they're going to guard it with their very lives. Why not put the nation's wealth there as well? And so the temple will indeed become a place for the storage of wealth.

Lots and lots and lots of gold and valuable items associated with the temple. Well, the design and the furnishings are very similar to what we see with the tabernacle, except multiplied. For example, instead of one table for showbread, you've got ten.

And instead of one lampstand, you have ten. And things are just plain bigger. Let's see what some of this looks like from a very simplified model.

This is one that was made in the UK, I think, about 25-30 years ago. But it gives us a little bit of a look at it. Notice we have two large pillars.

Joachim and Boaz are pillars that are set up on either side of the entrance to the temple. There is something that's a little bit askew in this if I'm reading my text correctly. Because I think, as I read the text correctly, the altar's width is as long as the temple is wide.

And this looks a little bit smaller. But at any rate, it's not a problem there. We're going to zero in on this thing.

That's what I'm really interested in. You've got the laver, don't you? Or the wash basin, or whatever you want to call it. It's the place where, holding water, the sea, some of it's called the sea, for washing and for cleansing.

And here we've got bulls, or bovine creatures, underneath it. Now, isn't that fascinating? Let me just throw another little piece of later literature into this. When the Apostle John has his view into heaven in chapter 4 of Revelation, what does he see? We sing about it in, I think it's Holy, Holy, Holy.

He sees a glassy sea, a big sea, a big expanse. Well, that's a reflection of Ezekiel, at the end of chapter 1, who also sees a huge expanse, and above the expanse is the throne of God. What's under the expanse? Those cherubim.

Isn't that interesting? So, in some way, we're seeing this broad expanse of heavens, the sea, whatever you want to call it, being borne up by cherubim. And here, it becomes symbolic of cleansing to come into the presence of God. You wash in this water before you go to the throne room.

And the temple is the throne room of God, just as in those visions you go past those cherubim who are protections. They're guardians of the throne room. You go past those and into the very presence of God.

Now, lots more we could say about this. In ancient Near Eastern temples, you do have, and I should have included a picture, and of course, I forgot to do it, but these huge temples from areas of Mesopotamia, particularly Assyrian temples, would have

absolutely mammoth creatures. Stone, made out of stone, standing on either side of the entrance to the temple.

They were winged creatures. And they look a whole lot cherubim. They look a lot like what might have been guarding the temple here as well.

Well, going inside again, noticing we've got multiple lampstands here, not just one. This is the holy place, as we had in the tabernacle, but now it's a stationary, static building. And then, of course, our most holy place, Ark of the Covenant, and these very huge representations again, cherubim, guarding the throne of God.

But keep in mind, it is not totally foreign or divorced from what the wider cultural context is because, as I just said, you have in the wider culture these great stone creatures guarding kings' throne rooms, too. So here the statement is: God is king, and he's the ultimate king. He's the ultimate king.

Well, from the entrance, courtyard, altar, and labor, I think that's it. A couple things we need to say with regard to how the Levites functioned. What was their major, well, what was one of their major functions when the tabernacle was in operation? What did the Levites do? They took care of it, and you can go even further than that, think tabernacle, think tent, think moving.

They're the ones who were responsible for packing it up, carrying it, setting it up, etc. Now, of course, once you've got a temple, they're not going to be doing that, are they? That's not their function. But they do have some very significant things.

All along, Levites and priests were supposed to be teachers, but now we have some other things that they're doing. They serve as gatekeepers. In some ways, a development and continuation of what they'd been doing before, because you'll remember that the Levitical families were stationed right around the tabernacle area.

Now, they're gatekeepers at the temple. This is an interesting one. They're musicians, temple musicians.

Of course, Chronicles does have a lot to say about this. Music and prophesying often go together. When we get to Elisha, we're going to see that again.

You have a linkage of the Levites providing music for the oracular presentation, in some way, of God's words. The other thing that I want to just harp on a little bit here. Oh, bad pun.

Sorry about that. Harp, music, blah, blah, blah. The other thing I would like to harangue you about is their music is excellent.

Did you read this stuff? These are trained musicians. What they do in the temple context is excellent. The text makes it very clear to let us know that.

They're not wandering on in there and strumming away and saying, I'm making a joyful noise to God. Hey, ho. There's a place for that, but not in the worship context.

Have I harped enough? Let's go on. They're also in charge of the treasuries. That's significant.

It's a responsibility. These things can't be abused. They serve as officials.

They serve as judges. We've seen little vestiges of that, or I should say hints towards that already when we were reading Deuteronomy. I was talking about bringing cases before the Lord.

Part of that is going to be functions of Levites, both in their individual towns, I would suggest, and possibly in Jerusalem proper. Well, the dedication of this takes place on the Feast of Tabernacles. It doesn't say Feast of Tabernacles, but it says in the Feast in the seventh month, so we can deduce that.

