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Volume 3 -
1 Kings
By A. Fuller

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1 KINGS

INTRODUCTION TO 1 AND 2 KINGS

The Greek translators, known as the Septuagint, who separated the “Book of the Law of Moses” into five parts, and the “Book of Samuel” into two, made the division, which is now almost universally adopted, of the original “Book of Kings” into a “First” and a “Second Book.” The separation thus made was followed naturally in the early Latin versions, which were formed from the Greek; and when Jerome set forth the edition now called “The Vulgate,” he followed the custom which he found established. The general adoption of the Vulgate by the Western Church caused the arrangement introduced by the Septuagint to obtain almost universal acceptance.

The work is named from its contents, since the entire subject of the whole is the history of the “kings” of Israel and Judah from the accession of Solomon to the Babylonian captivity.

1. The unity of the work is proved by the marked and striking simplicity and regularity of the plan. The work is, from first to last a history of the kings in strict chronological order, on the same system, and on a uniform scale. Exceptions to this uniformity in the larger space bestowed on the reigns of a few monarchs are due to the principle of treating with the greatest fullness the parts of the history theocratically of most importance.

(As Solomon (1 Kings 1—11), Jeroboam (^{<1125>}1 Kings 12:25—14:20), Ahab (^{<1169>}1 Kings 16:29—22:40), Jehoram (2 Kings 3—9:26), Hezekiah (2 Kings 18—20), and Josiah (2 Kings 22; 23).)

A second evidence of unity is the general uniformity of style and language — a uniformity admitted by all writers, and one which is only slightly infringed in two or three instances, where the irregularity may be accounted for by a diversity in the sources used by the author and a close following of the language which he found in those sources.

(In the first chapter of the First Book of Kings, peculiarities of diction occur which connect it with the Books of Samuel, and are

sufficiently explained by the supposition that in this part of his work the author of the Books of Kings drew from a source which had been used also by the author of Samuel. The narratives in ^{<1204>}2 Kings 4:1-37, and ^{<1205>}2 Kings 8:1-6, contain some remarkable Aramaic forms, which have been regarded as evidences of late composition, but which are, it is probable, provincialisms — peculiarities of an Israelite author contemporary (or nearly so) with Elisha, whose words the compiler of Kings preserved unaltered.)

To these general heads of evidence may be added certain peculiarities of thought or expression which pervade the two books, all of them indicating with greater or less certainty a single author.

(The formulae which introduce and close the reign of almost every king, or which describe the ordinary sinfulness of the Israelite monarchs; others are less palpable and evident, and therefore, the more thoroughly to be relied upon: such as the habit of express allusion to the Law of Moses (^{<1206>}1 Kings 2:3; 6:12, etc.; ^{<1207>}2 Kings 10:31; 11:12, etc.); the perpetual reference to God's choice of David and of Jerusalem (^{<1208>}1 Kings 8:16,29; 9:3, etc.; 2 Kings 20; 21:4); the constant use of the phrase "man of God," (which occurs in Kings at least fifty-three times, and in twelve distinct chapters. In Samuel it is used about five times in two chapters. In Chronicles it is used six times — in four chapters); the habit of frequently prefixing the word "king" to the names of monarchs; and the like.)

2. Some have thought from the continuity of the narrative, from the general resemblance of the style, and from the common employment of a certain number of words and phrases, that the six "books," commencing with Judges and terminating with the Second Book of Kings, are the production of a single writer, and constitute in reality a single unbroken composition. Others consider these arguments far from conclusive. The continuity of the narrative is formal, and may be due to the after arrangements of a reviser, such as Ezra is commonly believed to have been.

So far as the mere idiom of the language goes, it is perhaps true that we cannot draw a marked line between Kings and Samuel. But many of the traits most characteristic of the writer of Kings are wholly wanting in the other (and probably earlier) composition. For these and other reasons the "Books of Kings" may claim distinctness and separateness.

(References to the Book of the Law, so constant in Kings, nowhere occur in Samuel. Samuel is incomplete and vague in respect of dates, which in Kings are given with extraordinary precision. The author of Samuel nowhere makes any mention of his sources, while the author of Kings is constantly alluding to his. The favorite usages of the writer of Kings, such as his employment of the phrase “man of God,” and his habit of prefixing the word “king” to the names of monarchs, although not absolutely unknown to the writer of Samuel, are with him comparatively rare and unfamiliar. Each character who is brought upon the scene, however familiar to one acquainted with Samuel, is given a descriptive epithet, such as, “the prophet,” “the priest,” “the son of,” etc., as if previously unknown, when first introduced.)

3. There are two grounds upon which, apart from all traditional notices, the date of a historical work may be determined, namely, the peculiarities of the diction, and the contents.

The language of Kings belongs unmistakably to the period of the captivity. It is later than that of Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Joel, and Nahum, earlier than that of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah.

(The words and phrases which have been thought to indicate a later date than the time of the captivity can be shown, in almost every instance, to have been in use during that time, or even previously.)

In general character it bears a close resemblance to the language of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; and may be assigned to the sixth century before our era.

The result obtainable from the contents is similar, only somewhat more definite. Assuming the last detached section of the work (¹²⁵⁷2 Kings 25:27-30) to be an integral portion of it, we obtain the year 561 B.C. — the first year of Evil-Merodach — as the earliest possible date of the completion of the composition.

(The rest of the work may have been written as early as 580 B.C., and the section in question may have been added afterward.)

Again, from the fact that the work contains no allusion at all to the return of the Jews from their captivity, we obtain for the latest possible date the year 538 B.C., the year of the return under Zerubbabel: or in other words

between the death of Nebuchadnezzar and the accession of Cyrus in Babylon. Linguistic and other considerations favor the belief that the actual completion was early in this period — about 560 B.C.; and it is not improbable that the greater part of the work was written as early as 580 B.C. — i.e. some twenty years previously.

4. Jewish tradition assigns the authorship of Kings to Jeremiah; and there are very weighty arguments in favor of this view. There is a very remarkable affinity between the language of Kings and that of the admitted writings of the prophet.

(Compare ^{<1274>}2 Kings 17:14 and ^{<2076>}Jeremiah 7:26; ^{<1275>}2 Kings 17:15 and ^{<2415>}Jeremiah 2:5; ^{<1085>}1 Kings 8:25 and ^{<2437>}Jeremiah 33:17; ^{<1212>}2 Kings 21:12 and ^{<2493>}Jeremiah 19:3; ^{<1227>}2 Kings 22:17 and ^{<2472>}Jeremiah 7:20, etc.)

The matter moreover, of the two works, so far as the same events are treated, is in the closest harmony, those points being especially singled out for insertion, of which Jeremiah had personal knowledge and in which he took a special interest. Another argument of very considerable force is drawn from the entire omission of any notice at all of Jeremiah in Kings, which would have been very strange and unnatural in any other historian, considering the important part which Jeremiah played in the transactions of so many reigns, but which is completely intelligible on the hypothesis of his authorship of Kings: it is then the natural fruit and sign of a becoming modesty and unselfishness.

(Compare ^{<1234>}2 Kings 23:34 with ^{<2422>}Jeremiah 22:12; ^{<1230>}2 Kings 24:1 with ^{<2420>}Jeremiah 25:1-9; ^{<1247>}2 Kings 24:7 with ^{<2442>}Jeremiah 46:2-12; ^{<1250>}2 Kings 25:1-12 with ^{<2490>}Jeremiah 39:1-10, etc.)

Still, though Jeremiah's authorship appears, all things considered, to be highly probable, we must admit that it has not been proved, and is therefore to some extent uncertain.

5. The author of Kings cites as authorities on the subject matter of his history three works:

(1) the “book of the acts of Solomon” (^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:41);

(2) the “book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel” (^{<1149>}1 Kings 14:19, etc.); and

(3) the “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah” (^{<1149>}1 Kings 14:29, etc.).

His own history was, at least in part, derived from these works. Lesser works were also open to him.

(Such as the following: “The Chronicles of King David” (^{<13724>}1 Chronicles 27:24), “The Acts of Samuel the Seer,” “The Acts of Nathan the prophet,” “The Acts of Gad the Seer” (^{<1329>}1 Chronicles 29:29), “The Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite,” “The Visions of Iddo the Seer against Jeroboam the Son of Nebat” (^{<14029>}2 Chronicles 9:29), “The Acts of Shemaiah the prophet,” “Iddo the Seer on Genealogies” (^{<14125>}2 Chronicles 12:15), “The Commentary of the prophet Iddo” (^{<14132>}2 Chronicles 13:22), and the like.)

Further, the writer had probably access to a work of a different character from any of those quoted by the author of Chronicles, namely, a collection of the miracles of Elisha, made probably in one of the schools of the prophets.

Hence, the sources of Kings may be considered threefold, consisting, first, of certain general historical documents called the “Books of the Chronicles of the Kings;” secondly, of some special treatises on the history of particular short periods; and, thirdly, of a single work of a very peculiar character, the private biography of a remarkable man.

The “books of the chronicles of the kings” were probably of the nature of public archives, (See ^{<17023>}Esther 2:23; 6:1; 10:2.) — state-annals, that is, containing an account of the chief public events in the reign of each king, drawn up by an authorized person. With the Israelites the authorized person was probably in almost every case a prophet. The prophets regarded this as one of their principal duties, as we see by the examples of Isaiah (^{<14072>}2 Chronicles 26:22; Isaiah 36—38), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 39—43:7; 52), and Daniel (Daniel 1—6). At the close of every reign, if not even in its course, an addition was probably made to the “book of the chronicles of the kings” by the prophet who held the highest position at the period.

(Thus the “book of the acts of Solomon” was perhaps begun by Nathan, and was concluded either by Ahijah the Shilonite or by Iddo the Seer (^{<14029>}2 Chronicles 9:29). The “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah” was probably the work of Shemaiah (^{<14125>}2 Chronicles 12:15), Iddo (^{<14132>}2 Chronicles 13:22), Jehu the son of

Hanani (^{<1084>}2 Chronicles 20:34), Isaiah (^{<1072>}2 Chronicles 26:22), Jeremiah, and others of the prophetic order, each of whom wrote the history of the king or kings with whom he was himself contemporary. Similarly, with the “book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel,” Israelite prophets such as Ahijah, Micaiah the son of Imlah (^{<1218>}1 Kings 22:8), Elisha, and Jonah (^{<1245>}2 Kings 14:25), composed portions.)

But the prophets, in addition to these formal official writings, composed also historical works which were on a somewhat larger scale, and were especially more full in the account which they gave of religious matters. Compare for example, the difference between the prophetic monograph and the drier abstract of the “book of the chronicles,” contained in the historical chapters of Isaiah (Isaiah 36—39), and the parallel chapters of the Second Book of Kings (2 Kings 18—20). Compare also Jeremiah 39—44 with ^{<1231>}2 Kings 25:1-26. Further, comparing generally the history as given in Chronicles with the corresponding history in Kings, the author of Chronicles seems to have followed generally the separate works of the various prophetic writers: (See the introduction to Chronicles, and compare ^{<1329>}1 Chronicles 29:29; ^{<1409>}2 Chronicles 9:29; 12:15; 13:22, etc.) the author of Kings, mainly the official documents. In Chronicles nothing is more noticeable than the greater fullness of the religious history of Judah. (See particularly ^{<1321>}1 Chronicles 22:1-19; 28:1-21; 29:1-22; ^{<1408>}2 Chronicles 2:3-16; 13:4-18, etc.) This came chiefly from the several prophetic works, and marks a contrast between their character and the ordinary character of the state-annals.

The writer of Kings was mainly a compiler. He selected, arranged, and wove into a whole, the various narratives of earlier writers whereof he made use. This is evident, both from the retention of obsolete or provincial forms in particular narratives, and from the occurrence of a number of statements which were inappropriate at the time when the compiler wrote.

(Of this kind are the following:

1. The statement in ^{<1088>}1 Kings 8:8, that the staves of the ark continued where they were placed by Solomon.
2. The statement that the bondage of the Amorites, Hivites, etc., continued (^{<1021>}1 Kings 9:21).

3. The assertion that Israel was still in rebellion against the house of David (^{<1129>}1 Kings 12:19).
4. The declaration that Selah (Petra) kept the name of Joktheel, which Amaziah gave it (^{<247>}2 Kings 14:7).
5. The assignment of a preference over all other kings of Judah, previous and subsequent, both to Hezekiah (^{<285>}2 Kings 18:5) and to Josiah (^{<225>}2 Kings 23:25).

The close verbal agreement between ^{<285>}2 Kings 18:15—20:19, and Isaiah 36—39, can only have arisen from the writer's extracting without alteration Isaiah's account of the reign of Hezekiah as it occurred in the state-annals: and the verbal agreement between great part of Chronicles and Kings, is often best accounted for by supposing that the two writers made verbatim extracts from the same authority.

On the other hand the writer of Kings sometimes departed from the wording of his authors, and substituted expressions purely his own.

(The phrase "across the river" (^{<1024>}1 Kings 4:24) would not have been used to designate the tract west of the Euphrates by a Jew writing in Palestine in the reign of Solomon or Rehoboam. A contemporary of Jeroboam would not have spoken of "the cities of Samaria" (^{<1132>}1 Kings 13:32). The annals of Joash, son of Jehoahaz, did not, we may be sure, contain a statement that "God cast not Israel from his presence as yet" (^{<233>}2 Kings 13:23).)

And there are passages evidently original.

(Besides the "formulae" at the beginning and end of reigns, the same hand may be traced in ^{<270>}2 Kings 17:7-41; 21:7-16; 23:26,27; 24:3,4,6-20; 25:1-30.)

It is on these parts of the work that the argument in favor of Jeremiah's authorship especially rests.

6. Philologically speaking, the general condition of the text is good.

(Almost the only passages where the question of the true reading is of much importance are ^{<1125>}1 Kings 11:25, and ^{<266>}2 Kings 16:6, in both which cases it is suspected that "Edom," should be read for "Syria.")

But the historian has to lament an unsoundness, which, though affecting in no degree the religious character of the books, detracts from their value as documents wherein is contained an important portion of the world's civil history. The numbers, as they have come down to us in Kings, are untrustworthy, being in part self-contradictory, in part opposed to other Scriptural notices, in part improbable, if not even impossible.

(The date in ^{<1000>}1 Kings 6:1, contradicts the chronology of Judges and Samuel, as well as ^{<4130>}Acts 13:20; ^{<11421>}1 Kings 14:21, is at variance with 1 Kings 12. The accession of Jehoram is variously placed in ^{<1017>}2 Kings 1:17 and ^{<1200>}2 Kings 3:1; ^{<2150>}2 Kings 15:1 is irreconcilable with ^{<12423>}2 Kings 14:23; 17:1 with ^{<2150>}2 Kings 15:30, etc.)

(Thus Josiah (according to the present numbers) must have been born to Amon when the latter was sixteen, Jehoiakim to Josiah when Josiah was fourteen, and Hezekiah to Ahaz when Ahaz was only eleven! See ^{<12802>}2 Kings 18:2 note.)

The defect would seem to have arisen from two causes, one common to the Hebrew Scriptures, the other unique to these books. The common cause is corruption, partly from the fact that error in them is rarely checked by the context, partly from the circumstance that some system of abbreviated numerical notation has been adopted by professional scribes, and that the symbols employed by them have been mistaken one for another. The peculiar cause of error seems to have been insertions into the text of chronological notes originally made in the margin by a commentator.

(Abbreviated forms of numerical notation are exceedingly ancient, and appear to have prevailed in all the great Oriental monarchies, notably in Egypt and Babylonia. The Hebrews certainly employed letters for numbers, in the same way as they do at present, as early as the time of the Maccabees; and it is probable that they employed either this or some other method of abbreviation from a much earlier date, perhaps even from the time of the Exodus. The full expression of the numbers in the sacred text belongs probably to the Talmudical period of superstitious regard for the mere letter of Scripture — the time when the characters were counted, when central letters were determined, and the practice commenced of writing them large.)

The first date which occurs (~~1101~~ 1 Kings 6:1) seems to be a gloss of this character, and it may be suspected that to a similar origin is due the whole series of synchronisms between the dynasties of Israel and Judah. It is probable that the original work gave simply the years assigned to each king in the “books of the chronicles,” without entering upon the further question, in what regnal year of the contemporary monarch in the sister kingdom each prince ascended the throne. The chief difficulties of the chronology, and almost all the actual contradictions, disappear if we subtract from the work these portions.

(As for instance in ~~1102~~ 1 Kings 16:22,23: “So Tibni died, and Omri reigned. (In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah) Omri reigned over Israel twelve years.” Here the removal of the words in brackets would evidently improve the sense.)

Excepting in this respect, the Books of Kings have come down to us, as to all essentials, in a thoroughly sound condition. The only place where the Septuagint Version differs importantly from the Hebrew text is in 1 Kings 12, where a long passage concerning Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, not now found in the Hebrew, occurs between ~~1124~~ 1 Kings 12:24 and ~~1125~~ 1 Kings 12:25. But this passage is clearly no part of the original narrative. It is a story after the fashion of the apocryphal Esdras, worked up out of the Scripture facts, with additions, which the Alexandrian writer may have taken from some Jewish authority whereto he had access, but which certainly did not come from the writer of Kings. None of its facts except possibly a single one — the age, namely, of Rehoboam at his accession

(See the note at ~~1128~~ 1 Kings 12:8,10.) belongs to the real narrative of our historian.

7. The primary character of the work is undoubtedly historical. It is the main object of the writer to give an account of the kings of Israel and Judah from Solomon’s accession to the captivity of Zedekiah.

The history is, however, written — not, like most history, from a civil, but from a religious point of view. The Jews are regarded, not as an ordinary nation, but as God’s people. The historian does not aim at exhibiting the mere political progress of the kingdoms about which he writes, but intends to describe to us God’s treatment of the race with which he had entered into covenant. Where he records the events of the civil history, his plan is

to trace cut the fulfillment of the combined warning and promise which had been given to David (<1072>2 Samuel 7:12-16).

Hence, events, which an ordinary historian would have considered of great importance, may be (and are) omitted by our author from the narrative; or touched slightly and hastily.

(Thus he takes no notice at all of the expedition of Zerah the Ethiopian (<1449>2 Chronicles 14:9-15; 16:8); of Jehoshaphat's war with Moab, Ammon, and Edom (<1401>2 Chronicles 20:1-25); of Uzziah's successes against the Philistines (<1436>2 Chronicles 26:6-8); or of Manasseh's capture by the Assyrians (<1431>2 Chronicles 33:11-13). He treats with the utmost brevity the conquest of Jerusalem by Shishak (<1145>1 Kings 14:25,26), the war between Abijam and Jeroboam (<1157>1 Kings 15:7), that of Amaziah with Edom (<1247>2 Kings 14:7), and that of Josiah with Pharaoh-Nechoh (<1239>2 Kings 23:29); events treated at length in the parallel passages of the Book of Chronicles.)

As a general rule, the military history of the two kingdoms, which was no doubt carefully recorded in the "Books of the Chronicles," is omitted by the writer of Kings, who is content for the most part to refer his readers to the state-annals for the events which would have made the greatest figure in an ordinary secular history.

On the other hand, the special aim of the writer induces him to assign a prominent piece and to give a full treatment to events which a secular historian would have touched lightly or passed over in silence. The teaching of the prophets, and their miracles, were leading points in the religious history of the time; it was owing to them especially that the apostasy of the people was without excuse; therefore the historian who has to show that, despite the promises made to David, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the whole twelve tribes carried into captivity, must exhibit fully the grounds for this severity, and must consequently dwell on circumstances which so intensely aggravated the guilt of the people.

The character of the history that he has to relate, its general tendency and ultimate issue, naturally throw over his whole narrative an air of gloom. The tone of the work tires harmonises with that of Jeremiah's undoubted writings, and furnishes an additional argument in favor of that prophet's authorship.

The style of Kings is, for the most part, level and uniform — a simple narrative style. Occasionally, a more lofty tone is breathed, the style rising with the subject matter, and becoming in places almost poetical (^{<1191>}1 Kings 19:11,12; ^{<1292>}2 Kings 19:21-31). The most striking chapters are 1 Kings 8; 18; 19; 2 Kings 5; 9; 18; 19; 20.

8. The general authenticity of the narrative contained in our books is admitted. Little is denied or questioned but the miraculous portions of the story, which cluster chiefly about the persons of Elijah and Elisha. Some critics admitting that the narrative generally is derived from authentic contemporary documents — either state-annals or the writings of contemporary prophets — maintain that the histories of Elijah and Elisha come from an entirely different source, being (they hold) collections of traditions respecting those persons made many years after their deaths, either by the writer of Kings or by some other person, from the mouths of the common people. Hence, according to them, their “legendary” or “mythical” character.

But there are no critical grounds for separating off the account of Elijah, or more than a small portion of the account of Elisha, (^{<1301>}2 Kings 4:1-37, and ^{<1302>}2 Kings 8:1-6, form the exceptions to the general rule.) from the rest of the composition. The history of Elijah especially is so intertwined with that of the kingdom of Israel, and is altogether of so public a nature, that the “chronicles of the kings of Israel” would almost necessarily have contained an account of it; and an important part of the history of Elisha is of a similar character. Further, it is quite gratuitous to imagine that the account was not a contemporary one, or that it was left for a writer living long subsequently to collect into a volume the doings of these remarkable personages. The probability is quite the other way. As the prophets themselves were the historians of the time, it would be only natural that Elisha should collect the miracles and other remarkable deeds of Elijah; and that his own should be collected after his decease by some one of the “sons of the prophets.” Add to this that the miracles, as related, have all the air of descriptions derived from eye-witnesses, being full of such minute circumstantial detail as tradition cannot possibly preserve. The whole result would seem to be that (unless we reject miracles altogether as unworthy of belief on account of an “a priori” impossibility) the account of the two great Israelite prophets in Kings must be regarded as entitled to acceptance equally with the rest of the narrative.

Both internal consistency and probability, and also external testimony, strongly support the general authenticity of the secular history contained in Kings. The empire of Solomon is of a kind with which early Oriental history makes us familiar; it occurs exactly at a period when there was room for its creation owing to the simultaneous weakness of Egypt and Assyria; its rapid spread, and still more rapid contraction, are in harmony with our other records of Eastern dominion; its art and civilization resemble these known to have prevailed about the same time in neighboring countries. The contact of Judaea with Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, during the period covered by our books agrees with the Egyptian annals, and in some respects is most strikingly illustrated by the cuneiform inscriptions. Berosus, Manetho, Menander, Dius — the pagan historians of Babylon, Egypt, and Tyre — join with the monuments in the support which they furnish to our author's truthfulness and accuracy, as the comment appended to the text will prove abundantly.

Even the broader features of the chronology are both internally probable, and externally confirmed by the chronologies of other countries. The interval between the accession of Solomon and the captivity of Zedekiah is given as 433 1/2 years,

(This number is obtained by adding together the years of the kings of Judah. If parts of years are throughout counted as full years, this number is somewhat in excess. Clinton makes the actual time 429 years.)

which is divided among twenty-one monarchs, who belong to eighteen (or, excluding Jehoiachin, to seventeen) generations. This allows for each generation the very probable term of 25 1/2 years. During the portion of the history where the chronology is double, and where the chief internal difficulties occur, the divergence of the two schemes is but slight, amounting to no more than about twenty years in 240 or 250. Egyptian annals confirm approximately the Biblical dates for Shishak's invasion, and So's alliance. The Assyrian annals agree with the Hebrew in the date of the fall of Samaria, and in exhibiting Hazael and Jehu, Tiglath-Pileser and Ahaz, Sennacherib and Hezekiah, Esarhaddon and Manasseh, as contemporaries. The chronological difficulties, where such exist, do not at all exceed those with which every reader of profane historians is familiar, and which, in fact, pervade the whole of ancient chronology. They are partly to be accounted for by diversities in the mode of reckoning; while

occasionally no doubt they result from a corrupt reading, or from an unauthorized interpolation.

(In some systems, fractions of years are reckoned as years; in others, they are omitted altogether. In some, years are longer; in others, shorter than the true astronomical year. The differences which result from these causes mount up to something considerable in the course of centuries.)

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 1

1 Kings 1:1. *Now* Rather, “and.” The conjunction has here, probably, the same sort of connecting force which it has at the opening of Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, etc., and implies that the historian regards his work as a continuation of a preceding history.

King David The expression “king David,” instead of the simpler “David,” is characteristic of the writer of Kings. (See the introduction to the Book of Kings, notes 3, 4.) The phrase is comparatively rare in Chronicles and Samuel.

Stricken in, years David was perhaps now in his first year. He was thirty years old when he was made king in Hebron (~~1074~~ 2 Samuel 5:4); he reigned in Hebron seven years and six months (~~1071~~ 2 Samuel 2:11; ~~1070~~ 1 Chronicles 3:4); and he reigned thirty-three years at Jerusalem (~~1075~~ 2 Samuel 5:5). The expression had here been used only of persons above eighty (~~1081~~ Genesis 18:11; 24:1; ~~1630~~ Joshua 13:1; 23:1): but the Jews at this time were not long-lived. No Jewish monarch after David, excepting Solomon and Manasseh, exceeded sixty years.

Clothes Probably “bed-clothes.” The king was evidently bed-ridden (~~1047~~ 1 Kings 1:47).

1 Kings 1:2. Since the Jewish law allowed polygamy, David’s conduct in following — what has been said to have been — physician’s advice, was blameless.

1 Kings 1:5. The narrative concerning Abishag, the Shunammite (see the margin reference “a”), is introduced as necessary for a proper understanding of Adonijah’s later history (see ~~1023~~ 1 Kings 2:13-25.) But even as it stands, it heightens considerably the picture drawn of the poor king’s weak and helpless condition, of which Adonijah was not ashamed to take advantage for his own aggrandizement. Adonijah was born while David reigned at Hebron, and was therefore now between thirty-three and forty years of age. He was David’s fourth son, but had probably become the eldest by the death of his three older brothers. He claimed the crown by right of primogeniture (~~1025~~ 1 Kings 2:15), and secretly to his partisans (compare ~~1000~~ 1 Kings 1:10) announced his intention of assuming the

sovereignty. It was well known to him, and perhaps to the Jews generally, that David intended to make Solomon his successor (^{<1013>}1 Kings 1:13).

To run before him That is, he assumed the same quasi-royal state as Absalom had done, when he contemplated rebellion (^{<1051>}2 Samuel 15:1).

^{<1006>}**1 Kings 1:6.** *Had not displeased him* i.e. “His father had never checked or thwarted him all his life.”

A very goodly man Here, too, Adonijah resembled Absalom (^{<1045>}2 Samuel 14:25). The Jews, like the other nations of antiquity, regarded the physical qualities of rulers as of great importance, and wished their kings to be remarkable for strength, stature, and beauty (^{<0992>}1 Samuel 9:2). Adonijah’s personal advantages no doubt helped to draw the people to him.

His mother ... i.e. Haggith bare Adonijah after Maacah bare Absalom (^{<1003>}2 Samuel 3:3,4). The words in italics are not in the original; hence, some, by a slight alteration, read “David begat him.”