Solomon's prayer is a wonderful one, which I'm not going to read to you, but I want to just have you make sure you highlight these things. He is always promising. He's going to go back and reflect on God's previous promises, which, by the way, is a tremendous model for prayer, if you'd like it, to reflect on God's previous promises and where we stand at a given point in time in relationship to those promises and our thankfulness for those promises and for God's faithfulness.

It's not a bad idea. He also makes it clear that this is intended to be the dwelling place for God's name, and we don't want to lose sight of the fact that the name is powerful. That's why there's such a commandment against lifting up the name of the Lord to emptiness.

The name is important. Name is powerful. But then going on, most of the prayer focuses on what will happen if people are disobedient.

If, for example, they're disobedient, the rain might cease. If they turn and come to this temple and pray, then may God restore them. If they're disobedient and they get taken off into captivity, but they return and repent, they turn towards this place and pray, and God will restore them.

It goes through a number of those covenant curses that we saw when we read Leviticus 26 as well as Deuteronomy 27 and 28. So Solomon's prayer isn't just off the top of his head somewhere. He's praying based on the covenant.

Both the covenant with David and the covenant from Sinai. That's important. The dedication ceremony was a remarkable time, with lots of sacrifices being offered.

By the way, they're not just offering these sacrifices as all wholesale slaughter. There's a whole bunch of people there, and they're participating by eating part of the fellowship offerings. That's what's going on in that context.

As you know, the presence of God manifests itself dramatically, and then we have God's response, which is longer than this, but this is one of the passages that I think you know. Perhaps you've memorized this in some context or other. It's coming as God's further response to Solomon's prayer, and of course, it's a beautiful statement, one that, if you haven't memorized yet, it might be nice to memorize.

I see that I've got it sort of faded right into the red fabric there. But even after Solomon's prayer, you know, when things go bad, God says, if my people will humble themselves, pray, seek my face, turn from their wicked ways. You know, there's some criteria here.

Humble, pray, seek God, turn away repentance, then God will indeed restore us. So, it's something to keep in mind, and it certainly was important as this temple dedication is brought to a close. Now, that's sort of the good stuff.

Solomon comes to the end of his reign, and as I said earlier, this is the stuff that's not in Chronicles because this is a little bit sordid, maybe not as fun to read, but just as the closure of David's reign brought us in preparation to see the temple being built in Solomon, now we're going to see preparation, whether we like it or not, for the split in the kingdom. Solomon's made lots of political alliances. Verse 11, sorry, verse 1 of chapter 11, loved many foreign women, and that love, by the way, is talking about this political alliance stuff, marries them, says he held fast to them in love, had 700 wives of royal birth, again noting that connection, 300 concubines, and his wives led him astray, so that he turns to idolatry, and it talks in verse 5 of all the various gods and goddesses and points of idolatry.

The Lord's not really happy with this, so God is going to say in two different places that something's going to happen. First of all, the Lord says to Solomon, chapter 11, verse 11, since you've not kept my covenant, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates. I'll leave you one tribe because of David, but the kingdom is going to be torn away.

Adversaries come up, and I've noted the three major ones here. Edom had been under Solomon's control. Well, that fractures a little bit, and this Edomite leader is leading things.

Aram, that area that's the buffer zone between Israel and Mesopotamia proper, Syria has some fracturing. And then we have our major person, Jeroboam, son of Nebat. Verse 26, chapter 11, he rebelled against the king.

We don't know what that rebellion consists of. It doesn't tell us. But what's happening in the next couple of verses is our second notice that God has determined.

Do you remember these things of God sort of making things certain by means of two different statements? We've seen two different statements over and over again. Most recently, Saul got the kingdom but lost it. Now we've got it with Solomon.

God is going to inform him in two different ways. The kingdom is going to be gone. The first one is to Solomon directly.

The second one informs us. Verse 29, Jeroboam is going out of Jerusalem. Ahijah, who's a prophet from Shiloh.

Shiloh's got some important connections, doesn't it? He meets him and he says, my goodness, verse 30, here's a new cloak. Tears it in 12 pieces. And then he says, take 10.

Those 10 are going to be yours. Because the God of Israel says, I'm going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon's hand and give you 10 tribes. You being Jeroboam here.

One tribe will be preserved. So, we've got two different intimations that Solomon is going to lose the kingdom. Well, the tragedy is he doesn't turn from his ways.

And so, after 40 years he dies. Before we pick up with a divided kingdom, we're going to take another detour. The detour is going to be into wisdom literature because three of the four books that are considered wisdom books are associated with Solomon.

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs. And then in that context, we're also going to do Job. So starting next week, we are going to be moving into wisdom literature for a while.

And then we'll pick up the divided kingdom. In the meantime, Shabbat Shalom. Have a splendid weekend.

It's spring out there.