^{<1007>}**1 Kings 1:7.** Joab’s defection on this occasion, after his faithful adherence to David during the troubles caused by Absalom (^{<1082>}2 Samuel 18:2-17), may be accounted for by his fear that Solomon would be a “man of rest” (^{<1329>}1 Chronicles 22:9) and by his preference for the character of Adonijah. He may also have thought that Adonijah, as the eldest son (^{<1006>}1 Kings 1:5), had almost a right to succeed.

Abiathar’s defection is still more surprising than Joab’s. For his history, see ^{<1021>}1 Samuel 22:20 note. Hereto, David and he had been the firmest of friends. It has been conjectured that he had grown jealous of Zadok, and feared being supplanted by him.

^{<1008>}**1 Kings 1:8.** There is some difficulty in understanding how Zadok and Abiathar came to be both “priests” at this time, and in what relation they stood to one another. The best explanation seems to be that Abiathar was the real high priest, and officiated at the sanctuary containing the ark of the covenant in Zion, while Zadok performed the offices of chief priest at the tabernacle of Witness at Gibeon (^{<1363>}1 Chronicles 16:39).

For Benaiah, see ^{<1038>}2 Samuel 8:18; 20:23; 23:20,21. For Nathan, see ^{<1002>}2 Samuel 7:2,3,17; 12:1-15,25. As privy to all David’s plans (^{<1004>}1 Kings 1:24), he had no doubt fully approved the order of succession which the king was known to intend.

Shimei and Rei Shimei and Rei are perhaps David's two brothers, Shimma and Raddai (^{<13213>}1 Chronicles 2:13,14).

Mighty men Probably the company of 600, originally formed during David's early wanderings (^{<02513>}1 Samuel 25:13; 27:2), and afterward maintained as the most essential element of his standing army.

^{<1009>}**1 Kings 1:9.** Adonijah's feast was probably of a sacrificial character, and intended to inaugurate him as king. Compare the "sacrifices" of Absalom (^{<01512>}2 Samuel 15:12).

Zohemoth No satisfactory explanation has been given of this name. Large blocks of stone always attract attention in the East, and receive names which are often drawn from some trivial circumstance. Sinai and Palestine are full of such "Hajars," which correspond to the "Ebens" or "stones" of Holy Scripture. (Compare ^{<01322>}Genesis 28:22; ^{<06019>}Joshua 4:9; ^{<00614>}1 Samuel 6:14.) For En-Rogel, see the margin reference.

^{<1011>}**1 Kings 1:11.** *The son of Haggith* Compare the margin reference. This expression was well chosen to touch the pride of Bath-sheba. "Adonijah; not thy son, but the son of thy rival, Haggith."

^{<1012>}**1 Kings 1:12.** It would have been in accordance with general Eastern custom for Solomon to suffer death, if Adonijah had succeeded in his attempt. But to have executed his mother also would have been an unusual severity. Still, such cases sometimes occurred: Cassander put to death Roxana, the widow of Alexander the Great, at the same time with her son, the young Alexander.

^{<1014>}**1 Kings 1:14.** *Confirm thy words* "Establish" them, by giving a second testimony. Nathan thinks it best to move David's affections first through Bath-sheba, before he comes in to discuss the matter as one of state policy, and to take the king's orders upon it.

^{<1015>}**1 Kings 1:15.** *Into the chamber* The "bed-chamber" or "inner chamber." Abishag was a disinterested witness present, who heard all that Bath-sheba said to David.

^{<1016>}**1 Kings 1:16.** Bath-sheba bowed, like the woman of Tekoah (^{<1014>}2 Samuel 14:4), with the humble prostration of a suppliant. Hence, the king's question, "What wouldest thou?"

1 Kings 1:20. *Tell them who shall sit on the throne* Side by side with what may be called the natural right of hereditary succession, there existed in the old world, and especially in the East, a right, if not of absolutely designating a successor, yet at any rate of choosing one among several sons. Thus, Cyrus designated Cambyses; and Darius designated Xerxes; and a still more absolute right of nomination was exercised by some of the Roman emperors.

1 Kings 1:21. *Shall sleep* This euphemism for death, rare in the early Scriptures — being found only once in the Pentateuch (margin reference.), and once also in the historical books before Kings (^{<1072>}2 Samuel 7:12) — becomes in Kings and Chronicles the ordinary mode of speech (see ^{<1020>}1 Kings 2:10; 11:43, etc.; ^{<1081>}2 Chronicles 9:31; 12:16, etc.). David uses the metaphor in one psalm (^{<1038>}Psalm 13:3). In the later Scriptures it is, of course, common. (^{<2613>}Jeremiah 51:39; ^{<2712>}Daniel 12:2; ^{<1024>}Matthew 9:24; ^{<4111>}John 11:11; ^{<4113>}1 Corinthians 11:30; 15:51; ^{<5044>}1 Thessalonians 4:14, etc.)

1 Kings 1:22. Nathan came into the palace, not into the chamber, where he might not enter unannounced. Bath-sheba retired before Nathan entered, in accordance with Oriental ideas of propriety. So, when Bath-sheba was again sent for (^{<1028>}1 Kings 1:28), Nathan retired (compare ^{<1032>}1 Kings 1:32).

1 Kings 1:24. *Hast thou said* Thou hast said. In the original no question is asked. Nathan assumes, as far as words go, that the king has made this declaration. He wishes to draw forth a disclaimer.

1 Kings 1:29. “As the Lord liveth” was the most common form of oath among the Israelites (e.g. ^{<0789>}Judges 8:19; ^{<0949>}1 Samuel 14:39; 19:6). It was unique to David to attach a further clause to this oath — a clause of thankfulness for some special mercy (^{<0254>}1 Samuel 25:34), or for God’s constant protection of him (here and in ^{<1019>}2 Samuel 4:9).

1 Kings 1:31. A lower and humbler obeisance than before (^{<1016>}1 Kings 1:16). In the Assyrian sculptures ambassadors are represented with their faces actually touching the earth before the feet of the monarch.

1 Kings 1:32. The combination of the high priest, the prophet, and the captain of the bodyguard (the Cherethites and Pelethites, ^{<1003>}1 Kings

1:38), would show the people that the proceedings had the king's sanction. The order of the names marks the position of the persons with respect to the matter in hand.

1 Kings 1:33. Mules and horses seem to have been first employed by the Israelites in the reign of David, and the use of the former was at first confined to great personages (**2 Samuel 13:29; 18:9**). The rabbis tell us that it was death to ride on the king's mule without his permission; and thus it would be the more evident to all that the proceedings with respect to Solomon had David's sanction.

Gihon Probably the ancient name of the valley called afterward the Tyropoeum, which ran from the present Damascus Gate, by Siloam, into the Kedron vale, having the temple hill, or true Zion, on the left, and on the right the modern Zion or ancient city of the Jebusites. The upper "source" of the "waters of Gihon," which Hezekiah stopped (see the margin reference), was probably in the neighborhood of the Damascus Gate.

1 Kings 1:34. *Anoint him* Inauguration into each of the three offices (those of prophet, priest, and king) typical of the Messiah or Anointed One, was by anointing with oil. Divine appointment had already instituted the rite in connection with the kingly office (**2 Samuel 2:4**); but after Solomon we have no express mention of the anointing of kings, except in the three cases of Jehu, Joash, and Jehoahaz (**2 Kings 9:6; 11:12; 23:30**), who were all appointed irregularly. At the time of the captivity, kings, whose anointing has not been related in the historical books, still bear the title of "the anointed of the Lord." (**Lamentations 4:20; Psalm 89:38,51**.)

1 Kings 1:35. *Over Israel and over Judah* There is no anticipation here of the subsequent division of the kingdom; the antithesis between Judah and Israel already existed in the reign of David (**2 Samuel 2:9; 19:11**).

1 Kings 1:37. *As the LORD hath been with my lord* This phrase expresses a very high degree of divine favor. It occurs first in the promises of God to Isaac (**Genesis 26:3,24**) and Jacob (**Genesis 28:13**). See further margin reference.

1 Kings 1:39. *The tabernacle* Probably that which David had made for the ark of the covenant on Mount Zion (**2 Samuel 6:17**). For the

holy oil, see the margin reference. That it was part of the regular furniture of the tabernacle appears from ^{<02311>}Exodus 31:11; 39:38.

^{<1040>}**1 Kings 1:40.** *Piped with pipes* Some prefer “danced with dances” — a meaning which the Hebrew would give by a change in the pointing, and the alteration of one letter. But the change is unnecessary. (Flute-)pipes were known to the Israelites (^{<0905>}1 Samuel 10:5); they were very ancient in Egypt, and were known also to the Assyrians.

The earth rent If the present Hebrew text is correct we have here a strong instance of Oriental hyperbole. But it is suspected that there is a slight corruption, and that the verb really used meant “resounded.”

^{<1042>}**1 Kings 1:42.** Jonathan had acted in a similar capacity, as a carrier of intelligence, in the time of Absalom’s attempt (^{<1036>}2 Samuel 15:36; 17:17); but at that time, like his father, he was faithful to David, and “a valiant man,” “a virtuous man,” or “a man of worth.” (See ^{<1015>}1 Kings 1:52; ^{<1024>}Proverbs 12:4.)

^{<1043>}**1 Kings 1:43.** *Verily* “Nay, but” (or, “Not so”).

^{<1047>}**1 Kings 1:47.** *The king bowed himself* The king worshipped God and prayed that it might be so. Compare ^{<0473>}Genesis 47:31, with margin reference, ^{<3812>}Hebrews 11:21.

^{<1049>}**1 Kings 1:50.** On the “horns” of the altar, see ^{<0270>}Exodus 27:2 note. The altar to which Adonijah fled was probably in the “tabernacle” already referred to (^{<1019>}1 Kings 1:39).

^{<1052>}**1 Kings 1:52.** *There shalt not an hair ...* This was a proverbial expression, meaning “he shall suffer no hurt at all.” Solomon’s clemency in pardoning Adonijah is very remarkable. In the East not only are pretenders almost always punished with death, but it has often been the custom for each king upon his accession to put to death all his brothers as mere possible pretenders.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 2

1 Kings 2:1. The events related in 1 Chronicles 28—29 had occurred in the interval which separates the last and this present chapter.

1 Kings 2:2. David appears to have in his thoughts the divine address to Joshua. Without following it servilely, he reproduces several of its leading expressions and sentiments (compare the margin reference). Solomon's youth clearly constituted one of the chief difficulties of his position. If he was about nineteen or twenty, and known to be of a pacific disposition (**1 Chronicles 22:9**), then to have to rule over the warlike and turbulent Hebrew nation, with a strong party opposed to him, and brothers of full age ready to lead it, was evidently a most difficult task. Hence, he is exhorted, though in years a boy, to show himself in Spirit "a man."

1 Kings 2:3. The "statutes" have been explained to be the positive ordinances of the Law; the "commandments" the moral precepts, not to steal, etc.; the "judgments" the laws belonging to civil government; and the "testimonies" the laws directing the commemoration of certain events. Compare **Psalm 19:7,8**.

1 Kings 2:4. *That the LORD may continue his word* The original promise given to David indirectly, through Nathan (**2 Samuel 7:11-17**), and apparently unconditional, afterward was made conditional upon continued obedience. (See the margin reference "f.") David reminds Solomon of this, in order to impress upon him a powerful motive to continue faithful and obedient.

1 Kings 2:5. In his directions with respect to certain important persons, David, anxious for the security of his young successor's kingdom, allows old animosities to revive, and is willing to avenge himself indirectly and by deputy, though he had been withheld by certain scruples from taking vengeance in his own person. We must not expect Gospel morality from the saints of the Old Testament. They were only the best men of their several ages and nations. The maxim of "them of old time," whether Jews or Gentiles, was "Love your friends and hate your enemies" (see **Matthew 5:43**); and David perhaps was not in this respect in advance of

his age. Joab's chief offence against David, besides his two murders, was no doubt his killing Absalom (^{<1084>}2 Samuel 18:14). Another serious crime was his support of the treasonable attempt of Adonijah (^{<1007>}1 Kings 1:7). But besides these flagrant misdemeanours, he seems to have offended David by a number of little acts. He was a constant thorn in his side. He treated him with scant respect, taking important steps without his orders (^{<1035>}2 Samuel 3:26), remonstrating with him roughly and rudely (^{<1024>}2 Samuel 2:24,25), almost betraying his secrets (^{<1019>}2 Samuel 11:19-21), and, where he disliked the orders given him, disobeying them (^{<1206>}1 Chronicles 21:6). David allowed his ascendancy, but he chafed against it, finding this "son of Zeruiah," in particular "too hard" for him (margin reference).

Put the blood of war upon his girdle ... Meaning "The blood of Amasa spirited all over the girdle to which the sword of Joab was attached; and the sandals on his feet were reddened with the stains left by the falling corpse."

^{<1006>}**1 Kings 2:6.** *His hoar head* Joab, though the nephew of David, was probably not very greatly his junior, David being the youngest of the family, and Zeruiah, as is most likely, one of the eldest.

^{<1007>}**1 Kings 2:7.** One of the sons of Barzillai here intended was probably Chimham (see the margin reference). Who the others were is not known. The family continued down to the return from the captivity, and still held property in Israel (compare ^{<1026>}Ezra 2:61 and ^{<1076>}Nehemiah 7:63).

^{<1009>}**1 Kings 2:9.** *Hold him not guiltless* i.e. "Do not treat him as an innocent man. Punish him as in thy wisdom thou deemest best. Not capitally at once; but so that he may be likely to give thee in course of time a just occasion to slay him." So, at least, Solomon seems to have understood the charge. (See ^{<1026>}1 Kings 2:36-46.)

^{<1021>}**1 Kings 2:11.** *Forty years* In all forty years and six months. See ^{<1055>}2 Samuel 5:5, and ^{<1330>}1 Chronicles 3:4. The Jewish writers almost universally omit the fractions of a year.

^{<1022>}**1 Kings 2:12.** The "establishment" of the kingdom here intended is probably its universal acceptance both by the tribe of Judah and the other Israelites.

<1026> **1 Kings 2:16.** *Deny me not* literally, as in the margin, i.e. “make me not to hide my face through shame at being refused.”

<1029> **1 Kings 2:19.** *A seat* Or, “a throne.” We have here a proof of the high dignity of the Queen-mother. Compare also <1153> 1 Kings 15:13; <1210> 2 Kings 11:1-3. In the Persian court the Queen-mother had often the chief power.

<1022> **1 Kings 2:22.** *Ask for him the kingdom also* Bath-sheba had not seen anything dangerous or suspicious in Adonijah’s request. Solomon, on the contrary, takes alarm at once. To ask for Abishag was to ask for the kingdom. To the Oriental mind a monarch was so sacred, that whatever was brought near to him was thenceforth separate from common use. This sacred and separate character attached especially to the Royal harem. The inmates either remained widows for the rest of their lives, or became the wives of the deceased king’s successor. When a monarch was murdered, or dethroned, or succeeded by one whose title was doubtful, the latter alternative was almost always adopted (compare <1038> 2 Samuel 12:8; 16:22). Public opinion so closely connected the title to the crown and the possession of the deceased monarch’s wives, that to have granted Adonijah’s request would have been the strongest encouragement to his pretensions. Solomon, seeing this, assumes that Adonijah cherishes a guilty purpose, that there has been a fresh plot, that Abiathar and Joab — Adonijah’s counselors in the former conspiracy (<1007> 1 Kings 1:7) — are privy to it, and that the severest measures are necessary to crush the new treason.

<1023> **1 Kings 2:23.** *Against his own life* Adonijah had forfeited his life by his former conduct, and his pardon had been merely conditional (<1035> 1 Kings 1:52).

<1024> **1 Kings 2:24.** The phrase “making a house” means “continuing the posterity” of a person, and, in the case of a royal person, “maintaining his descendants upon the throne.”

<1026> **1 Kings 2:26.** For Anathoth and the allusions in this verse, see the margin reference.

<1027> **1 Kings 2:27.** *That he might fulfil the word of the LORD* We need not understand this as stating that the fulfillment of the old prophecy was

Solomon's motive, or even one of his motives. The reference is to the overruling providence of God, which thus brought about the fulfillment of the prophecy. (Compare ^{<1012>}Matthew 1:22; 2:15; 27:35, etc.) The deposition of Abiathar involved the rejection of the house of Ithamar (^{<1310B>}1 Chronicles 24:3), to which Eli belonged, and the reestablishment of the high priesthood in the line of Eleazar.

^{<1028>}**1 Kings 2:28.** Joab followed the example of Adonijab (margin reference). The tabernacle was now at Gibeon (^{<1004>}1 Kings 3:4; ^{<1316B>}1 Chronicles 16:39).

^{<1028>}**1 Kings 2:31.** It was only a murderer to whom the tabernacle was to be no protection (margin reference). Hence, the reference to the "innocent blood."

^{<1028>}**1 Kings 2:32.** *Shalt return his blood* i.e. "his shedding of blood."

^{<1028>}**1 Kings 2:33.** *Upon the head of his seed* Compare the margin reference. Nothing further is heard of Joab's descendants in the history.

^{<1028>}**1 Kings 2:34.** Retribution overtook Joab on the very scene (Gibeon) of the most treacherous of his murders. It was at the "great stone which is in Gibeon" that Joab killed Amasa (^{<1008>}2 Samuel 20:8-10).

^{<1028>}**1 Kings 2:35.** The high priesthood had been for some time in a certain sense divided between Zadok and Abiathar. (See the ^{<1008>}1 Kings 1:8 note). Henceforth, Zadok became sole high priest.

^{<1026>}**1 Kings 2:36.** The object, apparently, was to keep Shimei under the immediate eye of the government. Shimei's old home, Bahurim, lay east of Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho, (^{<1078>}2 Samuel 17:18), and could only be reached by crossing the Kedron valley. Solomon assumes, that, if he quits the city, it will probably be in this direction (^{<1025>}1 Kings 2:37).

^{<1029>}**1 Kings 2:39.** *Achish* Possibly the Achish of the marginal reference, but more probably the grandson of the former Achish.

^{<1026>}**1 Kings 2:42.** *Did I not make thee to swear* The Septuagint add to ^{<1025>}1 Kings 2:37 a clause stating that Solomon "made Shimei swear" on the day when he commanded him to reside at Jerusalem.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 3

1 Kings 3:1. What Pharaoh is meant is uncertain. It must have been a predecessor of Shishak (or Sheshonk), who invaded Judaea more than 40 years later (**1 Kings 14:25**); and probabilities are in favor, not of Psusennes II, the last king of Manetho's 21st dynasty, but of Psinaces, the predecessor of Psusennes. This, the Tanite dynasty, had become very weak, especially toward its close, from where we may conceive how gladly it would ally itself with the powerful house of David. The Jews were not forbidden to marry foreign wives, if they became proselytes. As Solomon is not blamed for this marriage either here or in **1 Kings 11**, and as the idol temples which he allowed to be built (**1 Kings 11:5-7**) were in no case dedicated to Egyptian deities, it is to be presumed that his Egyptian wife adopted her husband's religion.

The city of David The city, situated on the eastern hill, or true Zion, where the temple was afterward built, over against the city of the Jehusites (**1 Kings 9:24**; compare **2 Chronicles 8:11**).

1 Kings 3:2. The word "only" introduces a contrast. The writer means to say that there was one exception to the flourishing condition of things which he has been describing, namely, that "the people sacrificed in high-places." (Compare the next verse.) The Law did not forbid "high-places" directly, but only by implication. It required the utter destruction of all the high-places which had been polluted by idolatrous rites (**Deuteronomy 12:2**); and the injunction to offer sacrifices nowhere except at the door of the tabernacle (**Leviticus 17:3-5**) was an indirect prohibition of them, or, at least, of the use which the Israelites made of them; but there was some real reason to question whether this was a command intended to come into force until the "place" was chosen "where the Lord would cause His name to dwell." (See **Deuteronomy 12:11,14**.) The result was that high-places were used for the worship of Yahweh, from the time of the Judges downward (**Judges 6:25; 13:16; 1 Samuel 7:10; 13:9; 14:35; 16:5; 1 Chronicles 21:26**), with an entire unconsciousness of guilt on the part of those who used them. And God so far overlooked this ignorance that He accepted the worship thus offered Him, as appears from the vision vouchsafed to Solomon on this occasion. There were two reasons for the prohibition of high-places; first,

the danger of the old idolatry creeping back if the old localities were retained for worship; and, secondly, the danger to the unity of the nation if there should be more than one legitimate religious center. The existence of the worship at high places did, in fact, facilitate the division of the kingdom.

1 Kings 3:4. *Gibeon* The transfer to Gibeon of the “tabernacle of the congregation,” and the brass “altar of burnt offerings” made by Moses, which were removed there from Nob (compare ^{<10216>}1 Samuel 21:6, with marginal references “i,” “k”), had made it “the great high-place,” more sacred, i.e., than any other in the holy land, unless it were Mount Zion where the ark had been conveyed by David. For the position of Gibeon, see ^{<1003>}Joshua 9:3 note.

A thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer Solomon presented the victims. The priests were the actual sacrificers (^{<10185>}1 Kings 8:5). A sacrifice of a thousand victims was an act of royal magnificence suited to the greatness of Solomon. So Xerxes offered 1,000 oxen at Troy. If the offerings in this case were “whole burnt offerings,” and were all offered upon the altar of Moses, the sacrifice must have lasted several days.

1 Kings 3:5. *The LORD appeared unto Solomon in a dream* Compare the marginal references and ^{<10150>}Genesis 15:1; 28:12; 37:5.

1 Kings 3:6. *This great kindness* David himself had regarded this as God’s crowning mercy to him (^{<10048>}1 Kings 1:48).

1 Kings 3:7. See ^{<1002>}1 Kings 2:2 note, and on the hyperbole contained in the phrase “little child,” compare ^{<10488>}Genesis 43:8; ^{<102311>}Exodus 33:11.

How to go out or come in This expression is proverbial for the active conduct of affairs. (See the marginal reference.)

1 Kings 3:8. Compare the marginal references. Solomon regards the promises as fulfilled in the existing greatness and glory of the Jewish nation.

1 Kings 3:9. One of the chief functions of the Oriental monarch is always to hear and decide causes. Hence, supreme magistrates were naturally called “judges.” (See the introduction to the Book of Judges.) In

the minds of the Jews the “judge” and the “prince” were always closely associated, the direct cognisance of causes being constantly taken by their chief civil governors. (See ^{<0014>}Exodus 2:14; 18:16,22; ^{<0015>}1 Samuel 8:20; ^{<0012>}2 Samuel 15:2-6.)

Good and bad i.e. “right and wrong,” “justice and injustice.”

^{<0010>}**1 Kings 3:10.** Although Solomon’s choice was made “in a dream” (^{<0015>}1 Kings 3:5), we must regard it as springing from his will in some degree, and therefore as indicative of his moral character.

^{<0011>}**1 Kings 3:11.** *Thine enemies* e.g. Hadad the Edomite (^{<0014>}1 Kings 11:14-22) and Rezon the son of Eliadah (^{<0013>}1 Kings 11:23-25), whom Solomon might well have wished to remove.

^{<0012>}**1 Kings 3:12.** *A wise and an understanding heart* Solomon’s wisdom seems to have been both moral and intellectual (see ^{<0012>}1 Kings 4:29-34). But it was moral wisdom alone which he requested, and which was promised him. The terms translated “wise” and “understanding,” both denote practical wisdom. (See ^{<0043>}Genesis 41:33,39; ^{<0016>}Deuteronomy 4:6; ^{<0012>}Proverbs 1:2, etc.)

Neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee i.e. in the knowledge of what was in man, and in the wisdom to direct men’s goings, he was to be the wisest of “all” mere men. In such wisdom the world would know one only “greater than Solomon” (^{<0012>}Matthew 12:42; ^{<0013>}Luke 11:31).

^{<0013>}**1 Kings 3:13.** A striking illustration of that law of the divine government to which Christ referred (marginal reference).

^{<0014>}**1 Kings 3:14.** *I will lengthen thy days* The promise here was only conditional. As the condition was not observed (^{<0010>}1 Kings 11:1-8), the right to the promise was forfeited, and it was not fulfilled. Solomon can scarcely have been more than fifty-nine or sixty at his death.

^{<0015>}**1 Kings 3:15.** Solomon determined to inaugurate his reign by a grand religious ceremonial at each of the two holy places which at this time divided between them the reverence of the Jews. Having completed the religious service at Gibeon, where was the tabernacle of the congregation, he proceeded to Jerusalem, and sacrificed before the ark of the covenant, which was in Mount Zion (^{<0012>}2 Samuel 6:12). A great feast naturally

followed on a large sacrifice of peace-offerings. In these the sacrificer always partook of the flesh of the victim, and he was commanded to call in to the feast the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow (^{<1642>}Deuteronomy 14:29). Compare ^{<1069>}2 Samuel 6:19; ^{<1363>}1 Chronicles 16:3.

^{<1088>}**1 Kings 3:28.** *The wisdom of God* i.e. “Divine wisdom,” “a wisdom given by God” (^{<1082>}1 Kings 3:12). The ready tact and knowledge of human nature exhibited in this pattern judgment, and its special fitness to impress Orientals, have generally been admitted.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 4

1 Kings 4:1. Solomon, that is, was king over “all Israel” from the first; not like David, who for seven and a half years reigned over Judah only. This feature well introduces the glory of Solomon and the organisation of the court, of which the historian in this chapter intends to give us a general sketch. Solomon constitutes certain “princes” or officers of the first rank, deriving their station from him, and probably holding it during pleasure.

Azariah, the son of Zadok, the priest “The priest” here belongs to Azariah, not to Zadok. The term used (*cohen*)^{<43548>} means sometimes a priest, sometimes a civil officer, with perhaps a semi-priestly character. (See ^{<1088>}2 Samuel 8:18 note.) In this place it has the definite article prefixed, and can only mean “the high priest.” Azariah, called here the “son,” but really the “grandson,” of Zadok, seems to have succeeded him in the priesthood (^{<1360>}1 Chronicles 6:10). His position as high priest at the time when this list was made out gives Azariah the foremost place in it.

1 Kings 4:3. Shisha, or Shavsha (^{<3816>}1 Chronicles 18:16), seems also to have been called Sheva (^{<1025>}2 Samuel 20:25), and Seraiah (^{<1087>}2 Samuel 8:17).

The “scribes” were probably royal “secretaries” (margin), who drew up the king’s edicts, wrote his letters, and perhaps managed his finances (^{<1120>}1 Kings 12:10). They were among his most influential councillors.

By “recorder” or “remembrancer” (margin), we must understand “court annalist” (marginal reference “a”).

1 Kings 4:4. It is curious to find Abiathar in this list of princes, after what has been said of his disgrace (^{<1027>}1 Kings 2:27,35). Some have supposed that after a while Solomon pardoned him. Perhaps the true explanation is that the historian here enumerates all those who were accounted “princes” in any part of Solomon’s reign.

1 Kings 4:5. *The son of Nathan* It is uncertain whether the Nathan of this verse is the prophet or the son of David (^{<1054>}2 Samuel 5:14). While on the one hand the position of “king’s friend” is more likely to have been held

by a contemporary, which the prophet's son would have been, than by one so much younger as the son of a younger brother; on the other hand the title "cohen" seems to point to a member of the royal family. (See the next note.) Azariah who was "over the officers" was chief, that is, of the "officers" mentioned in ^{<1048>}1 Kings 4:8-19, as appears from the identity of the term here used with the title by which they are designated in ^{<1047>}1 Kings 4:7.

Principal officer Or, "cohen." The fact that the title *cohen* ^{<13548>} was borne by sons of David (^{<1038>}2 Samuel 8:18), who could not be "priests" in the ordinary sense of the word, seems to identify the Nathan of this verse with David's son (^{<1054>}2 Samuel 5:14) rather than with the prophet.

^{<1046>}**1 Kings 4:6.** *Over the household* Comptroller of the household, like the "Steward" of the Persian court. On the importance of this office, see ^{<218>}2 Kings 18:18, and compare ^{<2215>}Isaiah 22:15-25.

The tribute The marginal reading, "levy," is preferable. The reference is to the forced laborers whom Solomon employed in his great works (marginal reference).

^{<1047>}**1 Kings 4:7.** The requirement of a portion of their produce from subjects, in addition to money payments, is a common practice of Oriental monarchs. It obtained in ancient, and it still obtains in modern, Persia.

^{<1048>}**1 Kings 4:8.** In this arrangement of the territory into twelve portions, the divisions of the tribes seem to have been adopted as far as could be managed without unfairness. The prefecture of Ben-Hur corresponded nearly to the territory of Ephraim; that of Ben-Dekar to Dan; that of Ben-Hesed to Judah; those of Ben-Abinadab and Baana to Cis-Jordanic Manasseh; that of Ben-Geber to Manasseh beyond Jordan; of Abinadab to Gad; of Ahimaaz to Naphtali; of Baanah to Asher; of Jehoshaphat to Issachar; of Shimei to Benjamin; and of Geber to Reuben. The order in which the prefectures are mentioned is clearly not the geographical. Perhaps it is the order in which they had to supply the king's table.

^{<1049>}**1 Kings 4:9.** For some of the names, see ^{<694>}Joshua 19:41-43.

^{<1040>}**1 Kings 4:10.** *Sochob* See ^{<655>}Joshua 15:35.

1 Kings 4:11. *Dor* See ^{<0610>}Joshua 11:2 note. It has always been a practice among Oriental potentates to attach to themselves the more important of their officers by giving them for wives princesses of the royal house. Hence, the union here between Ben-Abinadab (probably Solomon's first cousin, compare ^{<0918>}1 Samuel 16:8) and Taphath. Compare ^{<1045>}1 Kings 4:15.

1 Kings 4:12. On these cities see ^{<0621>}Joshua 12:21; 3:16; ^{<0722>}Judges 7:22; ^{<0722>}Joshua 21:22.

1 Kings 4:13. It will be observed that five out of the twelve prefects are designated solely by their father's names, Ben-Hur, etc., while one (Ahimaaz, ^{<1045>}1 Kings 4:15) has no such designation. Probably the document, which the author of the Book of Kings consulted, had contained originally the proper name and father's name of each prefect; but it was mutilated or illegible in places at the time when he consulted it. If it was in the shape of a list, a single mutilation at one corner might have removed four of the six wanting names.

1 Kings 4:14. See the margin. Ahinadab had the territory from the places last mentioned as far as Mahanaim (^{<032>}Genesis 32:2).

1 Kings 4:19. The meaning of the last clause is somewhat doubtful. On the whole, our King James Version may well stand as nearly correct. The writer has assigned to Geber a wide stretch of territory; and, anticipating surprise, assures his readers "(there was but) one officer who (purveyed) in this land."

1 Kings 4:20. There is some doubt about the proper arrangement of the remainder of this chapter. The best alteration, if we alter the Hebrew order at all, would be to place ^{<1021>}1 Kings 4:20,21 after ^{<1025>}1 Kings 4:25.

Many ... See ^{<1038>}1 Kings 3:8 note; and compare Psalm 127, which is traditionally ascribed to Solomon, and which celebrates the populousness and security of Israel in his day.

1 Kings 4:21. Solomon's empire, like all the great empires of Asia down to the time of the Persians, consisted of a congeries of small kingdoms, all ruled by their own kings (^{<1024>}1 Kings 4:24), who admitted the suzerainty of the Jewish monarch, and paid him "presents," i.e., an annual tribute (see ^{<1025>}1 Kings 10:25).

Unto the land of the Philistines There is no word corresponding to “unto” in the Hebrew. The construction should be, “Solomon reigned over all the kingdoms from the river (i.e., the Euphrates: see the marginal references), over the land of the Philistines,” etc. The writer draws attention to the fact that the extent of Solomon’s kingdom was in accordance with the promises made to Abraham, Moses, and Joshua.

^{<102>}**1 Kings 4:22.** *Thirty measures* (margin, cors) The cor, which was the same measure as the homer, is computed, on the authority of Josephus, at 86 English gallons, on the authority of the rabbinical writers at 44. Thirty cors, even at the lower estimate, would equal 1,320 gallons, or 33 of our “sacks;” and the 90 cors of fine and coarse flour would altogether equal 99 sacks. From the quantity of flour consumed, it has been conjectured that the number of those who fed at the royal board was 14,000.

^{<103>}**1 Kings 4:23.** *Harts ...* The exact sorts of wild land animals here intended are very uncertain. Perhaps it would be best to translate “wild-goats, gazelles, and wild oxen,” which abounded in the wilder parts of Syria, from where Solomon would be supplied. (See ^{<104>}1 Kings 4:24.) (Yahmur, or the “roebuck,” gives its name to a valley in a wooded district, south of Carmel (Conder).) The use of game at the royal banquets of Assyria appears in the sculptures.

^{<104>}**1 Kings 4:24.** *On this side the river* i.e., the region west of the Euphrates.

Tipsah, or Tipsach, the place on the Euphrates called Thapsacus. The word means “ford,” or “passage,” being formed from *pasach* ^{<645>}, “to pass over” (compare “paschal”). It is the modern Suriyeh, forty-five miles below Balls, at the point where the Euphrates changes its course from south to southeast by east. The stream is fordable here, and nowhere else in this part of its course. Solomon’s possession of Thapsacus would have been very favorable to his schemes of land commerce (^{<109>}1 Kings 9:19).

To Azzah i.e., Gaza.

All the kings Compare ^{<623>}Joshua 12:9-24. In Philistia, small as it was, there were five kings (^{<1068>}1 Samuel 6:18). Syria was divided into numerous small states, as many as thirty-two kings being mentioned on one occasion (^{<110>}1 Kings 20:1). The Hittites were ruled by a great number of chieftains

or princes (~~1109~~1 Kings 10:29; ~~2076~~2 Kings 7:6). twelve are mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions.

~~1025~~ **1 Kings 4:25.** *Under his vine ...* This phrase seems to have been common among the Jews, and even among neighboring nations (~~2283~~2 Kings 18:31), to express a time of quiet and security. It is used by the prophets in descriptions of the Messianic kingdom (marginal references).

~~1025~~ **1 Kings 4:26.** In ~~4025~~2 Chronicles 9:25, the number of stalls for Solomon's chariot horses is stated at 4,000, instead of 40,000. The number in the present passage is probably a corruption. Solomon's chariots were but 1,400 (~~1105~~1 Kings 10:26; ~~4014~~2 Chronicles 1:14), for which 40,000 horses could not possibly be required. The Assyrian chariots had at most three horses apiece, while some had only two. 4,000 horses would supply the full team of three to 1,200, and the smaller team of two to 200 chariots. The number 4,000 is in due proportion to the 12,000 horses for cavalry, and is in accordance with all that we know of the military establishments of the time and country. Compare ~~4123~~2 Chronicles 12:3; ~~1084~~2 Samuel 8:4.

~~1025~~ **1 Kings 4:28.** Barley is to this day in the East the common food of horses.

Dromedaries Coursers. The animal intended is neither a camel nor a mule, but a swift horse.

The place where the officers were Rather, "places where the horses and coursers were," i.e., to the different cities where they were lodged.

~~1025~~ **1 Kings 4:29.** *Largeness of heart* What we call "great capacity." The expression which follows is common in reference to numerical multitude (~~1040~~1 Kings 4:20), but its use here to express mere amplitude or greatness is unique.

~~1025~~ **1 Kings 4:30.** *Children of the east country* Rather, "of the East" — the Beni Kedem — a distinct tribe, who occupied both sides of the Euphrates along its middle course (marginal reference). They were mostly nomads, who dwelt in tents (~~2428~~Jeremiah 49:28,29). Job belonged to them (~~8003~~Job 1:3), as did probably his three friends; and, perhaps, Balsam (~~0237~~Numbers 23:7). They must have been either Arabs or Aramaeans. We may see in the Book of Job the character of their "wisdom." Like Solomon's, it was chiefly gnomic but included some knowledge of natural

history. The “wisdom of Egypt” was of a different kind. It included magic (^{<0408>}Genesis 41:8; ^{<0171>}Exodus 7:11), geometry, medicine, astronomy, architecture, and a dreamy mystic philosophy, of which metempsychosis was the main principle. It is not probable that Solomon was, like Moses (marginal reference), deeply versed in Egyptian science. The writer only means to say that his wisdom was truer and more real than all the much-praised wisdom of Egypt.

^{<106>}**1 Kings 4:31.** It is most probable that the persons with whom Solomon is compared were contemporaries, men noted for “wisdom,” though there is no other mention of them.

His fame was in all nations See below, 1 Kings 10.

^{<106>}**1 Kings 4:32.** *Proverbs* In the collection which forms the “Book of Proverbs,” only a small portion has been preserved, less certainly than one thousand out of the three. Ecclesiastes, if it is Solomon’s, would add between one hundred and two hundred more proverbs. But the great bulk of Solomon’s proverbs has perished.

Songs Of these, Canticles is probably one (marginal reference): Psalm 72; 127 may also be of the number. Probably the bulk of Solomon’s songs were of a secular character, and consequently were not introduced into the canon of Scripture.

^{<106>}**1 Kings 4:33.** *Trees ...* A keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, and a habit of minute observation, are apparent in the writings of Solomon that remain to us. The writer here means to say that Solomon composed special works on these subjects. The Lebanon cedars were the most magnificent of all the trees known to the Hebrews, and hence, represent in the Old Testament the grandest of vegetable productions. (^{<19416>}Psalm 104:16; Cant. 5:15; ^{<5303>}Ezekiel 31:3, etc.) For the hyssop, see ^{<0122>}Exodus 12:22 note.

Of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes This is the usual Biblical division of the animal kingdom (^{<0015>}Genesis 1:26; 9:2; ^{<0890>}Psalm 148:10).

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 5

1 Kings 5:1. *Hiram, king of Tyre* Menander of Ephesus, who wrote a history of Tyre in Greek, founded upon native Tyrian documents, about 300 B.C., mentioned this Hiram as the son of Abibaal king of Tyre, and said that he ascended the throne when he was nineteen; that he reigned thirty-four years, and, dying at the age of fifty-three, was succeeded by his son Baleazar. Menander spoke at some length of the dealings of Hiram with Solomon.

Sent his servants This appears to have been an embassy of congratulation.

1 Kings 5:3. Solomon's presumption that Hiram knew David's design has not appeared in the previous history, but it is in accordance with **1 Chronicles 22:4**.

1 Kings 5:4. The contrast is not between different periods of Solomon's reign, but between his reign and that of his father.

Evil occurrent Rather, evil occurrence.

1 Kings 5:5. *As the LORD spake* See the marginal references **1 Kings 7:13**, and compare **1 Chronicles 22:10**.

1 Kings 5:6. Solomon's message to Hiram and Hiram's answer (**1 Kings 5:8,9**) are given much more fully in **2 Chronicles 2:3-16**.

Cedar-trees The Hebrew word here and elsewhere translated "cedar," appears to be used, not only of the cedar proper, but of other timber-trees also, as the fir, and, perhaps, the juniper. Still there is no doubt that the real Lebanon cedar is most commonly intended by it. This tree, which still grows on parts of the mountain, but which threatens to die out, was probably much more widely spread anciently. The Tyrians made the masts of their ships from the wood (**Ezekiel 27:5**), and would naturally be as careful to cultivate it as we have ourselves been to grow oak. The Assyrian kings, when they made their expeditions into Palestine, appear frequently to have cut it in Lebanon and Hermon, and to have transported it to their own capitals.

Skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians The mechanical genius and nautical skill of the Phoenicians generally, and of the Sidonians in particular, is noticed by Homer and Herodotus. In the reign of Hiram, Sidon, though perhaps she might have a king of her own, acknowledged the supremacy of Tyre.

1 Kings 5:9. See the marginal reference. The timber was first carried westward from the flanks of Lebanon to the nearest part of the coast, where it was collected into floats, or rafts, which were then conveyed southward along the coast to Joppa, now Jaffa, from where the land journey to Jerusalem was not more than about forty miles. A similar course was taken on the building of the second temple (**Ezra 3:7**).

Food for my household The Phoenician cities had very little arable territory of their own, the mountain range of Lebanon rising rapidly behind them; and they must always have imported the chief part of their sustenance from abroad. They seem commonly to have derived it from Judaea (marginal references). Hiram agreed now to accept for his timber and for the services of his workmen (**1 Kings 5:6**) a certain annual payment of grain and oil, both of them the best of their kind, for the sustentation of his court. This payment was entirely distinct from the supplies furnished to the workmen (marginal reference "1").

1 Kings 5:11. The number of measures of wheat was considerably less than Solomon's own annual consumption, which exceeded 32,000 cors (**1 Kings 4:22**); but the small amount of twenty cors of oil, which seems at first sight scarcely to match with the 20,000 cors of wheat, will not appear improbable, if we consider that the oil was to be "pure" — literally "beaten" — i.e., oil extracted from the olives by pounding, and not by means of the press.

Year by year i.e., during all the years that Solomon was engaged in building and was helped by Hiram.

1 Kings 5:12. *The LORD gave Solomon wisdom* It seems to be implied that Solomon's divine gift of wisdom enabled him to make such favorable arrangements with Hiram.

1 Kings 5:13. *A levy out of all Israel* This was, apparently, the first time that the Israelites had been called upon to perform forced labor, though it had been prophesied (**1 Samuel 8:16**). David had bound to

forced service “the strangers” (^{<1321D>}1 Chronicles 22:2); but hitherto the Israelites had escaped. Solomon now, in connection with his proposed work of building the temple, with the honor of God as an excuse, laid this burden upon them. Out of the 1,300,000 able-bodied Israelites (^{<1349>}2 Samuel 24:9), a band of 30,000 — one in forty-four — was raised, of whom one-third was constantly at work in Lebanon, while two-thirds remained at home, and pursued their usual occupations. This, though a very light form of task work, was felt as a great oppression, and was the chief cause of the revolt of the ten tribes at Solomon’s death (^{<11234>}1 Kings 12:4).

^{<1065>}**1 Kings 5:15.** *That bare burdens ...* Compare the marginal references. These laborers, whose services were continuous, consisted of “strangers” — “the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites” — whom Solomon, following the example of his father (^{<1321D>}1 Chronicles 22:2), condemned to slavery, and employed in this way.

^{<1066>}**1 Kings 5:16.** Comparing this verse and ^{<10923>}1 Kings 9:23 with ^{<4028>}2 Chronicles 2:18; 8:10, the entire number of the overseers will be seen to be stated by both writers at 3,850; but in the one case nationality, in the other degree of authority, is made the principle of the division.

^{<1067>}**1 Kings 5:17.** Some of these “great, hewed (no and) stones,” are probably still to be seen in the place where they were set by Solomon’s builders, at the southwestern angle of the wall of the Haram area in the modern Jerusalem. The largest found so far is 38 ft. 9 in. long, and weighs about 100 tons.

^{<1068>}**1 Kings 5:18.** *The stone-squarers* The Gebalites (see the margin), the inhabitants of Gebal, a Phoenician city between Beyrout and Tripolis, which the Greeks called Byblus, and which is now known as Jebeil.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 6

~~100~~ **1 Kings 6:1.** *In the four hundred and eightieth year* It is upon this statement that all the earlier portion of what is called the “received chronology” depends. Amid Minor differences there is a general agreement, which justifies us in placing the accession of Solomon about 1000 B.C. (1018 B.C. Oppert.) But great difficulties meet us in determining the sacred chronology anterior to this. Apart from the present statement, the chronological data of the Old Testament are insufficient to fix the interval between Solomon’s accession and the Exodus, since several of the periods which make it up are unestimated. Hence, chronologists have based entirely the “received chronology” upon this verse. But the text itself is not free from suspicion.

- (1) It is the sole passage in the Old Testament which contains the idea of dating events from an era.
- (2) It is quoted by Origen without the date, and seems to have been known only in this shape to Josephus, to Theophilus of Antioch, and to Clement of Alexandria.
- (3) It is hard to reconcile with other chronological statements in the Old and New Testament.

Though the books of Joshua, Judges, and Samuel furnish us with no exact chronology, they still supply important chronological data — data which seem to indicate for the interval between the Exodus and Solomon, a period considerably exceeding 480 years. For the years actually set down amount to at least 580, or, according to another computation, to 600; and though a certain deduction might be made from this sum on account of the round numbers, this deduction would scarcely do more than balance the addition required on account of the four unestimated periods. Again, in the New Testament, Paul (according to the received text) reckons the period from the division of Canaan among the tribes in the sixth year of Joshua (Joshua 14), to Samuel the prophet, at 450 years, which would make the interval between the Exodus and the commencement of the temple to be 579 years. On the whole, it seems, therefore, probable that the words “in the four hundred and eightieth year, etc.,” are an interpolation into the

sacred text, which did not prevail generally before the third century of our era.

~~1002~~ **1 Kings 6:2.** The size of Solomon's temple depends upon the true length of the ancient cubit, which is doubtful. It has been estimated as somewhat less than a foot, and again as between 19 and 20 inches, a difference of nearly 8 inches, which would produce a variation of nearly 40 feet in the length of the temple-chamber, and of 46 in that of the entire building. It is worthy of remark that, even according to the highest estimate, Solomon's temple was really a small building, less than 120 feet long, and less than 35 broad. Remark that the measures of the temple, both "house" and porch (~~1003~~ 1 Kings 6:3), were exactly double those of the older tabernacle (~~1268~~ Exodus 26:18 note). This identity of proportion amounts to an undesigned coincidence, indicating the thoroughly historical character of both Kings and Exodus.

~~1004~~ **1 Kings 6:4.** *Windows of narrow lights* Either (as in the margin) windows, externally mere slits in the wall, but opening wide within, like the windows of old castles: or, more probably, "windows with fixed lattices." The windows seem to have been placed high in the walls, above the chambers spoken of in ~~1005~~ 1 Kings 6:5-8.

~~1006~~ **1 Kings 6:5.** *Chambers* (Margin, floors). Rather, a lean-to, which completely surrounded three sides of the building, the north, the west, and the south.



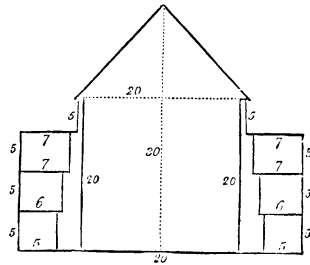
~~1006~~ **1 Kings 6:6.** In order to preserve the sanctity of the temple, and at the same time allow the attachment to it of secular buildings — sleeping apartments, probably, for the priests and other attendants — Solomon made "rebate-ments" in the wall of the temple, or in other words built it externally in steps, thus: The beams, which formed the roof of the chambers and the floors of the upper stories, were then laid on these steps or "rests" in the wall, not piercing the wall, or causing any real union of the secular with the sacred building.

It resulted from this arrangement that the lowest; chambers were the narrowest, and the uppermost considerably the widest of all, the wall receding each time by the space of a cubit.

<1007>**1 Kings 6:7.** The spirit of the command (marginal references), was followed. Thus the fabric rose without noise.

<1008>**1 Kings 6:8.** *The door for the middle chamber* i.e., the door which gave access to the mid-most “set of chambers.” The chambers on the ground-floor were possibly reached each by their own door in the outer wall of the lean-to. The middle and upper floors were reached by a single door in the right or south wall, from which a winding staircase ascended to the second tier, while another ascended from the second to the third. The door to the stairs was in the outer wall of the building, not in the wall between the chambers and the temple. That would have desecrated the temple far more than the insertion of beams.

<1009>**1 Kings 6:9.** *He built the house, and finished it* i.e., the external shell of the house. The internal fittings were added afterward. See <1065>**1 Kings 6:15-22.**



Covered the house Roofed it with a wooden roof, sloped like our roofs.

The diagram of a section of the temple will illustrate <1010>**1 Kings 6:2-10.** The numbers give the dimensions in cubits:

<1002>**1 Kings 6:12.** The meaning is, “So far as this house goes, thou art obedient (<1073>**2 Samuel 7:13**; <3172>**1 Chronicles 17:12**, etc.); if thou wilt be obedient in other things also, then will I perform My word,” etc., God’s promises being always conditional. The promises made to David were:

(1) that he should be succeeded by one of his sons (<1072>**2 Samuel 7:12**; <4221>**Psalm 132:11**);

(2) that the kingdom should be established in the line of his descendants forever, if they were faithful (^{<1072>}Psalm 132:12); and

(3) that the Israelites should be no more afflicted as beforetime (^{<1070>}2 Samuel 7:10).

These promises are now confirmed to Solomon, but on the express condition of obedience, and two further promises are added.

^{<1063>}**1 Kings 6:13.** The first promise to “dwell among” the Israelites had been made to Moses (^{<1058>}Exodus 25:8; 29:45), but had not been repeated to David. The next promise, “I will not forsake, etc.,” if not absolutely new, seems to have been more positive and general than previous similar promises (^{<1066>}Deuteronomy 31:6,8; ^{<1065>}Joshua 1:5). God will not at any time or under any circumstances wholly forsake Israel.

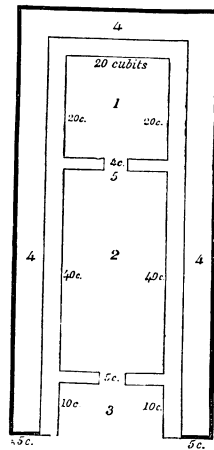
^{<1065>}**1 Kings 6:15.** The description of this verse applies to the main chamber of the temple, the holy place, only. The writer in ^{<1066>}1 Kings 6:16 describes the holy of holies.

The marginal rendering of this verse is right, and not the rendering in the text.

Fir Rather, “juniper.” See ^{<1068>}1 Kings 5:8 note.

^{<1066>}**1 Kings 6:16.** The meaning is, that at the distance of 20 cubits, measured along the side walls of the house from the end wall, Solomon constructed a partition, which reached from the floor to the ceiling and had a doorway in it. He thus made within the house, a sanctuary for a holy of holies.

<1067> **1 Kings 6:17.** Compare the following diagram:



GROUND PLAN OF TEMPLE.
 1. Holy of Holies, Oracle or Sanctuary.
 2. Holy Place, or Main-chamber.
 3. Porch.
 4. Priests' Chambers.
 5. Position of Altar of incense.

<1068> **1 Kings 6:18.** *Knops and open flowers* Rather, “gourds and opening flower-buds.” Imitations of the vegetable world are among the earliest of architectural ornaments. They abound in the architecture of Egypt and Persia. In that of Assyria they occur more sparingly.

<1069> **1 Kings 6:20.** *The fore part* Perhaps “the interior.”

And so covered ... Rather, “and he covered the altar (of incense) with cedar.” The altar was doubtless of stone, and was covered with cedar in preparation for the overlaying with gold. This overlaying was not gilding, but the attachment of thin plates of gold, which had to be fastened on with small nails. Such a mode of ornamentation was common in Babylonia, in Assyria, and in Media.

<1070> **1 Kings 6:21.** *The house* i.e., the main chamber.

The chains of gold Omit “the.” Their object was to form a barrier between the holy place and the holy of holies.

<1072> **1 Kings 6:22.** The lavish use of the precious metals in ornamentation was a special feature of early Oriental architecture. Recent researches have given reason to believe that two stages of the great temple at Borsippa — now known as the Bits Nimrud — had respectively a gold and a silver coating.

1 Kings 6:23. *Two cherubims* The pattern of the tabernacle was followed (marginal reference), but without servile imitation. The original cherubs were entirely of gold. These, being so much larger, were of wood, merely overlaid with a golden plating. The arrangement of the wings, and the direction of the faces, seem also to have been different. Moses' cherubim "covered with their wings over the mercy seat;" Solomon's stretched out theirs to the full (**1 Kings 6:27**), so that the four wings, each five cubits long (**1 Kings 6:24**), extended across the whole sanctuary, the width of which was twenty cubits (**1 Kings 6:20**). The former looked toward one another, and were bent downward toward the mercy-seat; the latter looked outward, toward the great chamber. (See **2 Chronicles 3:13**, and note.)

Of olive-tree The oleaster or wild olive, not the cultivated species.

1 Kings 6:29. Palms, cherubs, and flowers — the main decorations of Solomon's temple — bear considerable resemblance to the ornamentation of the Assyrians, a circumstance which can scarcely be accidental.

Within and without i.e., both in the inner chamber, or holy of holies, and in the outer one.

1 Kings 6:31. *A fifth part* Better than the margin. The meaning seems to be that the lintel was one-fifth of the width of the wall, and each door-post one-fifth of its height. Thus the opening was a square of four cubits, or of six feet.

1 Kings 6:32. *The two doors* i.e., two leaves which met in the middle, as in the Assyrian gate-ways generally.

Spread gold The doors were not simply sheeted with gold, like the floors (**1 Kings 6:30**), but had the gold hammered to fit the forms of the palms, cherubs, and flowers carved upon them. (**1 Kings 6:35**.) Such hammered metal-work, generally in bronze, has been found in tolerable abundance among the Assyrian remains.

1 Kings 6:33. *The door of the temple* The door, that is, which led from the porch into the great chamber of the temple. Its posts were "a fourth part of the wall," or, "five cubits high," which was, therefore, the height of the doorway.

~~<1064>~~ **1 Kings 6:34.** *Fir-tree* Rather, juniper (~~<1068>~~ 1 Kings 5:8 note). Each door was made in two parts, which folded back one on the other like shutters, by means of hinges. The weight of the doors no doubt made it inconvenient to open the whole door on every occasion.

~~<1066>~~ **1 Kings 6:36.** *The inner court* An outer court is mentioned in ~~<1069>~~ 2 Chronicles 4:9. The inner court is probably identical with the “higher court” of Jeremiah (~~<2060>~~ Jeremiah 36:10), being raised above the outer, as were sometimes the inner courts of Assyrian palaces. The court seems to have surrounded the temple. Its dimensions may be reasonably presumed to have been double those of the court of the tabernacle, i.e., 100 cubits on each side of the temple, and 200 cubits at the ends; or, about 720 feet long by 360 broad.

With three rows of hewed stone Either a fence enclosing the court, or the area of the court, which was possibly formed by three layers of hewn stone placed one above the other, and was then boarded on the top with cedar planks. Such a construction would no doubt be elaborate; but if it was desired to elevate the inner court above the outer, this is the way in which it would be likely to have been done. The temple would be placed, like the Assyrian palaces, on an artificial platform; and the platform, being regarded as a part of the sacred building, would be constructed of the best material.

~~<1068>~~ **1 Kings 6:38.** *Seven years* More exactly, “seven years and six months,” since Zif was the second, and Bul the eighth month. (~~<1069>~~ 1 Kings 6:1.)

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 7

1 Kings 7:1. *Thirteen years* The thirteen years, i.e., counting from the end of the seven (^{<1068>}1 Kings 6:38). Solomon's buildings thus occupied him twenty years (^{<1090>}1 Kings 9:10; ^{<4400>}2 Chronicles 8:1), from the fourth year of his reign to the twenty-fourth. The difference in the time taken by the temple and the palace is to be accounted for,

(1) by the long period of preparation which preceded the actual building of the former (^{<1272>}1 Chronicles 22:2-4; ^{<1053>}1 Kings 5:13-18); and

(2) by the greater size of the palace, which consisted of several large ranges of buildings. (See the next note.)

1 Kings 7:2. Many have supposed that the buildings mentioned in ^{<1000>}1 Kings 7:1,2,8, were three entirely distinct and separate buildings. But it is perhaps best to consider the "house" of ^{<1000>}1 Kings 7:1 as the palace proper — Solomon's own dwelling-house (see ^{<1078>}1 Kings 7:8); the house of ^{<1072>}1 Kings 7:2, as the state apartments; and the house for Pharaoh's daughter as the harem or zenana; and to regard these three groups of buildings as distinct, though interconnected, and as together constituting what is else-where termed "the king's house" (^{<1090>}1 Kings 9:10).

The house of the forest of Lebanon This name was probably given from the supposed resemblance of the mass of cedar pillars, which was its main feature, to the Lebanon cedar forest. Its length of "a hundred cubits," or 150 feet, was nearly twice as long as the entire temple without the porch. Some of the great halls in Assyrian palaces were occasionally as much as 180 feet.

The breadth "of fifty cubits," or 75 feet, is a breadth very much greater than is ever found in Assyria, and one indicative of the employment in the two countries of quite different methods of roofing. By their use of pillars the Jews, like the Persians, were able to cover in a very wide space.

Four rows The Septuagint gives "three rows." If the pillars were forty-five (^{<1000>}1 Kings 7:3), fifteen in a row, there should have been but three rows, as seems to have been the case in the old palace of Cyrus at Pasargadae. If there were four rows of fifteen, the number of pillars should have been sixty.

1 Kings 7:4. Either three ranges of windows, one above the other, on either side of the house; or perhaps the three ranges were one in either side wall, and the third in a wall down the middle of the hall, along the course of the midmost row of pillars. The windows were directly opposite one another, giving what we call a through light.

1 Kings 7:5. *All the doors and posts* The doorways, and the posts which formed them, seem to be intended. These were square at top, not arched or rounded. In Assyrian buildings arched doorways were not uncommon. The doorways also, like the windows, exactly faced one another.

1 Kings 7:6. Probably the porch of the “House of the Forest.” Porches of columns immediately in front of columnar chambers were a favorite feature of Persian architecture. The whole verse should be translated, “And he made the porch of the pillars in length 50 cubits, and in breadth 30 cubits, and a porch before them (i.e., the pillars), and pillars, and a base (or step) before them.” Most of the Persepolitan porches had small pillared chambers at some little distance in front of them.

1 Kings 7:7. The porch or gate of justice still kept alive the likeness of the old patriarchal custom of sitting in judgment at the gate; exactly as the “Gate of justice” still recalls it at Granada, and the Sublime Porte — “the Lofty Gate” — at Constantinople.

1 Kings 7:8. *Like unto this porch* i.e., of similar materials, hewn stone and cedar. The zenana could not have been a mere portico.

1 Kings 7:9. The stones were uniform — all cut to certain fixed measures of length, breadth, and thickness. They were not squared only on the face which showed, but also on the sides which fell within the wall and were not seen. Saws appear in Assyrian sculptures of the age of Sennacherib; and fragments of an iron saw have been found at Nimrud.

1 Kings 7:10. See the **1 Kings 5:17** note.

1 Kings 7:12. The palace, like the temple, had two courts (**1 Kings 6:36**), not, however, one immediately within the other. The lesser court of the palace seems to have been a private inner court among the buildings (**1 Kings 7:8**). The greater court was outside all the buildings,

surrounding the palace on every side. Assyrian palaces had always such an external court, and had generally one or more inner courts or quadrangles.

Both for the inner court By a slight alteration of the text, the meaning would be “as (was done) in the inner court, etc. and in the porch.”

~~<1073>~~ **1 Kings 7:13.** *Hiram* A man who bore the same name as the king of Tyre, a master workman, known as Hiram Ab, i.e. Master Hiram (~~<3423>~~ 2 Chronicles 2:13; 4:16).

~~<1074>~~ **1 Kings 7:14.** Hiram’s mother, while by birth of the tribe of Dan, had had for her first husband a man of the tribe of Naphtali. (Compare this verse and margin reference.)

All his work The work that he personally did for Solomon seems to have been limited to metal-work, and indeed to works in brass. (See below, ~~<1075>~~ 1 Kings 7:45, and compare ~~<4416>~~ 2 Chronicles 4:16.)

~~<1075>~~ **1 Kings 7:15.** These famous pillars, which were broken in pieces by the Babylonians when they destroyed Jerusalem (~~<1253>~~ 2 Kings 25:13; ~~<3527>~~ Jeremiah 52:17), were probably for ornament, standing by themselves under or in front of the porch. It is certain that the Phoenicians used isolated metal columns as sacred ornaments, so that Hiram would be familiar with such a mode of ornamentation. Eighteen cubits appear to have been the height of the shaft only. Adding the capital (~~<1076>~~ 1 Kings 7:16,19), the entire metal pillar was 27 cubits high; and if it had a stone base of eight cubits, which would not be greatly out of proportion, the height of 35 cubits (52 1/2 feet, ~~<4485>~~ 2 Chronicles 3:15) would have been reached. The height of some of the Persepolitan columns, with which these pillars may be best compared, is 67 feet. The circumference of 12 cubits (18 feet) implies a diameter of about 5 feet 9 inches at the base, which would make the column somewhat heavy in appearance. Egyptian pillars were, however, even thicker in proportion to their height. On the supposition that a portion of the original text has fallen out, this verse has been thus completed: “He cast two pillars of brass; eighteen cubits was the height of the one pillar, and eighteen cubits was the height of the other pillar; and a line of twelve cubits compassed the one pillar, and a line of twelve cubits compassed the other pillar.”

~~<1076>~~ **1 Kings 7:16.** The general character of the “chapters” or capitals, their great size in proportion to the shaft, which is as one to two, and their

construction of two quite different members, remind us of the pillars used by the Persians in their palaces, which were certainly more like Jachin and Boaz than any pillars that have reached us from antiquity. The ornamentation, however, seems to have been far more elaborate than that of the Persian capitals.

<1077> **1 Kings 7:17.** *Nets ...* Rather “Nets chequerwise, and festoons chainwise,” — probably a fine network over the whole, and chainwork hanging in festoons outside.

Seven for the one chapter The Septuagint reading is preferable. “A net for the one chapter and a net for the other chapter.” Compare <1074> 1 Kings 7:41.

<1078> **1 Kings 7:18.** The pomegranate was one of the most common ornaments in Assyria. It was used on quivers, on spear-shafts, and maceheads, in patterns on doorways and pavements, etc. It is doubtful whether a symbolic meaning was attached to it, or whether it was merely selected as a beautiful natural form.

<1079> **1 Kings 7:19.** There is a cornice of (so-called) lilywork at Persepolis, consisting of three ranges of broadish rounded leaves, one over the other. Lilies are also represented with much spirit on a bas-relief from Koyunjik.

<1072> **1 Kings 7:20.** In this verse also a portion of the original text is supposed to have fallen out in consequence of the repetition of words. The full phrase of the original has been retained in <1076> 1 Kings 7:16,17. It may be restored thus: “And the pomegranates were two hundred in rows round about upon the one chapter, and two hundred in rows round about upon the other chapter.” The “four hundred” (<1072> 1 Kings 7:42; <3493> 2 Chronicles 4:13), are obtained by counting the pomegranates of both pillars together. In <3523> Jeremiah 52:23, is an account of the arrangement of a single row of pomegranates, whereof each pillar had two.

<1072> **1 Kings 7:21.** The Septuagint in the parallel passage (margin reference), translate Jachin and Boaz by **Κατορθωσις** <3717> and **Ισχυς** <2479> — “Direction” and “Strength.” The literal meaning of the names is given in the margin. The meaning was probably “God will establish in strength” (i.e. firmly) the temple and the religion connected with it.

^{<1072>}**1 Kings 7:23.** The “molten sea “of Solomon, so called from its great size, took the place of the laver of the tabernacle (^{<0208>}Exodus 30:18-21), which was required for the ablutions of the priests. It was ten cubits, or fully fifteen feet, in diameter at top, and therefore forty-seven feet in circumference, with a depth of 5 cubits, or 7 1/2 feet. As a vessel of these dimensions, if hemispherical, would certainly not hold 2,000 (^{<1072>}1 Kings 7:26), much less 3,000 (^{<4018>}2 Chronicles 4:3) baths, the bath equaling 8 1/2 gallons, it is now generally supposed that the bowl bulged considerably below the brim, and further, that it had a “foot,” — or basin which received the water as it was drawn out by taps from the bowl. The “2,000 baths” may give the quantity of water ordinarily supplied to the “sea;” the “3,000 baths” the utmost that the laver could anyhow take. Bowls of a considerable size are represented in the Assyrian bas-reliefs; but none of such dimensions as Solomon’s. The largest mentioned by the Greeks held only 5,400 gallons, less than one-third of the contents of the “molten sea,” even according to the lowest estimate.

^{<1072>}**1 Kings 7:24.** *Knops* literally, “gourds,” — i.e. a boss or ball ornament encircled the rim of the bowl in two rows.

^{<1072>}**1 Kings 7:25.** Josephus charged Solomon with a breach of the Commandment (^{<0204>}Exodus 20:4,5), on account of the oxen here and the lions for his throne. The charge expresses the prohibition which some Jews have conceived the Commandment to urge against the arts of sculpture and painting.

^{<1072>}**1 Kings 7:26.** The palm or hand-breadth seems to have a little exceeded three inches.

With flowers of lilies Rather, “in the shape of a lily flower.” The rim was slightly curved outward, like the rim of an ordinary drinking-cup, or the edge of a lily blossom. See ^{<4045>}2 Chronicles 4:5 margin.

^{<1072>}**1 Kings 7:27.** *Ten bases of brass* These were for the ten lavers (^{<1073>}1 Kings 7:38. See ^{<4016>}2 Chronicles 4:6). In general terms the bases were square stands, 6 feet each way, and 4 1/2 feet high, elaborately ornamented on their four sides, and resting upon four wheels, 2 1/4 feet in diameter. Each stand supported a laver 6 feet high, which contained 40 baths (^{<1073>}1 Kings 7:38), or about 340 gallons.

~~1078~~ **1 Kings 7:28.** *Borders* Rather, “panels” (so ~~1073~~ 1 Kings 7:32,35), a set of square compartments between the “ledges” or borders, or mouldings. Below the panelling, with its ornamentation of lions, oxen (the two animal forms which occur most frequently in Assyrian decoration), and cherubim, was a space decorated with “additions of thin work” (~~1072~~ 1 Kings 7:29).

Upon the “ledges” (~~1072~~ 1 Kings 7:29) which surrounded the top of the base there was a stand for the laver, distinct from the upper surface of the base.

~~1073~~ **1 Kings 7:30.** *Plates of brass* Rather, “brazen axletrees.”

The “undersetters” (literally, “shoulders”) are conjectured to have been four brackets, or bars, proceeding from the four upper corners of the bases, and stretching upward to the outer rim of the laver, which thus rested partly upon them.

At the side of every addition Rather, “each opposite garlands.” The laver was ornamented with a garland at the place where the support reached it.

~~1071~~ **1 Kings 7:31.** It seems impossible to determine what is meant by the “mouth” of the laver, or what by its “chapter.”

~~1072~~ **1 Kings 7:32.** With the diameter (2 1/4 ft.) of the wheel here, may be compared that of the earliest Assyrian chariot-wheels, which was under 3 feet; and that of the front wheels seen in representations of Assyrian close carriages, which scarcely exceed 1/4th of the height of the entire vehicle. The wheels of these moveable lavers appear to have been a little less than 1/5th of the height of the whole structure.

~~1074~~ **1 Kings 7:34.** The undersetters were cast with the base, not afterward attached to it, and were therefore stronger and better able to support the laver.

~~1075~~ **1 Kings 7:35.** *A round compass* A circular elevation, half a cubit high, rather than a circular depression, half a cubit deep. Compare ~~1072~~ 1 Kings 7:29. The “ledges” and “borders” of the top of the base were its “hands” and its “panels.” These “hands,” distinct from the “shoulders” (~~1070~~ 1 Kings 7:30), were probably supports, adorned with engraved plates (~~1076~~ 1 Kings 7:36), either of the elevated circle on which the laver stood, or

of the lower part of the laver itself. Both panels and “hands” were “of the same,” i.e. of one piece with the base, cast at the same time.

^{<1076>}**1 Kings 7:36.** *According to the proportion of every one* i.e. “as large as the room left for them allowed,” implying that the panels were smaller than those on the sides of the base, and allowed scant room for the representations.

^{<1078>}**1 Kings 7:38.** *Every laver was four cubits* Assuming height to be intended, and taking the cubit at 20 inches, the entire height of the lavers as they stood upon their wheeled stands would seem to have been 13 ft. 9 in. It is evident, therefore, that the water must have been drawn from them, as from the “molten sea,” through cocks or taps.

^{<1074>}**1 Kings 7:40.** *Lavers* Rather, according to the true reading, “pots.” (Compare ^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:45; ^{<4416>}2 Chronicles 4:16.) The “pots” were the caldrons in which it was usual to boil the peace-offerings. See ^{<0123>}1 Samuel 2:13,14.

^{<1076>}**1 Kings 7:46.** *Succoth and Zarthan* See ^{<1072>}Judges 7:22: 8:5 note.

^{<1074>}**1 Kings 7:47.** The brass of which the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, the brass sea, and the various vessels were made had been taken by David from two cities belonging to Hadadezer, king of Zobah (^{<3818>}1 Chronicles 18:8).

^{<1078>}**1 Kings 7:48.** See the note to ^{<1063>}1 Kings 6:20 and ^{<4419>}2 Chronicles 4:19-22.

^{<1079>}**1 Kings 7:49,50.** See the notes to ^{<02531>}Exodus 25:31-38. The “bowls” of ^{<10751>}1 Kings 7:50 were the “bowls” for the tables (^{<02716>}Exodus 37:16), large vases containing oil for the lamps.

^{<10751>}**1 Kings 7:51.** *The things which David had dedicated* Not only the things described in ^{<3814>}1 Chronicles 28:14-18, but also the spoil of the nations which he had subdued (margin reference), and also the vessels of gold, silver, and brass, sent him by Toi king of Hamath, on his victory over Hadadezer. Solomon now brought these into the temple treasury. A sacred treasury had been established at least as early as the time of Saul, to which Saul himself, Abner, Joab, and others, had contributed (^{<3338>}1 Chronicles 26:28).

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 8

1 Kings 8:1. There seems to be a contrast here between the more popular proceedings of David (**2 Samuel 6:1**), and the statelier system of his son, who merely summons the chief men as representatives of the nation. The rest of the people “assembled themselves” (**1 Kings 8:2**), and were mere spectators of the solemnity.

1 Kings 8:2. *The feast in the month Ethanim* i.e. the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Ingathering, the commemoration of the dwelling in booths at the time of the Exodus (margin reference), and the festival of thanksgiving on account of the completion of harvest (**Exodus 23:16**; **Leviticus 23:39**; **Deuteronomy 16:13**). It was one of the three on which the people were required to “appear before the Lord.”

1 Kings 8:3. In **2 Chronicles 5:4**, ““the Levites” took up the ark;” and by the Law the ark was the special charge of the Kohathites (**Numbers 3:31**; **4:15**). But all priests were Levites (**Joshua 3:3**), though all Levites were not priests. And as Joshua had done (**Joshua 3:6**; **6:6**), so Solomon called upon the priests to bear the holy structure, allowing to mere Levites only the inferior honor of helping to transport the tabernacle and the vessels of the sanctuary.

1 Kings 8:4. *And the tabernacle of the congregation* Not the tented structure erected for the ark on Mount Zion (**2 Samuel 6:17**) by David, but the original tabernacle made by Moses, which had hitherto remained at Gibeon (margin reference). The tabernacle and its holy vessels were probably placed in the treasury.

1 Kings 8:8. It was forbidden to withdraw the staves wholly from the rings (margin reference); but they appear to have been now drawn forward in such a way that their ends or heads could be seen from the holy place, or great chamber of the temple, though without their being visible from the porch or vestibule. Either the doorway into the holy of holies was not exactly opposite the ark, but a little on one side; or, though that doorway was in the middle, opposite the ark, the doorway from the porch into the main chamber was not opposite to it. In Assyrian temples the arrangement

of the outer door, the inner door, and the sanctuary, seems to have been designedly such that a mere passer-by on the outside should not obtain even a glimpse of the shrine. It is suggested that the withdrawal of the staves was intended as a sign that the ark had reached “the place of its rest,” and was not to be borne about anymore.

There they are unto this day This is a quotation from an author who lived while the temple was still standing. See also ^{<1021>}1 Kings 9:21.

^{<1019>}**1 Kings 8:9.** Comparing this statement with ^{<804>}Hebrews 9:4, it would seem that Solomon, now that the sacred chest had reached its final resting-place, and stood in a large chamber surrounded by tables (^{<408>}2 Chronicles 4:8), removed the pot of manna and the rod from the interior, and set them elsewhere in the holy of holies.

^{<1010>}**1 Kings 8:10.** The cloud — the visible symbol of the divine presence — the Shechinah of the Targums — which had been promised before the ark was begun (^{<0246>}Exodus 29:43), and had filled the tabernacle as soon as it was completed (^{<0184>}Exodus 40:34), and which had probably been seen from time to time during the long interval when we have no express mention of it, now once more appeared in full magnificence, and took, as it were, possession of the building which Solomon was dedicating. The presence of God in the temple henceforth was thus assured to the Jews, and His approval of all that Solomon had done was signified.

^{<1011>}**1 Kings 8:11.** As in the case of Moses (^{<0415>}Exodus 40:35), so now the glory of the Lord, the manifestation of the divine presence, which the cloud usually veiled, shone forth from it with such brilliancy, that mortal man could not bear the sight.

^{<1012>}**1 Kings 8:12.** Rather, “The Lord spake of dwelling in the thick darkness” (margin reference). Solomon sees in the cloud the visible symbol of God’s presence, and accepts the token as a proof that He has taken possession of the house built for Him, and will thenceforth dwell there (^{<1013>}1 Kings 8:13).

^{<1014>}**1 Kings 8:14.** Solomon had spoken the preceding words, addressed to God, with his face directed to the holy of holies. He now turned around and looked outward toward the people. The people “stood” to hear him the attitude of respect and attention. This first blessing seems to have been

without speech — an inward prayer accompanied by the ordinary gesture of blessing.

<1085> **1 Kings 8:15.** The exact words of 2 Samuel 7 are not reproduced; only their general sense is given. In <1088> 1 Kings 8:18, what was merely tacitly implied was regarded as actually “said.”

<1086> **1 Kings 8:16.** The marginal reference completes the sense of this verse here. The passage is in accordance with archaic modes of speech, and is probably the more verbally accurate of the two.

<1082> **1 Kings 8:22.** The margin reference shows that the king was so placed as to be seen by all present, and that, before beginning his prayer, he knelt down upon his knees (compare <1085> 1 Kings 8:54).

<1083> **1 Kings 8:23.** Compare <1070> Deuteronomy 7:9.

<1088> **1 Kings 8:28.** Solomon’s prayer is, perhaps, generally for the fulfillment of all the promises made to David in connection with the building of the temple. But there seems to be special allusion in this verse to the promise recorded in <1024> Psalm 132:14.

<1087> **1 Kings 8:27.** *heaven of heavens* Compare <504> Deuteronomy 10:14; <1084> Psalm 148:4. It seems to mean the heaven in its most extended compass. Solomon combines with his belief in Yahweh’s special presence in the temple, the strongest conviction that He is no local or finite deity, but is ever present everywhere. Compare <1007> Psalm 139:7-10.

<1089> **1 Kings 8:29.** The choice of Jerusalem as the place seems to have been made by special revelation to David. See <1088> Psalm 78:68; 132:13; and compare <1301> 1 Chronicles 22:1.

Toward this place Better (here and in <1080> 1 Kings 8:30) than the marginal “in.” Wherever they were, the Jews always worshipped toward the temple. (See margin reference.)

And when thou hearest, forgive literally, “both hear and forgive” — i.e., “hear the prayer, and forgive the sin” which alone causes God to chasten men or to withhold from them His choicest blessings.

<1088> **1 Kings 8:31.** *The oath come before ...* “The oath” is equivalent to “the man who swears the oath.” A slight alteration in the present Hebrew

text gives the sense “and he (the accused) go and swear before thine altar,” etc. The threats and the promises, the punishments and calamities of ^{<1083>}1 Kings 8:31-38 were distinctly named in the Law. See the margin reference.

^{<1086>}**1 Kings 8:36.** *Teach them ...* Rather, “when thou art teaching them (by thy chastisement) the good way that they should walk in,” i.e. when thou art still teaching, not taking vengeance.

^{<1087>}**1 Kings 8:37.** *In the land of their cities* literally, “in the land of their gates.” Hence, the marginal translation “jurisdiction,” because judgments were pronounced in the town gates (^{<5168>}Deuteronomy 16:18). Another reading gives “in one of their cities.”

^{<1088>}**1 Kings 8:38.** *Know every man the plague of his own heart* i.e. perceive one’s sinfulness, or recognize one’s sufferings as divine chastisements, and sin as their cause.

^{<1089>}**1 Kings 8:41.** Nothing is more remarkable in the Mosaic Law than its liberality with regard to strangers, both in general (^{<10221>}Exodus 22:21; ^{<10255>}Leviticus 25:35; ^{<5109>}Deuteronomy 10:19) and in religious matters (^{<10514>}Numbers 15:14-16; ^{<5112>}Deuteronomy 31:12). It is quite in the spirit of these enactments that Solomon, having first prayed to God on behalf of his fellow-countrymen, should next go on to intercede for the strangers, and to ask for their prayers the same acceptance which he had previously begged for the prayers of faithful Israelites.

For thy name’s sake i.e. “to visit the place where Thou hast set Thy name” (Compare ^{<5135>}Deuteronomy 12:5,11, etc.).

^{<1092>}**1 Kings 8:42.** *Great name* A somewhat rare expression. It does not occur at all in the Pentateuch; though “mighty hand” and the “stretched out arm” are so frequent (^{<1116>}Exodus 6:6; 13:9; ^{<1129>}Deuteronomy 9:29): only once in Joshua (^{<1179>}Joshua 7:9); and twice in the Psalms (^{<1970>}Psalms 76:1; 99:3). About the time of the captivity the use of the phrase became more common (^{<5123>}Ezekiel 36:23; ^{<2106>}Jeremiah 10:6; 44:26).

^{<1093>}**1 Kings 8:43.** *That all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee* Solomon prays that the result of Yahweh’s hearing the prayers of pagans addressed toward the temple may be the general conversion of the world to the worship of Him. Compare Psalm 96; 98.

This house ... literally, as in the margin. In Scripture, when God's Name is said to be "called upon" persons or things, it seems to be meant that God is really present in them, upholding them and sanctifying them. This passage therefore means, that the pagan, when their prayers, directed toward the temple, are granted, will have a full assurance that God is present in the building in some very special way.

^{<1084>}**1 Kings 8:47.** *Bethink themselves* literally, as in the margin — i.e. "reflect," "consider seriously." Compare ^{<630>}Deuteronomy 30:1.

Sinned, done perversely, committed wickedness The words here used seem to have become the standard form of expressing contrition when the time of the captivity arrived and the Israelites were forcibly removed to Babylon (compare the margin reference). The three expressions are thought to form a climax, rising from negative to positive guilt, and from mere wrongful acts to depravation of the moral character.

^{<1085>}**1 Kings 8:50.** *Compassion ...* Not merely such compassion as Evil-Merodach showed toward Jehoiachin (^{<1257>}2 Kings 25:27-30; ^{<2623>}Jeremiah 52:31-34), but such as Cyrus and Artaxerxes showed in allowing the captive Jews to return to their own land (^{<1506>}Ezra 1:3; ^{<4116>}Nehemiah 2:6).

^{<1086>}**1 Kings 8:51.** *The furnace of iron* Egypt is so called as a place of severe trial and affliction.

^{<1084>}**1 Kings 8:54.** If the prayer of Solomon be, as it has all the appearance of being, a genuine document of the time, preserved in the archives to which the authors of both Kings and Chronicles had access, all theories of the late origin of Deuteronomy must be regarded as baseless. While references are not infrequent to other portions of the Pentateuch, the language of the prayer is mainly modelled upon Deuteronomy, the promises and threats contained in which are continually before the mind of the writer. (See the margin reference).

^{<1088>}**1 Kings 8:58.** *Incline our hearts* This is a doctrine which first appears in Scripture in the Davidical Psalms (see the margin reference and ^{<4904>}Psalms 141:4). Solomon in this prayer seems to be thoroughly penetrated with his father's spirit.

^{<1086>}**1 Kings 8:61.** *As at this day* i.e. "as ye are now doing, in coming with pious intentions to this festival."

1 Kings 8:63. These numbers have been thought incredible, but they are not impossible. At least 100,000, or 120,000 men (**1 Kings 8:65**) were assembled; and as they all offered sacrifice with the king (**1 Kings 8:62**), the number of victims must have been enormous. Part of the flesh of so many victims would be eaten; but much of the meat may have been privately burned (**Leviticus 19:6**), the object of the sacrifice being the glory of God, and not the convenience of the people. Profusion was a usual feature of the sacrifices of antiquity.

1 Kings 8:64. *The middle of the court* Or, “the whole area of the court “ — all the “mid” space within the enclosing walls, which thus became one huge altar, on any part of which victims might be offered at one and the same time.

1 Kings 8:65. A feast necessarily accompanied such a sacrifice as Solomon was holding. Compare **Leviticus 19:5**. On the present occasion there was a double festival — first, the Feast of the Dedication, from the 8th to the 15th of the month Ethanim (or Tisri), and then the Feast of tabernacles, from the 15th to the 22nd (**1 Kings 8:2**). On the day after this, “the eighth day,” counting from the commencement of the second seven, and the twenty-third day of the month (margin reference “m”), Solomon dismissed the people to their homes.

The entering in of Hamath Compare **Numbers 13:21**, note and margin reference The phrase marks the extreme northern boundary of the holy land.

The river of Egypt The Wady-el-Arish, the only large water-course on this coast (margin reference).

1 Kings 8:66. *Their tents* i.e. “their homes.” The word “tents” was used for “houses” from an old habit of speech, which had come down from the time when the Israelites were a nomadic nation.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 9

1 Kings 9:2. This appearance is fixed by 1 Kings 9:1 to Solomon's twenty-fourth year, the year in which he completed his palace (1 Kings 6:37,38; 7:1). The fact seems to be that, though the temple was finished in Solomon's eleventh year, the dedication did not take place until his twenty-fourth year. The order of the narrative in Kings agrees with this view, since it interposes the account of the building of the palace (1 Kings 7:1-12), and of the making of the furniture (1 Kings 7:13-51), between the completion of the building of the temple (1 Kings 6:38) and the ceremony of the Dedication (1 Kings 8).

1 Kings 9:3. The answer given by God to Solomon's prayer is reported more fully in 2 Chronicles 7:12-22.

When God puts His Name in the temple He does it, in intention, "forever." He will not arbitrarily withdraw it; there it will remain "forever," so far as God is concerned. But the people may by unfaithfulness drive it away (1 Kings 9:7-9).

And mine eyes and my heart An answer in excess of the prayer (1 Kings 8:29); "Not Mine eyes only, but Mine eyes and Mine heart."

1 Kings 9:4. See 1 Kings 3:14. Solomon's subsequent fall lends to these repeated warnings a special interest.

1 Kings 9:6. *At all turn* Rather, "If ye shall wholly turn from following Me." (See 2 Chronicles 7:19.) The Israelites were not to be cut off, except for an entire defection.

1 Kings 9:8. The Hebrew text runs — "And this house shall be high: every one," etc. The meaning appears to be, "This house shall be high" (i.e., conspicuous) "in its ruin as in its glory."

And shall hiss In contempt. This expression first appears in the time of Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29:8; Micah 6:16). It is especially familiar to Jeremiah (Jeremiah 18:16; 19:8, etc.).

1 Kings 9:10. The "twenty years" are to be counted from the fourth year of Solomon, the year when he commenced the building of the temple.

They are made up of the seven years employed in the work of the temple (^{<1068>}1 Kings 6:38), and the thirteen years during which Solomon was building his own house (^{<1070>}1 Kings 7:1).

^{<1091>}**1 Kings 9:11.** By the spirit, if not by the letter, of the Law, Solomon had no right to give away these cities, or any part of the inheritance of Israel (^{<10513>}Leviticus 25:13-34). But the exigences of a worldly policy caused the requirements of the Law to be set aside.

^{<1092>}**1 Kings 9:12.** *They pleased him not* It is a reasonable conjecture that, when a question arose with respect to a cession of land, Hiram had cast his eyes on the bay or harbour of Acco, or Ptolemais, and was therefore the more disappointed when he received an inland tract of mountain territory.

^{<1093>}**1 Kings 9:13.** Cabul is said to be a Phoenician word, and signified “displeasing” (see margin). There is some reason to believe that the cities thus despised by Hiram were restored to Solomon (^{<1402>}2 Chronicles 8:2), and that Solomon rebuilt them and colonized them with Israelites.

^{<1094>}**1 Kings 9:14.** *Hiram sent sixscore talents of gold* Apparently, to show that, although disappointed, he was not offended. The sum sent was very large — above a million and a quarter of our money, according to one estimate of the weight of the Hebrew gold talent; or about 720,000 according to the estimate adopted in ^{<12324>}Exodus 38:24-29 note. At any rate, it was more than equal to a sixth part of Solomon’s regular revenue (^{<11004>}1 Kings 10:14).

^{<1095>}**1 Kings 9:15.** *Levy* See the marginal reference note.

Millo See ^{<1070>}2 Samuel 5:9 note. The Septuagint commonly render the word ἡ ^{<3588>} *ακρᾶ* ^{<206>}, “the citadel,” and it may possibly have been the fortress on Mount Zion connected with the Maccabean struggles (1 Macc. 4:41; 13:49-52). Its exact site has not been determined.

And the wall of Jerusalem David’s fortification (^{<1070>}2 Samuel 5:9; ^{<13108>}1 Chronicles 11:8) had been hasty, and had now — fifty years later — fallen into decay. Solomon therefore had to “repair the breaches of the city of David” (^{<11127>}1 Kings 11:27).

Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer were three of the most important sites in the holy land. For the two first places, compare the marginal references and notes.

Gezer was a main city of the south. It was situated on the great maritime plain, and commanded the ordinary line of approach from Egypt, which was along this low region. The importance of Gezer appears from ^{<603>}Joshua 10:33; 12:12, etc. Its site is near Tell Jezer, and marked now by Abu Shusheh. Though within the lot of Ephraim (^{<643>}Joshua 16:3), and especially assigned to the Kohathite Levites (^{<621>}Joshua 21:21), it had never yet been conquered from the old inhabitants (marginal references), who continued to dwell in it until Solomon's time, and apparently were an independent people (^{<1016>}1 Kings 9:16).

Pharaoh took it before the marriage of Solomon with his daughter, and gave it "for a present" — i.e., for a dowry. Though in the East husbands generally pay for their wives, yet dower is given in some cases. Sargon gave Cilicia as a dowry with his daughter when he married her to Ambris king of Tubal: and the Persian kings seem generally to have given satrapial or other high offices as dowries to the husbands of their daughters.

^{<1017>}**1 Kings 9:17.** *Beth-horon the nether* See the marginal reference note.

^{<1018>}**1 Kings 9:18.** *Tadmor* The Hebrew text here has, as written, Tamor (or Tamar), and as read, Tadmor. That the latter place, or Palmyra, was meant appears, first, from the distinct statement of Chronicles (^{<1404>}2 Chronicles 8:4) that Solomon built Tadmor, and the improbability that the fact would be omitted in Kings; secondly, from the strong likelihood that Solomon, with his wide views of commerce, would seize and fortify the Palmyrene Oasis: and thirdly, from the unanimity of the old versions in rendering Tamar here by Tadmor. The probability seems to be that Tamar was the original name of the place, being the Hebrew word for "a palm," from where it is generally agreed that the town derived its name. Tadmor was a corrupt or dialectic variety of the word, which was adopted at the city itself, and prevailed over the original appellation. No reference is found to Tadmor in the Assyrian inscriptions, or in any Classical writer before Pliny.

^{<1019>}**1 Kings 9:19.** "The cities of store" contained provisions stored up for the troops (compare ^{<1428>}2 Chronicles 32:28). They seem to have been chiefly in the north — in Hamath (^{<1404>}2 Chronicles 8:4) and Naphtali (^{<1404>}2

Chronicles 16:4). On the “cities for his chariots,” see ^{<1102>}1 Kings 10:26 note.

By “that which Solomon desired to build” (see the margin) seem to be intended “pleasaunces” in or near the capital, and in the Lebanon range, built especially for the enjoyment of the king.

^{<1021>}**1 Kings 9:21.** See ^{<1055>}1 Kings 5:15 note.

^{<1022>}**1 Kings 9:22.** Comparing this with ^{<1053>}1 Kings 5:13,14, it would seem that a modified service of forced labor for one-third of each year was not regarded as reducing those who were subject to it to the condition of bondmen.

^{<1023>}**1 Kings 9:23.** *Five hundred and fifty* See ^{<1056>}1 Kings 5:16 note.

^{<1024>}**1 Kings 9:24.** Compare the marginal reference. Solomon was not satisfied that Pharaoh’s daughter should remain in the palace of David, which was on Mount Zion, in the immediate vicinity of the temple, because he regarded the whole vicinity of the temple as made holy by the presence of the ark of God. His own palace was on the other (western) hill, probably directly opposite to the temple, the valley of the Tyropoeum running between them.

^{<1025>}**1 Kings 9:25.** *Three times* i.e., (see the marginal reference) the three solemn Feasts — the Feast of unleavened bread, the Feast of weeks, and the Feast of tabernacles.

Did Solomon offer ... and he burnt incense Not with his own hand, but by his priests (^{<1086>}1 Kings 8:6; ^{<1487>}2 Chronicles 5:7-14). In sacred, as in ordinary, history, men are said to do that which they cause to be done.

^{<1026>}**1 Kings 9:26.** On Ezion-geber and Eloth, see the notes to marginal references. As the entire tract about Elath (Akaba) is destitute of trees, it is conjectured that the wood of which Solomon built his fleet was cut in Lebanon, floated to Gaza by sea, and thence conveyed across to Ezion-geber, at the head of the Elanitic Gulf, by land carriage. (Compare ^{<1426>}2 Chronicles 2:16.)

^{<1027>}**1 Kings 9:27.** *Shipmen* See ^{<1086>}1 Kings 5:6 note. With respect to the acquaintance of the Phoenicians with this particular sea, it may be observed that they are not unlikely to have had trading settlements there, as they had

in the Persian Gulf, even at this early period. The commerce with Ophir was probably an established trade, previously either in their hands or in those of the Egyptians, when Solomon determined to have a share in it. The Egyptians had navigated the other arm of the Red Sea, and perhaps its lower parts, from a much more ancient period.

~~<1008>~~ **1 Kings 9:28.** On Ophir, see the marginal reference note. Among the various opinions three predominate; all moderns, except a very few, being in favor of Arabia, India, or Eastern Africa. Arabia's claims are supported by the greatest number.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 10

1 Kings 10:1. Doubt has arisen whether the “queen of Sheba” was an Ethiopian or an Arabian princess. Both countries profess to have traditions on the subject connecting the queen of Sheba with their history; and in both countries, curiously enough, government by queens was common. But the claims of Arabia decidedly preponderate. The Arabian Sheba was the great spice country of the ancient world; whereas Ethiopia furnished no spices. The Arabian Sheba was an important kingdom. Sheba in Ethiopia was a mere town, subject to Meroe. And it may be doubted whether the Cushite Sheba of Scripture (^{<1107>}Genesis 10:7) is not rather to be sought on the shores of the Persian Gulf (^{<1107>}Genesis 10:7 note), from where no one supposes “the queen of Sheba” to have come. If Ophir be placed in Arabia, there will be an additional reason for regarding Sheba as in the same quarter, because then Solomon’s trade with that place will account for his fame having reached the Sabaean princess.

“The fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord,” has been variously explained, and is confessedly very obscure. May it not mean what we should call “his religious fame,” as distinct from his artistic, literary, military, or political fame — “his fame with respect to God and the things of God” — or, in other words, “his moral and religious wisdom?” (compare ^{<1106>}1 Kings 10:6).

Hard questions Or “riddles” (^{<0742>}Judges 14:12), though not exactly riddles in our sense. The Orientals have always been fond of playing with words and testing each other’s wit and intelligence by verbal puzzles of various kinds. This spirit seems to have been particularly rife in Solomon’s time, for Josephus records other encounters with Hiram of Tyre and another Tyrian called Abdemonus.

1 Kings 10:2. See ^{<1100>}1 Kings 10:10 note.

1 Kings 10:5. *And the meat of his table* Compare ^{<1102>}1 Kings 4:22,23. The scene here described receives very apt illustration from the Assyrian banquet scenes, where we have numerous guests sitting, dressed handsomely in fringed robes, with armlets upon their arms, and bracelets round their wrists, attendants standing behind them, and magnificent

drinking-cups, evidently of a costly metal, in the hands of the guests, which are filled from a great wine-bowl at one end of the chamber.

And his ascent by which he went up A rendering preferable to “the burnt-offering which he offered in.” The “ascent” was probably a private way by which the king passed from his palace on the western hill, across the ravine (Tyropoeum) and up the eastern hill, to the west side of the temple area (compare the marginal reference).

1 Kings 10:9. *Blessed be the LORD thy God* This acknowledgment of Yahweh falls below the confessions of Hiram (⁴⁰¹²2 Chronicles 2:12) and Cyrus (⁴⁰⁰⁸Ezra 1:3). It does not imply more than an admission of His power as a local deity; namely, that He is the God of the Jews and of their country.

1 Kings 10:10. Strabo relates that the Sabaeans were enormously wealthy, and used gold and silver in a most lavish manner in their furniture, their utensils, and even on the walls, doors, and roofs of their houses. That the gold of Sheba should be given to Solomon was prophesied by the writer of Ps 72 (see the marginal reference). The immense abundance of spices in Arabia, and especially in the Yemen or Sabaean country, is noted by many writers. According to Strabo, the spice-trade of Arabia was in the hands of two nations, the Sabaeans and the Gerrhaeans. The spices in which they dealt seem to have been only in part the produce of Arabia itself; some of the most important kinds, as the cinnamon and the cassia, must have been imported from India, since Arabia does not yield them. The chief precious stones which Arabia now yields are the onyx and the emerald. Anciently she is said to have produced other gems. Pearls, too, were readily procurable in Arabia from the Persian Gulf fishery.

1 Kings 10:11. *The navy of Hiram* i.e., Solomon’s navy in the Red Sea, which was chiefly manned by subjects of Hiram. (see the marginal reference).

Almug-trees Probably the sandal-wood tree (pterocarpus santalinus). The wood is very heavy, hard, and fine grained, and of a beautiful garnet color, which, according to the rabbinical writers, was the color of the algum. One of the names of the red sandal-wood, in its own native country (India) is “valguka,” a word of which “algum” is a natural corruption.

~~<1102>~~ **1 Kings 10:12.** *Pillars* The Hebrew word signifies ordinarily a “prop” (margin). It is generally supposed to mean in this place a “railing,” or “balustrade,” a sense which connects and harmonises the present passage with the parallel passage in Chronicles (marginal reference), where Solomon is said to have made of the almu-wood “stairs” for the temple and for his own house.

Harp The Jewish harp (*kinnor*^{<13658>}) was of a triangular shape, and had ordinarily ten strings. It probably resembled the more ancient harp of the Assyrians, which was played with a plectrum, as was (ordinarily) the “kinnor.”

Psalteries The psaltery, or viol. Hebrew: *nebel*^{<15035>}; Greek: *ναβλα*, was a stringed instrument played with the hand; perhaps a lyre, like those on Hebrew coins, the sounding-board of which is shaped like a jug; or, perhaps, a sort of guitar, with a hollow jug-shaped body at the lower end.

~~<1104>~~ **1 Kings 10:14.** *Six hundred threescore and six talents of gold* About \$3,646,350 of our money. Solomon’s annual revenue exceeded that of Oriental empires very much greater in extent than his, and must have made him one of the richest, if not the very richest, of the monarchs of his time.

~~<1105>~~ **1 Kings 10:15.** There is no mention in the original of “spice merchants.” Two classes of traders are spoken of; but both expressions are general.

Kings of Arabia Rather, “kings of the mingled people” (compare ~~<2224>~~ Jeremiah 25:24). These were probably tribes half Jewish, half Arabian, on the borders of the western desert. They are regarded as Arabs by the author of Chronicles (marginal reference).

Governors The word used here is thought to be of Aryan origin. It appears to have been a title given by the Persians to petty governors, inferior to the great satraps of provinces. We find it borne by, among others, Tatnai (~~<1516>~~ Ezra 5:6), Zerubbabel (~~<3001>~~ Haggai 1:1), and Nehemiah (~~<1654>~~ Nehemiah 5:14). It can scarcely have been in use among the Jews so early as Solomon, and we must therefore suppose it to have been substituted by the writer of Kings for some corresponding Semitic title. The empire of Solomon was not a state governed from a single center by an organisation of satrapies or provinces (~~<1021>~~ 1 Kings 4:21 note). But exceptionally, in

some parts of the empire, the kings had been superseded by “governors” (compare ^{<1124>}1 Kings 20:24).

^{<1106>}**1 Kings 10:16.** The “targets” seem to have been long shields protecting the whole body, while the “shields” of the next verse were bucklers of a smaller size, probably round, and much lighter. They may be compared with the Assyrian long shield, and the ordinary Assyrian round shield. As the amount of gold used in each of the larger shields was only 600 shekels — worth from 650 to 700 of our money — and that used in the smaller ones was only half as much it is evident that the metal did not form the substance of the shields, but was laid as a coating or plating over them.

^{<1107>}**1 Kings 10:17.** These shields, together with the 500 taken by David from Hadadezer (^{<1107>}2 Samuel 8:7) were hung round the outer walls of a building, reckoned as belonging to the “house of the Forest of Lebanon,” but separate from it, and called sometimes “the Tower of David” (Cant. 4:4), or from its use “the armoury” (^{<2044>}Song of Solomon 4:4; ^{<2318>}Isaiah 22:8). The practice of hanging shields outside walls for ornamentation seems to have existed at Tyre (^{<3270>}Ezekiel 27:10,11), Rome, Athens, and elsewhere. Traces of it are thought to be found in the Assyrian sculptures.

^{<1108>}**1 Kings 10:18.** It is, on the whole, probable that the substance of the throne was wood, and that the ivory, cut into thin slabs, and probably carved in patterns, was applied externally as a veneer. This is found to have been the practice in Assyria. The gold was probably not placed over the ivory, but covered other parts of the throne.

^{<1109>}**1 Kings 10:19.** Representations of thrones are frequent in the Egyptian and Assyrian sculptures. They have no steps up to them, but frequently stand upon square bases. The back appears to be flat at the top, not rounded. Assyrian thrones have “stays” or arms on either side, and they stand generally upon lion’s feet. They are always accompanied by a footstool.

Lions stood beside the stays The arms of Assyrian thrones are occasionally supported by figures of animals. The throne of Rameses II at Medinet Abou has a sphinx at the side and a lion below the sphinx. The figure of the lion is naturally adopted by any imaginative race as an emblem of sovereignty. In the present case its adoption seems to have grown directly

out of the poetic imagery of inspired prophets, who, living before the time of Solomon, had compared Israel (^{<023>}Numbers 23:24; 24:9), and more particularly Judah (^{<040>}Genesis 49:9), to a lion. The “twelve lions” of ^{<100>}1 Kings 10:20 were probably intended to be emblematic of the twelve tribes. Josephus adds to the description of Solomon’s throne here given, that the seat was supported by a golden ox or bull, with its head turned over its shoulder. As the lion was especially emblematic of Judah, so was the ox or bull of Ephraim. (^{<206>}Hosea 4:16; 10:11; ^{<261>}Jeremiah 31:18, etc.)

^{<100>}**1 Kings 10:20.** Solomon’s throne, as described, is certainly grander than any of which we have a representation, either in Assyria or Egypt. Much more, then, would it transcend the thrones in inferior kingdoms.

^{<102>}**1 Kings 10:22.** This is given as the reason of the great plentifulness of silver in the time of Solomon. The “navy of Tharshish” (not the same as the navy of Ophir, ^{<105>}1 Kings 9:26) must therefore have imported very large quantities of that metal. Tharshish, or Tartessus, in Spain, had the richest silver mines known in the ancient world, and had a good deal of gold also; apes and ivory were produced by the opposite coast of Africa; and, if north Africa did not produce “peacocks,” which is uncertain, she may have produced the birds called here “tukkiyim,” which some translate “parrots,” others “guinea-fowl” — the latter being a purely African bird. The etymology of the Hebrew words here rendered “ivory,” “apes,” and “peacocks,” is uncertain; but even if of Indian origin, the Jews may have derived their first knowledge of ivory, apes, and peacocks, through nations which traded with India, and may thus have got the words into their language long before the time of Solomon. The names once fixed would be retained, whatever the quarter from where the things were procured afterward.

^{<103>}**1 Kings 10:23,24.** See the marginal references. By “all the earth” we are, of course, only to understand the kings or people of neighboring nations.

^{<105>}**1 Kings 10:25.** *His present* i.e., his tribute (^{<102>}1 Kings 4:21 note). A statement illustrated by Egyptian and Assyrian sculptures on slabs and obelisks. Tribute-bearers from the subject kings, bring not only the fixed rate of bullion, but a tribute in kind besides, consisting of the most precious products of their respective countries.

1 Kings 10:26. See **1 Kings 4:26** note. Until the time of Solomon, war-chariots had not been in use among the Jews, except to a very small extent (**1 Chronicles 18:4**). Hence, it was necessary for him to put himself on an equality in this respect with neighboring powers.

Cities for chariots They were probably fortresses upon the borders of his territory, in which he maintained the standing army necessary for the support of his dominion.

1 Kings 10:27. *Made silver as stones* This strong hyperbole marks in the most striking way the great wealth and prosperity of the capital during Solomon's reign. The lavish expenditure which impoverished the provinces, and produced, or helped to produce, the general discontent that led to the outbreak under Jeroboam, enriched the metropolis, which must have profited greatly by the residence of the court, the constant influx of opulent strangers, and the periodical visits of all Israelites not hindered by some urgent reason at the great festivals.

The "sycamore-trees in the vale" (Shephelah) are mentioned also in **1 Chronicles 27:28**. Like the olives and the vines, they were placed by David under a special overseer, on account of their value. The tree meant seems to be the sycamore proper, or "fig-mulberry," which is still common in Palestine, and is highly esteemed both on account of its fruit and its timber.

1 Kings 10:28. The word translated "linen yarn" is thought now by Hebraists to mean "a troop" or "company." If the present reading is retained, they would translate the passage — "As for the bringing up of Solomon's horses out of Egypt, a band of the king's merchants fetched a band (or troop) of horses at a price." But the reading is very uncertain. The Septuagint had before them a different one, which they render "and from Tekoa." Tekoa, the home of Amos (**Amos 1:1**), was a small town on the route from Egypt to Jerusalem, through which the horses would have naturally passed. The monuments of the 18th and of later dynasties make it clear that the horse, though introduced from abroad, became very abundant in Egypt. During the whole period of Egyptian prosperity the corps of chariots constituted a large and effective portion of the army. That horses were abundant in Egypt at the time of the Exodus is evident from **Exodus 9:3; 14:9,23,28;** **Deuteronomy 17:16**. That they continued numerous in later times appears from frequent allusions, both in the Historical Books of Scripture and in the prophets, as **2 Kings 7:6;**

18:24; ^{<2380>}Isaiah 36:9; ^{<2375>}Ezekiel 17:15, etc. The monuments show that the horse was employed by the Egyptians in peace no less than in war, private persons being often represented as paying visits to their friends in chariots.

^{<1109>}**1 Kings 10:29.** Taking the shekel at about three shillings of our money, six hundred silver shekels would be equal to about 90; and 150 shekels to 22 British pounds and 10 shillings. “Average” price seems to be in each case intended; and we may account for the comparatively high price of the chariot by supposing that by “chariot” is intended the entire equipage, including car, harness, and trained horses, of which there would be two at least, if not three. The “horses” mentioned separately from the chariots are not chariot-horses, but chargers for the cavalry.

The kings of the Hittites See ^{<1306>}2 Kings 7:6 note. The kings intended were probably Solomon’s vassals, whose armies were at his disposal if he required their aid.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 11

1 Kings 11:1. In noticing successively Solomon's excessive accumulation of silver and gold (~~1104~~1 Kings 10:14-25), his multiplication of horses (~~1105~~1 Kings 10:26-29), and his multiplication of wives, the writer has in mind the warning of Moses against these three forms of princely ostentation, all alike forbidden to an Israelite monarch (marginal reference).

Zidonians i.e., Phoenician women. A tradition states that Solomon married a daughter of Hiram, king of Tyre.

1 Kings 11:2. *Ye shall not go in unto them ...* These words are not a quotation from the Pentateuch. They merely give the general meaning of the two passages prohibiting intermarriage with neighboring idolators (marginal references). Strictly speaking, the prohibition in the Law of intermarriage was confined to the Canaanite nations. But the principle of the prohibition applied equally to the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites who all bordered on the holy land; and was so applied by Ezra (~~4500~~Ezra 9:1) and Nehemiah (~~4633~~Nehemiah 13:23).

1 Kings 11:3. These numbers seem excessive to many critics, and it must be admitted that history furnishes no parallel to them. In Cant. 6:8 the number of Solomon's legitimate wives is said to be sixty, and that of his concubines eighty. It is, perhaps probable, that the text has in this place suffered corruption. For "700" we should perhaps read "70."

1 Kings 11:4. *Old* About fifty or fifty-five. From his age at his accession (~~1106~~1 Kings 2:2 note) he could not have been more than about sixty at his death.

The true nature of Solomon's idolatry was neither complete apostasy — an apostasy from which there could be no recovery; nor a mere toleration, rather praise-worthy than blameable. Solomon did not ever openly or wholly apostatize. He continued his attendance on the worship of Yahweh, and punctually made his offerings three times a year in the temple (~~1105~~1 Kings 9:25); but his heart was not "perfect" with God. The religious earnestness of his younger days was weakened by wealth, luxury, sensualism, an increasing worldliness leading him to worldly policy and latitudinarianism arising from contact with all the manifold forms of human

opinion. His lapse into deadly sin was no doubt gradual. Partly from ostentation, partly from that sensualism which is the most common failing of Oriental monarchs, he established a harem on a grand and extraordinary scale. To gratify “strange women,” i.e., foreigners, admitted either from worldly policy, or for variety’s sake, he built magnificent temples to their false gods, right over against Jerusalem, as manifest rivals to “the temple.” He thus became the author of a syncretism, which sought to blend together the worship of Yahweh and the worship of idols — a syncretism which possessed fatal attractions for the Jewish nation. Finally, he appears himself to have frequented the idol temples (^{<11105>}1 Kings 11:5,10), and to have taken part in those fearful impurities which constituted the worst horror of the idolatrous systems, thus practically apostatising, though theoretically he never ceased to hold that Yahweh was the true God.

^{<11105>}**1 Kings 11:5.** *Went after* This expression is common in the Pentateuch, and always signifies actual idolatry (see ^{<61128>}Deuteronomy 11:28; 13:2; 28:14, etc.).

For Ashtoreth, or Astarte, the goddess of the Zidonians, see ^{<23413>}Exodus 34:13; ^{<61676>}Deuteronomy 16:21 notes. On the tomb of a Phoenician king, discovered in 1855, on the site of Sidon, mention is made of a temple of Astarte there, which the monarch built or restored; and his mother is said to have been a priestess of the goddess.

Milcom or Molech (^{<11107>}1 Kings 11:7) are variants of the term ordinarily used for “king” among the Semitic races of Western Asia, which appears in MELKarth (Phoenic.), AbiMELECH (Hebrew), AndramMELEK (Assyrian), Abd-ul-MALIK (Arabic), etc. On the character and worship of Molech, see ^{<63112>}Leviticus 20:2-5 note.

^{<11107>}**1 Kings 11:7.** Chemosh (^{<42129>}Numbers 21:29 note), seems to have been widely worshipped in Western Asia. His name occurs frequently on the “Moabite-Stone.” Car-Chemish, “the fort of Chemosh,” a great city of the northern Hittites, must have been under his protection. In Babylon he seems to have been known as Chomus-belus, or Chemosh-Bel.

The hill Olivet. At present the most southern summit only (the “Mons Offensionis”) is pointed out as having been desecrated by the idol sanctuaries: but the early Eastern travelers tell us that in their time the most northern suburb was believed to have been the site of the high place of Chemosh, the southern one that of Moloch only.

1 Kings 11:13. *One tribe* i.e., (marginal reference) the tribe of Judah. Benjamin was looked upon as absorbed in Judah, so as not to be really a tribe in the same sense as the others. Still, in memory of the fact that the existing tribe of Judah was a double one (**1 Kings 12:21**), the prophet Ahijah tore his garment into twelve parts, and kept back two from Jeroboam (**1 Kings 11:30,31**).

1 Kings 11:14. The writer has reserved for this place the various troubles of Solomon's reign, not allowing them to interrupt his previous narrative. He has, consequently, not followed chronological order. Hadad's (**1 Kings 11:23**) and Rezon's opposition belong to the early years of Solomon's reign.

Hadad was a royal title (perhaps, the Syriac name for "the Sun") both in Syria and in Idumaea (compare **Genesis 36:35**; **1 Chronicles 1:51**).

1 Kings 11:15. The verse gives certain additional particulars of David's conquest of Edom (marginal references). Joab was left, or sent, to complete the subjugation of the country, with orders to exterminate all the grown male inhabitants. It was not very often that David acted with any extreme severity in his wars; but he may have considered himself justified by policy, as he certainly was by the letter of the Law (**Deuteronomy 20:13**), in adopting this fierce course against Edom.

Was in Edom Or, according to another reading, "smote" Edom.

The slain Probably the Israelites who had fallen in the struggle. Translate, "when ... Joab was gone up to bury the slain, and had smitten every male," etc.

1 Kings 11:16. *Every male in Edom* i.e., every male whom he could find. As did Hadad and his company (**1 Kings 11:17**), so others would escape in various directions. The Edomite nation was not destroyed on the occasion.

1 Kings 11:18. *Midian* A town in the south of Judah. Paran is the desert tract immediately to the south of Judaea, the modern desert of et-Tih.

Pharaoh King of the twenty-first (Tanite) dynasty; probably he was Psusennes I, Manetho's second king. It appears to have been the policy of

the Pharaohs about this time to make friends and contract alliances with their eastern neighbors.

1 Kings 11:21. That Hadad should wait for the death of Joab before requesting leave to return to Idumaea shows how terrible an impression had been made by the severe measures which that commander had carried out twenty-five or thirty years previously (**1 Kings 11:16**). The inability of refugees to depart from an Oriental court without the king's leave, and his unwillingness ordinarily to grant leave, are illustrated by many passages in the history of Persia.

1 Kings 11:23. *Rezon* Possibly the same as the Hezion of **1 Kings 15:18**; but probably one who interrupted the royal line of the Damascene Hadads, which was restored after his death. We may arrange the Damascus-kings of this period as follows:

- Hadadezer (or Hadad I), about 1040 B.C. (conquered by David).
- Rezon (usurper) was contemporary with Solomon.
- Hezion (Hadad II) was contemporary with Rehoboam.
- Tabrimon (Hadad III) was contemporary with Abijam.
- Ben-hadad (Hadad IV) was contemporary with Asa.

1 Kings 11:24. *And (they) reigned* A very slight emendation gives the sense, "they made him king at Damascus."

1 Kings 11:26. *Zereda* See **Judges 7:22**.

Lifted up his hand against the king i.e., "he rebelled." Compare marginal reference.

1 Kings 11:27. Millo was probably fortified in Solomon's twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth year.

1 Kings 11:28. *A mighty man of valor* Here "a man of strength and activity." It is a vague term of commendation, the exact force of which must be fixed by the context. See **Ruth 2:1**; **1 Samuel 9:1**, etc.

Solomon made Jeroboam superintendent of all the forced labor ("the charge") exacted from his tribe — the tribe of Ephraim — during the time that he was building Millo and fortifying the city of Jerusalem (**1 Kings 9:15**).

1 Kings 11:29. *At that time* Probably after Jeroboam's return from Egypt (see **1 Kings 11:40**).

The Shilonite An inhabitant of Shiloh in Mount Ephraim, the earliest and most sacred of the Hebrew sanctuaries (**Joshua 18:10**; **Judges 18:31**; **1 Samuel 4:3**, etc.)

1 Kings 11:30. The first instance of the "acted parable." Generally this mode was adopted upon express divine command (see **Jeremiah 13:1-11**; **Ezekiel 3:1-3**). A connection may be traced between the type selected and the words of the announcement to Solomon (**1 Kings 11:11-13**. Compare **1 Samuel 15:26-28**).

1 Kings 11:34. Translate — "Howbeit I will not take ought of the kingdom out of his hand." The context requires this sense.

1 Kings 11:36. *That David may have a light* Compare the marginal references. The exact meaning of the expression is doubtful. Perhaps the best explanation is, that "light" here is taken as the essential feature of a continuing "home."

1 Kings 11:38. See the marginal references. To "build a sure house," or "give a house," is to give a continuity of offspring, and so secure the perpetuity of a family. The promise, it will be observed, is conditional; and as the condition was not complied with, it did not take effect (see **1 Kings 14:8-14**). The entire house of Jeroboam was destroyed by Baasha (**1 Kings 15:29**).

1 Kings 11:39. *But not forever* David had been distinctly promised that God should never fail his seed, whatever their shortcomings (**Psalms 89:28-37**). The fulfillment of these promises was seen, partly in the Providence which maintained David's family in a royal position until Zerubbabel, but mainly in the preservation of his seed to the time fixed for the coming of Christ, and in the birth of Christ — the Eternal King — from one of David's descendants.

1 Kings 11:40. Compare **1 Kings 11:26**. The announcement of Ahijah was followed within a little while by rebellion on the part of Jeroboam. As Solomon's luster faded, as his oppression became greater and its objects more selfish, and as a prospect of deliverance arose from the personal qualities of Jeroboam (**1 Kings 11:28**), the tribe of Ephraim to

which he belonged, again aspired after its old position (see ^{<1674>}Joshua 17:14 note). Jeroboam, active, energetic, and ambitious, placed himself at their head. The step proved premature. The power of Solomon was too firmly fixed to be shaken; and the hopes of the Ephraimites had to be deferred until a fitter season.

The “exact” date of Jeroboam’s flight into Egypt cannot be fixed. It was certainly not earlier than Solomon’s twenty-fourth year, since it was after the building of Millo (^{<1127>}1 Kings 11:27). But it may have been several years later.

Shishak This king is the first Pharaoh mentioned in Scripture who can be certainly identified with any known Egyptian monarch. He is the Sheshonk (Sheshonk I) of the monuments, and the Sesonchosis of Manetho. The Egyptian date for his accession is 980 or 983 B.C., which synchronizes, according to the ordinary Hebrew reckoning, with Solomon’s 32nd or 35th year. Sheshonk I has left a record of his expedition against Judah, which accords well with what is related of Shishak (^{<1145>}1 Kings 14:25,26; ^{<1122>}2 Chronicles 12:2-4).

^{<1114>}**1 Kings 11:41.** *The book of the acts of Solomon* See the marginal reference and Introduction p. 265.

^{<1112>}**1 Kings 11:42.** Josephus gave Solomon a reign of 80 years, either because he wished to increase the glory of his country’s greatest king, or through his having a false reading in his copy of the Septuagint Version. It is, no doubt, remarkable that the three successive kings, Saul, David, and Solomon, should have each reigned forty years (^{<1132>}Acts 13:21; ^{<1134>}2 Samuel 5:4,5); but such numerical coincidences occur from time to time in exact history.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 12

1 Kings 12:1. The first step taken by the new king was a most judicious one. If anything could have removed the disaffection of the Ephraimites, and caused them to submit to the ascendancy of Judah, it would have been the honor done to their capital by its selection as the scene of the coronation. Shechem (now Nablous) lay on the flank of Mount Gerizim, directly opposite to Mount Ebal, in a position second to none in all Palestine. Though Abimelech had destroyed the place (^{<1095>}Judges 9:45), it had probably soon risen again, and was once more a chief city, or perhaps “the” chief city, of Ephraim. Its central position made it a convenient place for the general assembly of the tribes, as it had been in the days of Joshua (^{<1083>}Joshua 8:30-35; 24:1-28); and this would furnish an additional reason for its selection.

1 Kings 12:2. *Heard of it* i.e., of the death of Solomon and accession of Rehoboam. This would be more clear without the division into chapters; which division, it must be remembered, is without authority.

Dwelt in Egypt By a change of the pointing of one word, and of one letter in another, the Hebrew text here will read as in ^{<400>}2 Chronicles 10:2, “returned out of Egypt; and they sent and called him.”

In the Septuagint Version the story of Jeroboam is told in two different ways. The general narrative agrees closely with the Hebrew text; but an insertion into the body of 1 Kings 12 — remarkable for its minuteness and circumstantiality — at once deranges the order of the events, and gives to the history in many respects a new aspect and coloring. This section of the Septuagint, though regarded by some as thoroughly authentic, absolutely conflicts with the Hebrew text in many important particulars. In its general outline it is wholly irreconcilable with the other narrative; and, if both stood on the same footing, and we were free to choose between them, there could be no question about preferring the history as given in our Version.

1 Kings 12:4. The complaint was probably twofold. The Israelites no doubt complained in part of the heavy weight of taxation laid upon them for the maintenance of the monarch and his court (^{<1089>}1 Kings 4:19-23). But their chief grievance was the forced labor to which they had been

subjected (<1053>1 Kings 5:13,14; 11:28). Forced labor has been among the causes leading to insurrection in many ages and countries. It helped to bring about the French Revolution, and it was for many years one of the principal grievances of the Russian serfs. Jeroboam's position as superintendent of the forced labors of the tribe of Ephraim (<11128>1 Kings 11:28) revealed to him the large amount of dissatisfaction which Solomon's system had produced, and his contemplated rebellion in Solomon's reign may have been connected with this standing grievance.

<11126>**1 Kings 12:6.** *The old men, that stood before Solomon his father* Perhaps "the princes" of <1042>1 Kings 4:2. Solomon placed great value upon good advisers (<21114>Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; 24:6).

<11127>**1 Kings 12:7.** The advice was not that the king should permanently resign the office of ruler, but that he should "for once" be ruled by his people.

<11128>**1 Kings 12:8.** The age of Rehoboam at his accession is an interesting and difficult question. According to the formal statement of the present text of <1142>1 Kings 14:21; <41213>2 Chronicles 12:13, he had reached the mature age of 41 years, and would therefore be unable to plead youth as an excuse for his conduct. The general narrative, however, seems to assume that he was quite a young man (compare <4137>2 Chronicles 13:7). Perhaps the best way of removing the whole difficulty would be to read in the above text "twenty-one" for "forty-one." The corruption is one which might easily take place, if letters were used for numerals.

My little finger ... i.e., "You shall find my hand heavier on you than my father's — as much heavier as if my little finger were thicker than his loins."

<11121>**1 Kings 12:11.** *Scorpions* By this word some understand whips having leaden balls at the ends of their lashes with hooks projecting from them; others the thorny stem of the eggplant, or "the scorpion plant." But it seems best to regard the expression as a figure of speech.

<11125>**1 Kings 12:15.** *The cause was from the LORD* i.e., "the turn of events was from the Lord." Human passions, anger, pride, and insolence, worked out the accomplishment of the divine designs. Without interfering with man's free will, God guides the course of events, and accomplishes His purposes.

1 Kings 12:16. See the marginal reference. The words breathe unmistakably the spirit of tribal jealousy and dislike (^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:40 note).

Now see to thine own house, David i.e., “Henceforth, house of David, look after thine own tribe, Judah, only.” It is not a threat of war, but a warning against interference.

1 Kings 12:17. *Israel ...* The Israelites proper, or members of the other tribes, who happened to be settled within the limits of the land of Judah. These Israelites quietly submitted to Rehoboam. “Israel” through this chapter, and throughout the rest of Kings, designates ordinarily “the ten tribes,” and is antithetical to “Judah.”

1 Kings 12:18. Adoram has been identified with Adoniram (marginal references), and even with the Adoram of ^{<1114>}2 Samuel 20:24. But it is highly improbable that the same person was chief superintendent of the forced labors during the whole of Solomon’s long reign, and also during a part of David’s and Rehoboam’s. We may therefore conclude that the three names mark three distinct persons, perhaps of the same family, who were respectively contemporary with the three kings. Adoram was chosen, as best acquainted with the hardships whereof the rebels complained, to arrange some alleviation of their burthens.

1 Kings 12:19. *Unto this day* This expression shows that the writer, who lived during the captivity, and consequently long after the rebellion of Israel had come to an end, is embodying in his history the exact words of an ancient document. His source, whatever it was, appears to have been also followed by the writer of Chronicles. (See ^{<1409>}2 Chronicles 10:19.)

1 Kings 12:20. The first act of the Israelites, on learning what had occurred at Shechem, was to bring together the great “congregation” of the people (compare ^{<1211>}Judges 20:1), in order that, regularly and in solemn form, the crown might be declared vacant, and a king elected in the room of the monarch whose authority had been thrown off. The congregation selected Jeroboam. The rank, the talent, and the known energy of the late exile, his natural hostility to the house of Solomon, his Ephraimitic descent, his acquaintance with the art of fortification, and the friendly relations subsisting between him and the great Egyptian king, pointed him out as the most suitable man for the vacant post. If, according

to the Septuagint, Shishak had not only protected him against Solomon, but also given him an Egyptian princess, sister to his own queen, in marriage, his position must have been such that no other Israelite could have borne comparison with him. Again, the prophecy of Ahijah would have been remembered by the more religious part of the nation, and would have secured to Jeroboam their adhesion; so that every motive, whether of policy or of religion, would have united to recommend the son of Nebat to the suffrages of his countrymen.

1 Kings 12:21. The adhesion of Benjamin to Judah at this time comes upon us as a surprise. By blood Benjamin was far more closely connected with Ephraim than with Judah. All the traditions of Benjamin were antagonistic to Judah, and hitherto the weak tribe had been accustomed to lean constantly on its strong northern neighbour. But it would seem that, in the half-century which had elapsed since the revolt of Sheba, the son of Bichri (**2 Samuel 20:1**), the feelings of the Benjamites had undergone a complete change. This is best accounted for by the establishment of the religious and political capital at Jerusalem, on the border line of the two tribes (**Joshua 15:8; 18:16**), from where it resulted that the new metropolis stood partly within the territory of either, and was in a certain sense common to both. One of the gates of Jerusalem was “the high gate of Benjamin” (**Jeremiah 20:2**); and probably Benjamites formed a considerable part of the population. The whole tribe also, we may well believe, was sincerely attached to the temple worship, in which they could participate far more freely and more constantly than the members of remoter tribes, and to which the habits of forty years had now accustomed them.

On the number of the Israelites, see the notes at **Exodus 12:37**, and **2 Samuel 24:9**. The number mentioned here is moderate, compared with the numbers given both previously and subsequently (**2 Chronicles 13:3; 17:14-18**).

1 Kings 12:22. Shemaiah was the chief prophet in Judah during the reign of Rehoboam, as Ahijah was in Israel. See the marginal references.

1 Kings 12:23. *The remnant* i.e., “the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah” (**1 Kings 12:17** note).

1 Kings 12:25. *Built Shechem* In the sense of “enlarged and fortified.” See ^{<2040>}Daniel 4:30. The first intention of Jeroboam seems to have been to make Shechem his capital, and therefore he immediately set about its fortification. So also he seems to have fortified Penuel for the better security of his Trans-Jordanic possessions (marginal reference).

1 Kings 12:26. Jeroboam’s fear was lest a reaction should set in, and a desire for reunion manifest itself. He was not a man content to remain quiet, trusting simply to the promise made him (^{<1113>}1 Kings 11:38). Hence, he gave way to the temptation of helping forward the plans of Providence by the crooked devices of a merely human policy. His measures, like all measures which involve a dereliction of principle, brought certain evils in their train, and drew down divine judgment on himself. But they fully secured the object at which he aimed. They prevented all healing of the breach between the two kingdoms. They made the separation final. They produced the result that not only no reunion took place, but no symptoms of an inclination to reunite ever manifested themselves during the whole period of the double kingdom.

1 Kings 12:27. *Kill me* In case his subjects desired a reconciliation with Rehoboam, Jeroboam’s death would at once facilitate the re-establishment of a single kingdom, and obtain favor with the legitimate monarch. (Compare ^{<1047>}2 Samuel 4:7.)

1 Kings 12:28. The “calves of gold” were probably representations of the cherubic form, imitations of the two cherubim which guarded the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies. But being unauthorized copies, set up in places which God had not chosen, and without any divine sanction, the sacred writers call them “calves.” They were not mere human figures with wings, but had at any rate the head of a calf or ox. (Hence, some attribute this calf-worship entirely to Assyrian and Phoenician influence.) Jeroboam, in setting them up, was probably not so much influenced by the Apis-worship of Egypt, as:

(1) by a conviction that the Israelites could not be brought to attach themselves to any worship which did not present them with sensible objects to venerate;

(2) by the circumstance that he did not possess any of the old objects of reverence, which had been concentrated at Jerusalem; and

(3) by the fact that he could plead for his “calves” the authority of so great a name as Aaron (marginal reference).

1 Kings 12:29. In the first place, Jeroboam consulted the convenience of his subjects, who would thus in no case have very far to go in order to reach one or the other sanctuary. Further, he avoided the danger of reminding them continually that they had no ark — a danger which would have been imminent, had the two cherubs been placed together in one shrine.

He selected Bethel (in the south) for one of his seats of worship, on account of its pre-eminent sanctity. (See the marginal reference; **Judges 20:26-28**; **1 Samuel 7:16**.)

The north of Palestine did not furnish a spot possessing an equally sacred character, but still Dan had to some extent the character of a “holy city” (marginal reference).

1 Kings 12:30. *This thing became a sin* i.e., this act of Jeroboam’s became an occasion of sin to the people. The author perhaps wrote the following words thus: “The people went to worship before the one to Bethel and before the other to Dan.”

1 Kings 12:31. *He made an house of high places* i.e., “He built a temple, or sanctuary, at each of the two cities where the calves were set up.” The writer uses the expression “house of high places” in contempt, meaning that the buildings were not real temples, or houses of God, like that at Jerusalem, but only on a par with the temples upon high places which had long existed in various parts of the land.

Made priests of the lowest of the people More correctly, “from all ranks of the people.” That the Levites did not accept Jeroboam’s innovations, and transfer their services to his two sanctuaries, must have been the consequence of their faithful attachment to the true worship of Yahweh. In all probability Jeroboam confiscated the Levitical lands within his dominions for the benefit of the new priestly order (**2 Chronicles 11:13,14**).

1 Kings 12:32. *A feast* Intended as a substitute for the Feast of tabernacles (marginal reference “c”). It may also have assumed the character of a feast of dedication, held at the same time, after the example

of Solomon (^{<1K8>}1 Kings 8:2). His object in changing the month from the seventh to the eighth, and yet keeping the day of the month, is not clear. Perhaps it was on account of the later vintage of the more northern regions. It is remarkable that Josephus places the scene in the “seventh” month. He therefore, was not aware that the people of Israel kept the feast of tabernacles a month later than their brethren of Judah. The expression “he offered upon the altar” (see the margin and ^{<1215>}Exodus 20:26) shows that Jeroboam himself officiated as priest, and offered this sacrifice — at Bethel, not at Dan; where it is possible that the priests descended from Jonathan, the son of Gershom and grandson of Moses, undertook the services (^{<0783>}Judges 18:30 note).

^{<1123>}**1 Kings 12:33.** This verse belongs to 1 Kings 13 rather than to 1 Kings 12, being intended as an introduction to what follows.

Which he had devised of his own heart The entire system of Jeroboam receives its condemnation in these words. His main fault was that he left a ritual and a worship where all was divinely authorized, for ceremonies and services which were wholly of his own devising. Not being a prophet, he had no authority to introduce religious innovations. Not having received any commission to establish new forms, he had no right to expect that any religious benefit would accrue from them. (See ^{<1125>}1 Kings 12:26 note.)

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 13

1 Kings 13:1. Rather, “in the word of the Lord.” The meaning seems to be, not merely that the prophet was bid to come, but that he came in the strength and power of God’s word, a divinely inspired messenger. (Compare **1 Kings 13:2,5,32.**)

By the altar “On the altar;” i.e. on the ledge, or platform, halfway up the altar, whereupon the officiating priest always stood to sacrifice. Compare **1 Kings 12:32** note.

1 Kings 13:2. *A child shall be born ... Josiah by name* Divine predictions so seldom descend to such particularity as this, that doubts are entertained, even by orthodox theologians, with respect to the actual mention of Josiah’s name by a prophet living in the time of Jeroboam. Only one other instance that can be considered parallel occurs in the whole of Scripture — the mention of Cyrus by Isaiah. Of course no one who believes in the divine foreknowledge can doubt that God could, if He chose, cause events to be foretold minutely by his prophets; but certainly the general law of his Providence is, that He does not do so. If this law is to be at any time broken through, it will not be capriciously. Here it certainly does not appear what great effect was to be produced by the mention of Josiah’s name so long before his birth; and hence, a doubt arises whether we have in our present copies the true original text. The sense is complete without the words “Josiah by name;” and these words, if originally a marginal note, may easily have crept into the text by the mistake of a copyist. It is remarkable that, where this narrative is again referred to in Kings (marginal reference), there is no allusion to the fact that the man of God had prophesied of Josiah “by name.”

1 Kings 13:3. *He gave a sign* A sign of this kind — an immediate prophecy to prove the divine character of a remote prophecy — had scarcely been given before this. In the later history, however, such signs are not unfrequent (compare **2 Kings 19:29;** **Isaiah 7:14-16.**)

The ashes ... shall be poured out i.e., “The half-burnt remains of the offerings shall be ignominiously spilled upon the ground.”

1 Kings 13:5. We need not suppose a complete shattering of the altar, but rather the appearance of a crack or fissure in the fabric, which, extending from top to bottom, caused the embers and the fragments of the victims to fall until they reached the ground.

1 Kings 13:7. *I will give thee a reward* It was customary to honor a prophet with a gift, if he performed any service that was requested at his hands (see the marginal references).

1 Kings 13:9. *Eat no bread, nor drink water* The reason of the command is evident. The man of God was not to accept the hospitality of any dweller at Bethel, in order to show in a marked way, which men generally could appreciate, God's abhorrence of the system which Jeroboam had "devised of his own heart."

Nor turn again by the same way that thou camest This command seems to have been given simply to test the obedience of the prophet by laying him under a positive as well as a moral obligation.

1 Kings 13:11. The truly pious Israelites quitted their homes when Jeroboam made his religious changes, and, proceeding to Jerusalem, strengthened the kingdom of Rehoboam (¹⁴⁰⁰⁶2 Chronicles 10:16,17). This "old prophet" therefore, who, without being infirm in any way, had remained under Jeroboam, and was even content to dwell at Bethel — the chief seat of the new worship — was devoid of any deep and earnest religious feeling.

1 Kings 13:14. *Under an oak* literally, "under the oak," or "the terebinth-tree." There was a single well-known tree of the kind, standing by itself in the vicinity of Bethel, which the author supposed his readers to be acquainted with.

1 Kings 13:18. *But he lied unto him* It is always to be remembered that the prophetic gift might co-exist with various degrees of moral imperfection in the person possessing it. Note especially the case of Balaam.

1 Kings 13:21. *Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD* It was his duty not to have suffered himself to be persuaded. He should have felt that his obedience was being tried, and should have required, ere he considered himself released, "the same, or as strong,

evidence,” as that on which he had received the obligation. Disobedience to certain positive commands of God, was one which it was at this time very important to punish signally, since it was exactly the sin of Jeroboam and his adherents.

<1132> **1 Kings 13:22.** On the anxiety of the Hebrews to be buried with their fathers, see <1473>Genesis 47:30; 49:29,1,25; <10957>2 Samuel 19:37, etc.

<1133> **1 Kings 13:28.** *The lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass* These strange circumstances were of a nature to call men’s attention to the matter, and cause the whole story to be bruited abroad. By these means an incident, which Jeroboam would have wished hushed up, became no doubt the common talk of the whole people.

<1133> **1 Kings 13:30.** *He laid his carcase in his own grave* As Joseph of Arimathaea did the body of our Lord (<41263>Matthew 27:60). The possession of rock-hewn tombs by families, or individuals, was common among the Jews from their first entrance into the holy land to their final expulsion. A sepulchre usually consisted of an underground apartment, into which opened a number of long, narrow “loculi,” or cells, placed side by side, each adapted to receive one body. The cells were 6 or 7 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 3 feet high. They were commonly closed by a stone placed at the end of each. Many such tombs still exist in Palestine.

<1133> **1 Kings 13:32.** *Against all the houses of the high places* i.e., more than the two high places at Dan and Bethel. There were many lesser high places in the land, several of which would be likely to be in Israel (<11303>1 Kings 3:4).

In the cities of Samaria The word Samaria cannot have been employed by the old prophet, in whose days Samaria did not exist (<11333>1 Kings 16:24). The writer of Kings has substituted for the term used by him that whereby the country was known in his own day.

<1133> **1 Kings 13:33.** *Whosoever would, he consecrated him* i.e., he exercised no discretion, but allowed anyone to become a priest, without regard to birth, character, or social position. We may suspect from this that the office was not greatly sought, since no civil governor who cared to set up a priesthood would wish to degrade it in public estimation. Jeroboam did impose one limitation, which would have excluded the very poorest

class. The candidate for consecration was obliged to make an offering consisting of one young bullock and seven rams (~~<1413>~~2 Chronicles 13:9).

~~<1113>~~ **1 Kings 13:34.** This persistence in wrong, after the warning given him, brought a judgment, not only on Jeroboam himself, but on his family. Jeroboam's departure from the path of right forfeited the crown (~~<1113>~~1 Kings 11:38); and in that forfeiture was involved naturally the destruction of his family, for in the East, as already observed, when one dynasty supplants another, the ordinary practice is for the new king to destroy all the males belonging to the house of his predecessor. See ~~<1115>~~1 Kings 15:29.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 14

<1140>1 Kings 14:1. *At that time* The phrase here connects the narrative which follows with Jeroboam's persistence in his evil courses. The event related is the first judgment upon him for his obduracy, the beginning of the cutting off of his house from the face of the earth.

Abijah We see by this name that Jeroboam did not intend to desert the worship of Yahweh, since its signification is "Yahweh is my father," or "Yahweh is my desire" (^{<3896>}Job 34:36).

<1142>1 Kings 14:2. *Disguise thyself* Jeroboam fears that even Ahijah the Shilonite, who in some sort made him king, will scarcely give his queen a favorable answer. The king's conscience tells him that he has not performed the conditions on which he was promised "a sure house" (^{<1118>}1 Kings 11:38).

<1143>1 Kings 14:3. See the marginal reference The presents here were selected for the purpose of deception, being such as a poor country person would have been likely to bring. Jeroboam counted also on Ahijah's blindness (^{<1140>}1 Kings 14:4) as favoring his plan of deception (compare ^{<1270>}Genesis 27:1,22).

Cracknels See the margin. The Hebrew word is thought to mean a kind of cake which crumbled easily.

<1145>1 Kings 14:5. *Feign herself to be another woman* literally, "she shall make herself strange," i.e., "she shall come in disguised." So ^{<1146>}1 Kings 14:6.

<1146>1 Kings 14:6. *For I am sent to thee* Rather, "I also am sent to thee." As thou hast a message to me from thy husband, so have I a message to thee from the Lord.

<1147>1 Kings 14:7. As Jeroboam's appointment to the kingdom had been formally announced to him by the prophet Ahijah, so the same prophet is commissioned to acquaint him with his forfeiture of it. Compare ^{<1153>}1 Samuel 15:26-28.

<1149>1 Kings 14:9. *Above all that were before thee* i.e., above all previous rulers of the people, whether Judges or kings. Hereto none of the rulers of Israel had set up the idolatrous worship of ephod, teraphim, and the like (**<0787>**Judges 18:17), as a substitute for the true religion, or sought to impose an idolatrous system on the nation. Gideon's ephod "became a snare" contrary to his intention (**<0087>**Judges 8:27). Solomon's high places were private — built for the use of his wives, and not designed to attract the people. Jeroboam was the first ruler who set himself to turn the Israelites away from the true worship, and established a poor counterfeit of it, which he strove to make, and succeeded in making, the religion of the great mass of his subjects.

And hast cast me behind thy back A very strong and very rare expression, occurring again only in **<3235>**Ezekiel 23:35; where it is said of the Jews generally, shortly before the captivity. The expressions in the marginal references are similar but less fearful.

<1140>1 Kings 14:10. All the males of the family of Jeroboam were put to death by Baasha (**<1153>**1 Kings 15:28,29). The phrase "will cut off," etc., appears to have been a common expression among the Jews from the time of David (**<0252>**1 Samuel 25:22) to that of Jehu (**<1308>**2 Kings 9:8), but scarcely either before or after. We may suspect that, where the author of Kings uses it, he found it in the documents which he consulted.

Him that is shut up and left in Israel See the marginal reference note.

And will take away the remnant ... The idea is, that the whole family is to be cleared away at once, as men clear away ordure or any vile refuse.

<1141>1 Kings 14:11. The dogs are the chief scavengers of Oriental cities (compare **<4916>**Psalms 59:6,14). And the vulture is the chief scavenger in the country districts, assisted sometimes by kites and crows (see **<8927>**Job 39:27-30, where the vulture, not the eagle, is intended). Vultures are very abundant in Palestine.

<1143>1 Kings 14:13. The child was evidently a prince of some promise. It is probable that he was heir to the throne.

<1144>1 Kings 14:14. The Hebrew text of this verse appears to be defective in this place. No satisfactory sense can be obtained from it. The true meaning of the original passage is possibly: "Yahweh shall raise up a king

who will destroy the house of Jeroboam on the day that he is raised up. What do I say? He will destroy it even now.”

1 Kings 14:15. The general prophecy of Moses (^{<1238>}Deuteronomy 29:28), that the disobedient Israelites would be rooted up out of their land, and cast into another land, is here for the first time repeated, and is definitively applied to the ten tribes, which are to be removed “beyond the river” (the Euphrates, ^{<1021>}1 Kings 4:21,24), and “scattered.” On the fulfillment of this prophecy, and especially on the “scattering” of the ten tribes, see ^{<1276>}2 Kings 17:6 note.

Groves See ^{<1243>}Exodus 34:13 note. The grove- (or, “asherah”-) worship, adopted from the Canaanite nations, appears to have died away after the fierce onslaught which Gideon made upon it (^{<1025>}Judges 6:25-31). It now revived, and became one of the most popular of the idolatries both in Israel and Judah (^{<1143>}1 Kings 14:23, and compare the marginal references).

1 Kings 14:17. Jeroboam had by this time removed from Shechem, and established a new capital in Tirzah, one of the old Canaanite towns (^{<1024>}Joshua 12:24) — a town of great reputation for beauty, counted in that respect on a par with Jerusalem (^{<2104>}Song of Solomon 6:4). Tirzah is perhaps to be identified with “Telluzah,” a place in the mountains about 9 miles distant from Shechem (Nablous) (or with Teiasir — Conder). It may have been the palatial residence of the kings rather than the actual capital of the country. It remained the capital until Omri built Samaria (^{<1163>}1 Kings 16:23,24). Toward the close of the kingdom it appears again as the city of Menahem, who murdered Shallum and succeeded him (^{<1254>}2 Kings 15:14).

The threshold of the door literally, “the threshold of the house.” Compare the prophecy (^{<1142>}1 Kings 14:12). The child actually died as she crossed the threshold of the palace. Probably the palace, like that of Sargon at Khorsabad, lay at the outer edge of the town.

1 Kings 14:19. The wars of Jeroboam may be divided into:

- (1) his wars with Rehoboam (see ^{<1145>}1 Kings 14:25,30); and
- (2) his war with Abijam (see the marginal reference).

The book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel (of Judah, ^{<1149>}1 Kings 14:29). See the Introduction, p. 265.

1 Kings 14:21. On the age of Rehoboam at his accession, see **1 Kings 12:8** note. The 17 years of his reign must have been complete, or a little more than complete, if Abijam ascended the throne in the “eighteenth” year of Jeroboam (**1 Kings 15:1**).

1 Kings 14:22. This defection of Judah did not take place until Rehoboam’s fourth year (marginal reference).

They provoked him to jealousy Compare **Exodus 20:5**; and on the force of the metaphor involved in the word, see **Exodus 34:15** note.

1 Kings 14:23. The words “they also” are emphatic. Not only did the Israelites make themselves high places (**1 Kings 12:31; 13:32**), but the people of Judah also. The “high places,” which are said to have been “built,” were probably small shrines or tabernacles hung with brightly-colored tapestry (**Ezekiel 16:16**), like the “sacred tent” of the Carthaginians.

The “images” were rather “pillars” (**Genesis 28:18** note).

Groves See **1 Kings 14:15**, note. The “groves,” it will be observed, were “built” on high hills and “under green trees.”

Under every green tree i.e., under all those remarkable trees which, standing singly about the land, were landmarks to their respective neighborhoods, and places of resort to travelers, who gladly rested under their shade (**Deuteronomy 12:2**).

1 Kings 14:24. *Sodomites* literally, “(men) consecrated.” The men in question were in fact “consecrated” to the mother of the gods, the famous “Dea Syra,” whose priests, or rather devotees, they were considered to be. The nature of the ancient idolatries is best understood by recollecting that persons of this degraded class practiced their abominable trade under a religious sanction.

1 Kings 14:25. The examination of the famous inscription of Shishak at Karnak has resulted in the proof that the expedition commemorated was directed against Palestine, and has further thrown a good deal of light on the relations of the two kingdoms at the period. Of the fifteen fenced cities fortified by Rehoboam in the early part of his reign (**2 Chronicles 11:5-12**), three, Shoco, Adoraim, and Aijalon are distinctly mentioned among Shishak’s conquests. Other towns of Judah or Benjamin also occur.

Further, a considerable number of the captured cities are in the territory of Jeroboam: these cities “are either Canaanite or Levitical.” Hence, we gather, that, during the four years which immediately followed the separation of the kingdoms, Rehoboam retained a powerful hold on the dominions of his rival, many Canaanite and Levitical towns acknowledging his sovereignty, and maintaining themselves against Jeroboam, who probably called in Shishak mainly to assist him in compelling these cities to submission. The campaign was completely successful.

^{<1146>}**1 Kings 14:26.** The circumstances of Shishak’s invasion, related here with extreme brevity, are given with some fulness by the author of Chronicles (marginal reference). It is still a question whether the submission of the Jewish king is or is not expressly recorded in the Karnak inscription. Midway in the list of cities and tribes occurs the entry “YUDeH-MALK” which it has been proposed to translate “Judah, king.” Others regard it as the name of a Palestinian town not otherwise known to us.

^{<1148>}**1 Kings 14:28.** It appears from this verse that Rehoboam, notwithstanding that he encouraged, and perhaps secretly practiced, idolatry (^{<1142>}1 Kings 14:22-24, compare ^{<1153>}1 Kings 15:3,12; ^{<1421>}2 Chronicles 12:1), maintained a public profession of faith in Yahweh, and attended in state the temple services. Compare the conduct of Solomon, ^{<1025>}1 Kings 9:25.

^{<1146>}**1 Kings 14:31.** *Slept with his fathers and was buried ...* Compare ^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:43. The expression is a sort of formula, and is used with respect to all the kings of Judah, except two or three. The writer probably regards the fact, which he records so carefully, as a continuation of God’s mercy to David.

His mother’s name ... The mention of the queen-mother so regularly in the account of the kings of Judah is thought to indicate that she had an important position in the state. There are, however, only two instances where such a person seems to have exercised any power (^{<1153>}1 Kings 15:13; ^{<1210>}2 Kings 11:1-20).

Abijam Abijah (see the marginal reference) was probably his real name, while Abijam is a form due to the religious feeling of the Jews, who would not allow the word JAH to be retained as an element in the name of so bad a king. Instances of a similar feeling are the change of Beth-”el” into Beth-

aven in Hosea (^{<1045>}1 Kings 4:15), and perhaps of Jehoahaz into Ahaz (^{<1258>}2 Kings 15:38 note).

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 15

1 Kings 15:2. *Three years* More strictly, not much more than two years (compare **1 Kings 15:1,9**). Any part of a year may, however, in Jewish reckoning, be taken as a year.

His mother's name was Maachah Or Michaiah, according to the present reading of marginal reference.

The daughter of Abishalom Absalom seems to have had but one daughter, Tamar (**2 Samuel 14:27**), so that Maachah must have been, not his daughter, but his grand-daughter. Her father (see the margin) was Uriel of Gibeah whom, therefore, Tamar married. Maachah took her name from her great-grandmother (**2 Samuel 3:3**).

1 Kings 15:3. *He walked in all the sins of his father* Yet Abijam prepared precious offerings for the temple service (**1 Kings 15:15**), probably to replace vessels which Shishak had carried off, and in his war with Jeroboam professed himself a faithful servant of Yahweh (**2 Chronicles 13:10-12**).

1 Kings 15:4. *To set up his son* The idolatry of Abijam deserved the same punishment as that of Jeroboam (**1 Kings 14:10-14**), of Baasha (**1 Kings 16:2-4**), or of Zimri (**1 Kings 16:19**), the cutting off of his seed, and the transfer of the crown to another family. That these consequences did not follow in the kingdom of Judah, was owing to the "faithfulness" of David (see the marginal reference), which brought a blessing on his posterity. Few things are more remarkable and more difficult to account for on mere grounds of human reason, than the stability of the succession in Judah, and its excessive instability in the sister kingdom. One family in Judah holds the throne from first to last, during a space but little short of four centuries, while in Israel there are nine changes of dynasty within two hundred and fifty years.

1 Kings 15:6. The writer repeats what he had said in **1 Kings 14:30**, in order to remind the reader that Abijam inherited this war from his father. Abijam's war is described in marginal reference That the author of Kings gives none of its details is agreeable to his common practice in mere

military matters. Thus he gives no details of Shishak's expedition, and omits Zerah's expedition altogether.

^{<1150>}**1 Kings 15:10.** *Mother's name* Rather, "grandmother's." The Jews call any male ancestor, however remote, a father, and any female ancestor a mother (compare ^{<1150>}1 Kings 15:2; ^{<1033>}Genesis 3:20). This Maachah was the favorite wife of Rehoboam (^{<4412>}2 Chronicles 11:21), and the mother of Abijam. The way in which she is here mentioned strongly favors the notion that the position of queen-mother was a definite one at the court, and could only be held by one person at a time.

^{<1153>}**1 Kings 15:13.** Asa degraded Maachah from the rank and state of queen-mother.

The word translated "idol" both here and in the parallel passage (marginal reference), does not occur elsewhere in Scripture. It is derived from a root signifying "fear" or "trembling," and may perhaps best be understood as "a fright, a horror." Such a name would seem best to apply to a grotesque and hideous image like the Phthah of the Egyptians. She made it to serve in lieu of the ordinary "grove" — asherah, or idolatrous emblem of Astarte (^{<0343>}Exodus 34:13 note). Asa cut it down, for like the usual "asherah," Maachah's "horror" was fixed in the ground.

And burnt it at the brook Kidron Similarly Josiah, when he removed Manasseh's "grove" — asherah — from the house of the Lord, brought it out to the brook Kidron, and burned it there. The object probably was to prevent the pollution of the holy city by even the ashes from the burning.

^{<1154>}**1 Kings 15:14.** ^{<4443>}2 Chronicles 14:3 would seem at first sight to imply that he entirely put down the worship. But idolatry, if at one time put down, crept back afterward; or while Asa endeavored to sweep it wholly away, his subjects would not be controlled, but found a means of maintaining it in some places — not perhaps in the cities (see ^{<4445>}2 Chronicles 14:5), but in remote country districts, where the royal authority was weaker, and secrecy more practicable.

^{<1155>}**1 Kings 15:15.** Abijam's dedications were made after his victory over Jeroboam, and probably consisted of a portion of the spoils which were the fruit of the battle (^{<4436>}2 Chronicles 13:16-19).

Asa's dedications may have been made from the spoils of Zerah the Ethiopian, who attacked him in his eleventh year (^{<4449>}2 Chronicles 14:9, etc.). They were not deposited in the temple until his fifteenth year (^{<4450>}2 Chronicles 15:10,18).

^{<11516>}**1 Kings 15:16.** Baasha became king of Israel in the third year of Asa (^{<11533>}1 Kings 15:33). The petty warfare which ordinarily prevailed on the borders of the two kingdoms continued "all the days" of Asa and Baasha. During the first ten years of Asa's reign he was little molested (^{<4441>}2 Chronicles 14:1,6).

^{<11517>}**1 Kings 15:17.** Ramah (perhaps "Er-Ram;" marginal reference) was situated halfway between Bethel and Jerusalem. Its distance from Jerusalem was no more than five miles so that its occupation was a menace to that capital. Baasha's seizure of Ramah implies a previous recovery of the towns taken by Abijam from Jeroboam, namely, Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephraim (^{<44319>}2 Chronicles 13:19), and was a carrying of the war into the enemy's country. Could his conquest have been maintained, it would have crippled Judah seriously, and have almost compelled a transfer of the capital to Hebron.

That he might not suffer any to go out or come in Baasha, in seizing Ramah, professed to be acting on the defensive. His complaint seems to have been well founded (compare ^{<44319>}2 Chronicles 15:9); but it was more than a defensive measure — it was the first step toward a conquest of the southern kingdom.

^{<11518>}**1 Kings 15:18.** *Left* Or, according to another reading, "found." The wealthy condition of the temple treasury is sufficiently indicated in ^{<11515>}1 Kings 15:15. Compare ^{<44518>}2 Chronicles 15:18.

Asa's conduct in calling Benhadad to his aid, condemned by the seer Hanani (^{<4447>}2 Chronicles 16:7), cannot, of course, be justified; but there was much to excuse it. An alliance, it appears, had existed between Abijam and Tabrimon, Benhadad's father (^{<11519>}1 Kings 15:19) — an alliance which may have helped Abijam to gain his great victory over Jeroboam and achieve his subsequent conquests (^{<44317>}2 Chronicles 13:17-20). This had been brought to an end by Baasha, who had succeeded in inducing Benhadad to enter into a league with him. It was only natural that Asa should endeavor to break up this league; and, politically speaking, he had a full right to go further, and obtain, if he could, the support of the Syrian

troops for himself. The Israelites had set the example of calling in a foreign power, when Jeroboam obtained the aid of Shishak.

To Benhadad On the probable succession of the Damascene kings, and on the meaning of the name Hadad, see ^{<1114>}1 Kings 11:14,23.

^{<1159>}**1 Kings 15:19.** Rather, “Let there be a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father.”

^{<1150>}**1 Kings 15:20.** Ijon is probably marked by the ruins called “Tel-Dibbin,” which are situated a few miles northwest of the site of Dan, in a fertile and beautiful little plain which bears the name of “Merj’ Ayun” or “meadow of fountains.” On Abel-beth-maachah, or Abel-maim (“Abel-on-the waters”) and Dan, see the marginal references

For Cinneroth or Genesareth see ^{<1610>}Joshua 11:2.

^{<1152>}**1 Kings 15:22.** Geba, situated opposite to Michmash (^{<0945>}1 Samuel 14:5), is almost certainly “Jeba,” which stands picturesquely on the top of its steep terraced hill on the very edge of the “Wady Suweinit.” Its position was thus exceedingly strong; and, as it lay further north than Ramah, Asa may have considered that to fortify and garrison it would be a better protection to his northern frontier than fortifying Ramah.

For Mizpah see the marginal reference From ^{<2400>}Jeremiah 41:9 we learn that Asa, besides fortifying the place, sank a deep well there to secure his garrison from want of water if the town should be besieged.

^{<1153>}**1 Kings 15:23.** *The rest of all the acts of Asa* A few of these are preserved in ^{<4450>}2 Chronicles 15:9-15; 16:7-12. From the whole narrative of Chronicles we gather that the character of Asa deteriorated as he grew old, and that, while he maintained the worship of Yahweh consistently from first to last, he failed to maintain the personal faith and piety which had been so conspicuous in his early youth.

The cities which he built Asa, during the earlier part of his reign, before any serious attack had been made upon him, had the prudence to “build fenced cities in Judah,” with “walls and towers, gates and bars,” so strengthening himself against a possible evil day (^{<4446>}2 Chronicles 14:6,7).

In the time of his old age See the marginal reference. If it has been rightly supposed that Rehoboam was a young man of 21 or 22 at his accession

(~~1128~~ 1 Kings 12:8), Asa's age at this time must have been less than 50. It may seem strange to speak of "old age" in such a case; but Solomon was regarded as "old" at about 50 (~~1106~~ 1 Kings 11:4 note).

~~1152~~ **1 Kings 15:24.** Asa prepared his own sepulchre in his lifetime, as has been so often done by Oriental kings; and his funeral was conducted with great magnificence (~~1164~~ 2 Chronicles 16:14).

~~1155~~ **1 Kings 15:25.** The sacred historian now gives an account of the contemporary kings of Israel, beginning with Nadab, who ascended the throne in Asa's second year, and concluding with Ahab, in whose fourth year Asa died. This narrative occupies him almost to the close of the first Book of Kings.

CHRONOLOGY.

Year of the divided Kingdom.	Kings of Judah	Years of Reign.	Kings of Israel.	Years of Reign.
1	REHOBOAM (Invasion of Shishak).	17	JEROBOAM	22
5	ADAMIAH	3		
18	ASA	41	NADAB	2
20			BAASHA	24
22				
23				
31	(Invasion of Zerah). (Great feast at Jerusalem)		ELAH	2
34			ZIMRI	7
46			OMRI	12
47			AHAB	22
58			(4th year of Ahab).	
61	(Last year of Asa).			

~~1157~~ **1 Kings 15:27.** *Baasha ... of the house of Issachar* It is curious to find Issachar furnishing a king. Tola, its one very undistinguished Judge (~~970~~ Judges 10:1), on obtaining office had at once settled himself in the territory of Ephraim. The tribe was as little famous as any that could be named. The "ass crouching between two burthens" was a true symbol of the patient, plodding cultivators of the plain of Esdraelon (~~1494~~ Genesis 49:14,15). Baasha probably owed his rise neither to his tribe nor to his social position, but simply to his audacity, and his known valor and skill as a soldier (~~1162~~ 1 Kings 16:2).

~~1152~~ **1 Kings 15:32.** An exact repetition of ~~1156~~ 1 Kings 15:16. From the book before him (~~1153~~ 1 Kings 15:31) the writer extracts a passage which happens to correspond exactly with one which he has already extracted from the "Book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah." He does not object to repeating himself (compare ~~1142~~ 1 Kings 14:21,31; 14:30; 15:6; ~~1716~~ 2 Kings 17:6; 18:11).

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 16

1 Kings 16:1. Hanani, the father of Jehu, was seer to Asa in the kingdom of Judah (^{<14147>}2 Chronicles 16:7-10). His son Jehu, who here discharges the same office in the kingdom of Israel, appears at a later date as an inhabitant of Jerusalem where he prophesied under Jehoshaphat, whom he rebuked on one occasion. He must have lived to a great age, for he outlived Jehoshaphat, and wrote his life (marginal references).

1 Kings 16:5. The “might” of Baasha is sufficiently indicated by those successes which drove Asa to call Ben-hadad to his aid. (^{<1157>}1 Kings 15:17-21).

1 Kings 16:7. The natural position of this verse would be after ^{<1160>}1 Kings 16:4 and before ^{<1165>}1 Kings 16:5. But it may be regarded as added by the writer, somewhat irregularly, as an afterthought; its special force being to point out that the sentence on Baasha was intended to punish, not only his calf-worship, but emphatically his murder of Jeroboam and his family. Though the destruction of Jeroboam had been foretold, and though Baasha may be rightly regarded as God’s instrument to punish Jeroboam’s sins, yet, as he received no command to execute God’s wrath on the offender, and was instigated solely by ambition and self-interest, his guilt was just as great as if no prophecy had been uttered. Even Jehu’s commission (^{<1195>}2 Kings 9:5-10) was not held to justify, altogether, his murder of Jehoram and Jezebel.

1 Kings 16:8. *Two years* i.e., More than one year, or, at any rate, some portion of two distinct years (compare ^{<1160>}1 Kings 16:10).

1 Kings 16:9. The conspiracy of Zimri — Elah’s “servant” (i.e., “subject”) — was favored by his position, which probably gave him military authority in the city, by the absence of a great part of the people and of the officers who might have checked him, at Gibbethon (^{<1165>}1 Kings 16:15), and by the despicable character of Elah, who, instead of going up to the war, was continually reminding men of his low origin by conduct unworthy of royalty.

Steward The office was evidently one of considerable importance. In Solomon’s court it gave the rank of *sar*^{<18269>}, prince. In Persia the “steward

of the household” acted sometimes as a sort of regent during the king’s absence.

<1163>1 Kings 16:11. *Neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends* Zimri’s measures were of much more than ordinary severity. Not only was the royal family extirpated, but the friends of the king, his councillors and favorite officers, were put to death. Omri, as having been in the confidence of the late monarch, would naturally fear for himself, and resolve to take the course which promised him at least a chance of safety.

<1163>1 Kings 16:13. *Their vanities* The “calves.” The Hebrews call an idol by terms signifying “emptiness,” “vapor,” or “nothingness.” (Compare marginal references.)

<1166>1 Kings 16:16. *All Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king* This passage of history recalls the favorite practice of the Roman armies under the Empire, which, when they heard of the assassination of an emperor at Rome, were accustomed to invest their own commander with the purple.

<1167>1 Kings 16:17. *Went up* The expression “went up” marks accurately the ascent of the army from the Shephelah, where Gibbethon was situated (**<1164>Joshua 19:44**), to the hill country of Israel, on the edge of which Tirzah stood (**<1147>1 Kings 14:17**).

<1168>1 Kings 16:18. *The palace of the king’s house* The tower of the king’s house. A particular part of the palace — either the “harem,” or, more probably, the keep or citadel, a tower stronger and loftier than the rest of the palace.

Zimri’s desperate act has been repeated more than once. That the last king of Assyria, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, thus destroyed himself, is almost the only “fact” which we know concerning him.

<1169>1 Kings 16:19. Zimri’s death illustrates the general moral which the writer of Kings draws from the whole history of the Israelite monarchs. that a curse was upon them on account of their persistence in Jeroboam’s sin, which, sooner or later, brought each royal house to a bloody end.

1 Kings 16:22. From a comparison of the dates given in **1 Kings 16:15,23,29** it follows that the contest between the two pretenders lasted four years.

Tibni's death can scarcely be supposed to have been natural. Either he must have been slain in battle against Omri, or have fallen into his hands and been put to death.

There has probably been some derangement of the text here. The passage may have run thus: "So Tibni died, and Omri reigned in the thirty-first year of Asa, king of Judah. Omri reigned over Israel twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah." Omri's reign of 12 years began in Asa's 27th (**1 Kings 16:15,16**), and terminated in his 38th (**1 Kings 16:29**). The event belonging to Asa's 31st year was the death of Tibni, and the consequent extension of Omri's kingdom.

The six years in Tirzah are probably made up of the four years of contention with Tibni, and two years afterward, during which enough of Samaria was built for the king to transfer his residence there.

1 Kings 16:24. "Samaria" represents the Greek form of the name (**Σαμαρεία** ^{<4540>}); the original is *Shomeron* ^{<4811>} (margin). The site is marked by the modern "Sebustiyeh," an Arabic corruption of Sebaste, the name given by Herod to Samaria when he rebuilt it. Sebustiyeh is situated on a very remarkable "hill." In the heart of the mountains of Israel occurs a deep basin-shaped depression, in the midst of which rises an oblong hill, with steep but not inaccessible sides, and a long flat top. This was the site which Omri chose for his new capital. Politically it was rather more central than Shechem, and probably than Tirzah. In a military point of view it was admirably calculated for defense. The country round it was especially productive. The hill itself possessed abundant springs of water. The result is that we find no further change. Shechem and Tirzah were each tried and abandoned; but through all the later alterations of dynasty Samaria continued uninterruptedly, to the very close of the independence, to be the capital of the northern kingdom.

Omri purchased the right of property in the hill, just as David purchased the threshing-floor (**2 Samuel 24:24**; compare **1 Kings 21:2**). Two talents, or 6,000 shekels (^{<4782>}Exodus 38:24 note) — about 500 British pounds (or perhaps 800 pounds) of our money — may well have been the full value of the ground. And while naming his city after Shemer, Omri may

also have had in view the appropriateness of such a name to the situation of the place. Shomeron, to a Hebrew ear, would have necessarily conveyed the idea of a “watch-tower.” This name, however, appears not to have been at first accepted by the surrounding nations. The earlier Assyrian kings knew the Israelite capital, not as Samaria, but as Beth-Khumri, i.e., “the city (house) of Omri.” It is not until the time of Tiglath-pileser that they exchange this designation for that of “Sammirin.”

1 Kings 16:25. Omri outwent his idolatrous predecessors in his zeal, reducing the calf-worship to a regular formal system, which went down to posterity (compare the marginal reference).

1 Kings 16:27. *His might* Perhaps in the war between Israel and Syria of Damascus (**1 Kings 20:1**, etc.), during the reign of Omri. Its issue was very disadvantageous to him (**1 Kings 20:34; 22:2**).

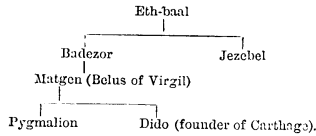
1 Kings 16:29. *Twenty and two years* Rather, from a comparison between **1 Kings 15:10** and **1 Kings 22:51**, not more than 21 years. Perhaps his reign did not much exceed 20 years.

1 Kings 16:30. See **1 Kings 16:33**. The great sin of Ahab — that by which he differed from all his predecessors, and exceeded them in wickedness — was his introduction of the worship of Baal, consequent upon his marriage with Jezebel, and his formal establishment of this gross and palpable idolatry as the religion of the state.

1 Kings 16:31. *As if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam* Idolatries are not exclusive. Ahab, while he detested the pure worship of Yahweh, and allowed Jezebel to put to death every “prophet of the Lord” whom she could find (**1 Kings 18:4**), readily tolerated the continued worship of the “calves,” which had no doubt tended more and more to lose its symbolic character, and to become a thoroughly idolatrous image-worship.

Eth-baal Identified with the Ithobalus of Menander, who reigned in Tyre, probably over all Phoenicia, within 50 years of the death of Hiram. This Ithobalus, whose name means “With him is Baal,” was originally priest of the great temple of Astarte, in Tyre. At the age of 36 he conspired against the Tyrian king, Pheles (a usurping fratricide), killed him, and seized the throne. His reign lasted 32 years, and he established a dynasty which

continued on the throne at least 62 years longer. The family-tree of the house may be thus exhibited:



Hence, Jezebel was great-aunt to Pygmalion and his sister Dido.

Served Baal The worship of Baal by the Phoenicians is illustrated by such names as IthoBAL, HanniBAL, etc. Abundant traces of it are found in the Phoenician monuments.

<1164> **1 Kings 16:34.** This seems to be adduced as a proof of the general impiety of Ahab's time. The curse of Joshua against the man who should rebuild Jericho had hitherto been believed and respected. But now faith in the old religion had so decayed, that Joshua's malediction had lost its power. Hiel, a Bethelite of wealth and station, undertook to restore the long-ruined fortress. But he suffered for his temerity. In exact accordance with the words of Joshua's curse, he lost his firstborn son when he began to lay anew the foundations of the walls, and his youngest when he completed his work by setting up the gates. We need not suppose that Jericho had been absolutely uninhabited up to this time. But it was a ruined and desolate place without the necessary protection of walls, and containing probably but few houses (<1163> Judges 3:13 note). Hiel re-established it as a city, and it soon became once more a place of some importance (<1165> 2 Chronicles 28:15).

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 17

1 Kings 17:1. The name Elijah means “Yahweh is my God.” It is expressive of the truth which his whole life preached.

The two words rendered “Tishbite” and “inhabitant” are in the original (setting aside the vowel points) “exactly alike.” The meaning consequently must either be “Elijah the stranger, of the strangers of Gilead,” or (more probably) “Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbi of Gilead.” Of Tishbi in Gilead there is no further trace in Scripture; it is to be distinguished from another Tishbi in Galilee. In forming to ourselves a conception of the great Israelite prophet, we must always bear in mind that the wild and mountainous Gilead, which bordered on Arabia, and was half Arab in customs, was the country wherein he grew up.

His abrupt appearance may be compared with the similar appearances of Ahijah (^{<1112>}1 Kings 11:29), Jehu (^{<116>}1 Kings 16:1), Shemaiah (^{<1412>}2 Chronicles 11:2), Azariah (^{<1450>}2 Chronicles 15:1), and others. It is clear that a succession of prophets was raised up by God, both in faithful Judah and in idolatrous Israel, to witness of Him before the people of both countries, and leave them without excuse if they forsook His worship. At this time, when a grosser and more deadly idolatry than had been practiced before was introduced into Israel by the authority of Ahab, and the total apostasy of the ten tribes was consequently imminent, two prophets of unusual vigour and force of character, endowed with miraculous powers of an extraordinary kind, were successively raised up, that the wickedness of the kings might be boldly met and combated, and, if possible, a remnant of faithful men preserved in the land. The unusual efflux of miraculous energy at this time, is suitable to the unusual emergency, and in very evident proportion to the spiritual necessities of the people.

As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand This solemn formula, here first used, was well adapted to impress the king with the sacred character of the messenger, and the certain truth of his message. Elisha adopted the phrase with very slight modifications (^{<110>}2 Kings 3:14; 5:16).

Drought was one of the punishments threatened by the Law, if Israel forsook Yahweh and turned after other gods (^{<6117>}Deuteronomy 11:17; 28:23; ^{<1339>}Leviticus 26:19, etc.).

^{<1173>}**1 Kings 17:3.** *Brook Cherith* Rather, “the torrent course,” one of the many which carry the winter rains from the highlands into that stream.

^{<1174>}**1 Kings 17:4.** *The ravens* This is the translation of most of the ancient versions; others, omitting the points, which are generally allowed to have no authority, read “Arabians;” others, retaining the present pointing, translate either “merchants” (compare the original of ^{<3719>}Ezekiel 27:9,27), or “Orbites.” Jerome took it in this last sense, and so does the Arabic Version.

^{<1175>}**1 Kings 17:9.** The dependence of Zarephath (Sarepta) on Sidon is indicated in the inscriptions of Sennacherib, where it is mentioned as belonging to Luliya (Elulæus), king of Sidon, and as submitting to the Assyrian monarch on Luliya’s flight from his capital. Elijah may have been sent to this place, so near the city of Jezebel’s father, as one which it was most unlikely that he would visit.

^{<1172>}**1 Kings 17:12.** *As the LORD thy God liveth* The words do not prove that the woman was an Israelite, or a worshipper of the true God; any Phoenician, recognizing in Elijah’s appearance the garb and manner of a Jehovistic prophet, might have thus addressed him: Baal-worshippers would have admitted Yahweh to be “a” living God. The woman does not say “as the Lord my God liveth.”

That we may eat it and die Phoenicia always depended for its cereal supplies on the harvests of Palestine (^{<1189>}1 Kings 5:9 note); and it is evident that the famine was afflicting the Phoenicians at this time no less than the Israelites.

^{<1176>}**1 Kings 17:16.** This is the first recorded miracle of its kind — a supernatural and inexplicable multiplication of food (compare ^{<1142>}2 Kings 4:42-44; ^{<1145>}Matthew 14:15-21; 15:32-38). The sacred record does not explain these miracles; but if the explanations sometimes suggested — that there was a transformation of previously existing matter into meal, oil, fish, and bread — be the true one, the marvel of the thing would not be much greater than that astonishing natural chemistry by which, in the growth of plants, particles of water, air, and earth are transmuted into fruits and

grains of corn, and so fitted to be human food. There would be a difference in the agency employed and in the time occupied in the transmutation, but the thing done would be almost the same.

<1177> **1 Kings 17:17.** *No breath* Or, “no spirit,” “no soul.” (Compare <1177> Genesis 2:7). The word used is translated “spirit” in <1177> Proverbs 20:27; Eccl. 3:21; <1310> Job 26:4; and elsewhere.

<1178> **1 Kings 17:18.** *What have I to do with thee?* i.e., “What have we in common?” — implying a further question, “Why hast thou not left me in peace?” The woman imagines that Elijah’s visit had drawn God’s attention to her, and so to her sins, which (she feels) deserve a judgment — her son’s death.

Thou man of God In the mouth of the Phoenician woman this expression is remarkable. Among the Jews and Israelites (<1122> 1 Kings 12:22; <1716> Judges 13:6,8) it seems to have become the ordinary designation of a prophet. We now see that it was understood in the same sense beyond the borders of the holy land.

<1179> **1 Kings 17:19.** *Into a loft* Rather, “into the upper chamber;” often the best apartment in an Eastern house.

<1172> **1 Kings 17:21.** *He stretched himself upon the child three times* This action of Elijah is different from that of Elisha (marginal reference), and does not imply the use of any natural means for the restoration of suspended animation. It is nearly parallel to the “touch,” through which our Lord performed similar miracles (<1125> Matthew 9:25; <1714> Luke 7:14).

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 18

1 Kings 18:1. *The third year* i.e., in the third year of his sojourn with the widow. The whole period of drought was three years and a half (^{<4045>}Luke 4:25; ^{<5057>}James 5:17): of this, probably about one year was passed by Elijah in the torrent-course of Cherith, and two years and a half at Sarepta.

1 Kings 18:3. Obadiah's name, "servant of Yahweh," indicates his religious character. It corresponds to the modern Arabic name Abdallah. Ahab could scarcely have been ignorant of Obadiah's faithfulness to Yahweh; and it tells in favor of the monarch's tolerance that he should have maintained an adherent of the old religion in so important an office. There seems to be no doubt that the worst deeds of Ahab's reign sprang less from his own free will and natural disposition than from the evil counsels, or rather perhaps the imperious requirements, of his wife.

1 Kings 18:4. We have no details of Jezebel's deed of blood. Some have conjectured that it was the answer of Jezebel to Elijah's threat, and that the command given him to hide in Cherith alone saved him from being one of the victims. This view receives some support from Obadiah's act and words (^{<1183>}1 Kings 18:13).

Fifty in a cave The limestone formation of Judaea and Samaria abounds with large natural caverns, the size of which is easily increased by art. These "caves" play an important part in the history of the country, serving especially as refuges for political offenders and other fugitives (^{<0702>}Judges 6:2; ^{<0136>}1 Samuel 13:6; ^{<5113>}Hebrews 11:38).

1 Kings 18:5. *Unto all fountains of water and unto all brooks* Rather, "to all springs of water and to all torrent-courses." The former are the perennial streams; the latter are the torrent-courses which become dry in an ordinary summer.

All the beasts Rather, some, or, "a portion of our beasts."

1 Kings 18:9. Obadiah thinks that to execute this commission will be fatal to him (^{<1182>}1 Kings 18:12).

<11830> **1 Kings 18:10.** *There is no nation ...* This is expressed in the style of Oriental hyperbole. What Obadiah means is: “there is no nation nor kingdom, of those over which he has influence, whither the king has not sent.” He could scarcely, for example, have exacted an oath from such countries as Egypt or Syria or Damascus. But Ahab may have been powerful enough to expect an oath from the neighboring Hittite, Moabite, and Edomite tribes, perhaps even from Ethbaal his father-in-law, and the kings of Hamath and Arpad.

<11817> **1 Kings 18:17.** *Art thou he ...* Meaning, “Can it possibly be that thou dost venture to present thyself before me, thou that troublest Israel by means of this terrible drought?” The charge of “troubling” had never before been brought against anyone but Achan (marginal reference “e”); it was one which must have called to the prophet’s recollection Achan’s miserable fate.

<11818> **1 Kings 18:18.** Instead of apologies, and pleas for pardon, Elijah meets the charge with a countercharge, and makes a sudden demand. “Gather to me,” etc. This boldness, this high tone, this absence of the slightest indication of alarm, seems to have completely discomfited Ahab, who ventured on no reply, made no attempt to arrest the prophet, did not even press him to remove his curse and bring the drought to an end, but simply consented to do his bidding. There is no passage of Scripture which exhibits more forcibly the ascendancy that a prophet of the Lord, armed with His spiritual powers, could, if he were firm and brave, exercise even over the most powerful and most unscrupulous of monarchs.

Baalim i.e., the various aspects under which the god, Baal, was worshipped, Baal-shamin, Baal-zebub, Baal-Hamman, etc.

<11819> **1 Kings 18:19.** Carmel (<06122> Joshua 12:22 note) was chosen by the prophet as the scene of the gathering to which he invited, or rather summoned, Ahab. Its thick jungles of copse and numerous dwarf-oaks and olives, would furnish abundant wood for his intended sacrifice. Here was a perennial fountain; and here again an ancient “altar of the LORD” (<11833> 1 Kings 18:30), belonging probably to the old times of non-idolatrous high-place worship — perhaps an erection of one of the patriarchs. On the one hand, there would be a view of the Mediterranean, from where the first sign of rain was likely to come, and on the other of Jezreel, the residence of the court at the time, with its royal palace and its idol-temples, so that

the intended trial would take place in the sight (so to speak) of the proud queen and her minions.

The prophets of Baal The priests of Baal are so called not so much because they claimed a power of foretelling the future, as because they were “teachers” of the false religion, and more especially because they stand here in antagonism to the “prophet of the LORD,” with whom they are about to contend.

The prophets of the groves, four hundred Rather, “of the grove” — the prophets, or priests, attached to the “grove” — asherah — which Ahab had made, probably at Jezreel (marginal reference). The number 400 seems to have been one especially affected by Ahab. We again find 400 prophets at the close of his reign (^{<1216>}1 Kings 22:6). The number 40 entered largely into the religious system of the Jews (^{<1067>}1 Kings 6:17; ^{<0269>}Exodus 26:19; ^{<633>}Deuteronomy 25:3; ^{<3410>}Ezekiel 41:2).

Which eat at Jezebel’s table Rather, “which eat from Jezebel’s table.” Oriental etiquette would not have allowed them to eat “at” the table of the queen, which was spread in the seraglio. They were fed from the superfluity of her daily provision, which was no doubt on a sumptuous scale. Compare ^{<1042>}1 Kings 4:22,23.

^{<1183>}**1 Kings 18:20.** Local tradition places the site of Elijah’s sacrifice, not on the highest point of the mountain (1,728 ft.), but at the southeastern extremity (1,600 ft.) of the ridge, where a shapeless ruin, composed of great hewn stones, and standing amid thick bushes of dwarf-oak, in the near vicinity of a perennial spring, is known to the Arabs as “El-Maharrakah,” “the burning,” or “the sacrifice.” All the circumstances of the locality adapt it for the scene of the contest.

^{<1182>}**1 Kings 18:21.** The people were mute. They could not but feel the logical force of Elijah’s argument; but they were not prepared at once to act upon it. They wished to unite the worship of Yahweh with that of Baal — to avoid breaking with the past and completely rejecting the old national worship, yet at the same time to have the enjoyment of the new rites, which were certainly sensuous, and probably impure.

^{<1182>}**1 Kings 18:22.** *I, even I, only remain* He means, “I only remain in the exercise of the office of a prophet.” The others (Compare ^{<1180>}1 Kings 18:4) had been forced to fly and hide themselves in dens and caves of the

earth; their voices were silenced; they had not ventured to come to Carmel. Elijah contrasts his solitary appearance on the side of Yahweh at the great gathering with the crowd of those opposed to him.

~~<1182>~~ **1 Kings 18:24.** *The God that answereth by fire* God had frequently before consumed offerings with supernatural fire (~~<1182>~~ Leviticus 9:24; ~~<1182>~~ Judges 6:21). The Baal-worshippers were no doubt in the habit of attributing thunder and lightning to their gods — the great Nature-power — and thus had no excuse for declining Elijah's challenge.

~~<1185>~~ **1 Kings 18:25.** Elijah gives precedence in everything to the Baal-priests, to take away all ground for cavil in case of failure. It is his object to make an impression on king and people; and he feels rightly that the impression will depend greatly on the contrast between their inability and the power given to him.

~~<1186>~~ **1 Kings 18:26.** *And called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon* Compare the parallel in the conduct of the Greeks of Ephesus. (~~<1186>~~ Acts 19:34). The words "O Baal, hear us," probably floated on the air as the refrain of a long and varied hymn of supplication.

They leaped upon the alters which was made The marginal rendering is preferable to this. Wild dancing has always been a devotional exercise in the East, and remains so to this day; witness the dancing dervishes. It was practiced especially in the worship of Nature-powers, like the Dea Phrygia (Cybele), the Dea Syra (Astarte?), and the like.

~~<1187>~~ **1 Kings 18:27.** The object of Elijah's irony was two-fold;

(1) to stimulate the priests to greater exertions, and so to make their failure more complete, and

(2) to suggest to the people that such failure would prove absolutely that Baal was no God.

The force of the expressions seems to be, "Cry on, only cry louder, and then you will make him hear, for surely he is a god; surely you are not mistaken in so regarding him." He is "talking," or "meditating;" the word used has both senses, for the Hebrews regarded "meditation" as "talking with oneself;" "or he is pursuing;" rather, perhaps, "he hath a withdrawing," i.e., "he hath withdrawn himself into privacy for awhile," as a king does upon occasions. The drift of the whole passage is scornful

ridicule of the anthropomorphic notions of God entertained by the Baal-priests and their followers (compare ^{<KFT>}Psalm 50:21). The pagan gods, as we know from the Greek and Latin classics, ate and drank, went on journeys, slept, conversed, quarrelled, fought. The explanations of many of these absurdities were unknown to the ordinary worshipper, and probably even the most enlightened, if his religion was not a mere vague Pantheism, had notions of the gods which were largely tainted with a false anthropomorphism.

^{<HRS>}**1 Kings 18:28.** Elijah's scorn roused the Baal-priests to greater exertions. At length, when the frenzy had reached its height, knives were drawn, and the blood spirted forth from hundreds of self-inflicted wounds, while an ecstasy of enthusiasm seized many, and they poured forth incoherent phrases, or perhaps an unintelligible jargon, which was believed to come from divine inspiration, and constituted one of their modes of prophecy.

The practice of inflicting gashes on their limbs, in their religious exercises, was common among the Carians, the Syrians, and the Phrygians. We may regard it as a modification of the idea of human sacrifice. The gods were supposed to be pleased with the shedding of human blood.

Lancets Lancets, in our modern sense of the word, can scarcely have been intended by our translators. The Hebrew word is elsewhere always translated "spears," or "lances;" and this is probably its meaning here.

^{<HRS>}**1 Kings 18:29.** *And they prophesied* Compare ^{<DZD>}1 Kings 22:12. The expression seems to be used of any case where there was an utterance of words by persons in a state of religious ecstasy.

Until the time of the offering etc Rather, "Until toward the time." Elijah had built his altar by the actual time of the offering (^{<HRS>}1 Kings 18:36).

^{<HRS>}**1 Kings 18:32.** *He built an altar in the name of the LORD* i.e., calling, as he built it, on the name of Yahweh, and so dedicating it to His service.

Two measures of seed literally, "two seahs of seed." The seah contained about three gallons. ^{<HRS>}**1 Kings 18:33.** *And he put the wood in order ...* He obeyed, that is, all the injunctions of the Law with respect to the

offering of a burned sacrifice (marginal reference). He thus publicly taught that the ordinances of the Law were binding upon the kingdom of Israel.

Barrels Rather, “pitchers” or “water-jars,” such as the maidens used to carry on their heads (^{<0244>}Genesis 24:14-20. Compare ^{<0076>}Judges 7:16,19). The flooding the sacrifice and the trench with water would at once do away with any suspicion of fraud, and greatly enhance in the eyes of the people the marvelousness of the miracle. The unfailing spring at the eastern end of Carmel (^{<1189>}1 Kings 18:19), was capable of furnishing as much water as he needed.

^{<1186>}**1 Kings 18:36.** *At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice* i.e., probably “the ninth hour,” or three o’clock. Thus there might still remain about five hours of light, during which the other events of the day were accomplished.

LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel This solemn address would carry back the thoughts of the pious to the burning bush of Horeb, and the words there spoken (marginal references), for there only had this mysterious formula been used before. Its use now was calculated to stir their faith and prepare them in some degree for God’s answering “by fire.”

That I have done all these things at thy word i.e., “That I have been divinely directed in all that I have done publicly as a prophet, in proclaiming the drought, in gathering this assembly, and in proposing this trial; that I have not done them of my own mind” (marginal reference).

^{<1187>}**1 Kings 18:37.** *That thou hast turned their heart* The hearts of the people were turning. Elijah speaks of them as already turned, anticipating the coming change, and helping it on.

^{<1188>}**1 Kings 18:38.** *The fire of the LORD fell* This cannot have been a flash of lightning. It was altogether, in its nature as well as in its opportuneness, miraculous. Compare the marginal references for the conduct of the people.

^{<1189>}**1 Kings 18:39.** *The LORD, he is the God* The people thus pronounced the matter to be clearly and certainly decided. Baal was overthrown; he was proved to be no god at all. The Lord Yahweh, He, and He alone, is God. Him would they henceforth acknowledge, and no other.

<1184>1 Kings 18:40. Elijah required the people to show their conviction by acts — acts which might expose them to the anger of king or queen, but which once committed would cause them to break with Baal and his worshippers forever.

Elijah is said to have slain the “prophets of Baal,” because the people killed them by his orders. Why they were brought down to the torrent-bed of Kishon to be killed, is difficult to explain. Perhaps the object of Elijah was to leave the bodies in a place where they would not be found, since the coming rain would, he knew, send a flood down the Kishon ravine, and bear off the corpses to the sea. Elijah’s act is to be justified by the express command of the Law, that idolatrous Israelites were to be put to death, and by the right of a prophet under the theocracy to step in and execute the Law when the king failed in his duty.

<1184>1 Kings 18:41. *Get thee up, eat and drink* Ahab had descended the hill-side with Elijah, and witnessed the slaughter of the priests. Elijah now bade him ascend the hill again, and partake of the feast which was already prepared, and which always followed upon a sacrifice.

There is a sound of abundance of rain Either the wind, which in the East usually heralds rain, had begun to rise, and sighed through the forests of Carmel — or perhaps the sound was simply in the prophet’s ears, a mysterious intimation to him that the drought was to end, and rain to come that day.

<1184>1 Kings 18:42. Ahab could feast; Elijah could not, or would not. Ascending Carmel not quite to the highest elevation (**<1183>1 Kings 18:43**), but to a point, a little below the highest, from where the sea was not visible, he proceeded to pray earnestly for rain, as he had prayed formerly that it might not rain.

<1183>1 Kings 18:43. Tradition says that Elijah’s servant was the son of the widow of Sarepta (**<1172>1 Kings 17:23**).

<1184>1 Kings 18:44. *A little cloud ...* Sailors know full well that such a cloud on the far horizon is often the forerunner of a violent storm.

<1186>1 Kings 18:46. Divinely directed, and divinely upheld, Elijah, instead of resting, ran in advance of the king’s chariot the entire distance of at least 16 miles to the entrance of Jezreel. He thus showed himself ready to

countenance and uphold the irresolute monarch, if he would turn from his evil courses, and proceed to carry out the religious reformation which the events of the day had inaugurated.

The entrance of Jezreel Modern “Zerin.” Ahab had not removed the capital from Samaria (^{<1220>}1 Kings 22:10,37); but he had built himself a palace at Jezreel (^{<1200>}1 Kings 21:1), and appears to have resided there ordinarily. A contemporary Assyrian inscription speaks of him as “Ahab of Jezreel.”

Elijah’s caution in accompanying Ahab only to “the entrance” is like that of the modern Arabs, who can seldom be induced to trust themselves within walls. He rested on the outskirts of the town, waiting to learn what Jezebel would say or do, knowing that it was she, and not Ahab, who really governed the country.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 19

~~<1192>~~ **1 Kings 19:2.** The prophet had not long to wait before learning the intentions of the queen. A priest's daughter herself, she would avenge the slaughtered priests; a king's wife and a king's child, she would not quail before a subject. That very night a messenger declared her determination to compass the prophet's death within the space of a day.

So let the gods ... A common oath about this time (marginal references). The Greek Version prefixes to this another clause, which makes the oath even more forcible, "As surely as thou art Elijah and I am Jezebel, so let the gods," etc.

~~<1193>~~ **1 Kings 19:3.** The rapid movement of the original is very striking. "And he saw (or, "feared," as some read), and he rose, and he went, etc." The fear and flight of Elijah are very remarkable. Jezebel's threat alone, had not, in all probability, produced the extraordinary change but, partly, physical reaction from the over-excitement of the preceding day; and, partly, internal disquietude and doubt as to the wisdom of the course which he had adopted.

Beer-sheba is about 95 miles from Jezreel, on the very borders of the desert et-Tih. Elijah cannot possibly have reached it until the close of the second day. It seems implied that he traveled both night and day, and did not rest until he arrived thus far on his way. It was one of the towns assigned to the tribe of Simeon (~~<1692>~~ Joshua 19:2). The Simeonites were, however, by this time absorbed into Judah.

~~<1194>~~ **1 Kings 19:4.** Elijah did not feel himself safe until he was beyond the territory of Judah, for Ahab might demand him of Jehoshaphat (~~<1180>~~ 1 Kings 18:10), with whom he was on terms of close alliance (~~<1234>~~ 1 Kings 22:4). He, therefore, proceeds southward into the desert, simply to be out of the reach of his enemies.

A juniper-tree The tree here mentioned (*rothem*^{<17574>}) is not the juniper but a species of broom (*Genista monosperma*), called "rethem" by the Arabs, which abounds in the Sinaitic peninsula. It grows to such a size as to afford shade and protection, both in heat and storm, to travelers.

Requested for himself that he might die Like Moses and Jonah (marginal references). The prophet's depression here reached its lowest point. He was still suffering from the reaction of overstrained feeling; he was weary with nights and days of travel; he was faint with the sun's heat; he was exhausted for want of food; he was for the first time alone — alone in the awful solitude and silence of the great white desert. Such solitude might brace the soul in certain moods; but in others it must utterly overwhelm and crush. Thus the prophet at length gave way completely — made his prayer that he might die — and, exhausted sank, to sleep.

I am not better than my fathers i.e., “I am a mere weak man, no better nor stronger than they who have gone before me, no more able to revolutionize the world than they.”

1 Kings 19:5. *An angel touched him* The friendly ministrations of angels, common in the time of the patriarchs (^{<ORIG>}Genesis 18:2-16; 19:1-22; 28:12; 32:1,24-29), and known also under the Judges (^{<ORIG>}Judges 6:11-21; 13:3-20), was now extended to Elijah. Any other explanation of this passage does violence to the words. It is certainly not the intention of the writer to represent Elijah as relieved on this occasion by a human “messenger.”

1 Kings 19:6. *A cake baked on the coals* It is not implied that Elijah found a fire lighted and the cake on it, but only that he found one of the usual baked cakes of the desert, which form the ordinary food of the Arab at the present day.

At his head The Hebrew word means simply “the place on which the head lies;” hence, the marginal rendering, “bolster.”

1 Kings 19:7. *Arise and eat ...* i.e., “Eat a second time, for otherwise the journey will be beyond thy powers.” “The journey” was not simply a pilgrimage to Horeb, which was less than 200 miles distant, and might have been reached in six or seven days. It was to be a wandering in the wilderness, not unlike that of the Israelites when they came out of Egypt; only it was to last forty days instead of forty years.

1 Kings 19:8. The old commentators generally understood this to mean that Elijah had no other food at all, and compared this long fast with that of Moses and that of our Lord (marginal references). But the words do not exclude the notion of the prophet's having obtained such

nourishment from roots and fruits as the desert offers to a wanderer, though these alone would not have sustained him.

<1199> **1 Kings 19:9.** *A cave* Rather, “the cave.” Some well-known cave must be intended — perhaps the “cliff of the rock” (<1232>Exodus 33:22). The traditional “cave of Elijah” which is shown in the secluded plain immediately below the highest summit of the Jebel Mousa, cannot, from its small size, be the real cavern.

<1190> **1 Kings 19:10.** *I, even I only, am left* The same statement as in <1182>1 Kings 18:22, but the sense is different. There Elijah merely said that he alone remained to execute the prophet’s office, which was true; here he implies that he is the only prophet left alive, whereas a hundred had been saved by Obadiah (<1184>1 Kings 18:4).

<1191> **1 Kings 19:11.** *And behold, the LORD passed by* The remainder of this verse and the whole of the next are placed by the Septuagint, and by the Arabic translator, in the mouth of the Angel. But it seems best to regard the vision as ending with the words “before the Lord” — and the writer as then assuming that this was done, and proceeding to describe what followed.

<1192> **1 Kings 19:12.** *A still small voice* literally, “a sound of soft stillness.” The teaching is a condemnation of that “zeal” which Elijah had gloried in, a zeal exhibiting itself in fierce and terrible vengeance, and an exaltation and recommendation of that mild and gentle temper, which “beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” But it was so contrary to the whole character of the stern, harsh, unsparing Tishbite, that it could have found no ready entrance into his heart. It may have for a while moderated his excessive zeal, and inclined him to gentler courses; but later in his life the old harshness recurred in a deed in reference to which our Lord himself drew the well-known contrast between the spirits of the two Dispensations (<1195>Luke 9:51-56).

<1193> **1 Kings 19:13.** *Mantle* The upper garment, a sort of short cloak or cape — perhaps made of untanned sheepskin, which was, besides the strip of leather round his loins, the sole apparel of the prophet (compare <1194>Matthew 3:4). For the action compare the marginal references.

There came a voice unto him ... The question heard before in vision is now put again to the prophet by the Lord Himself. Elijah gives no humbler and more gentle answer. He is still satisfied with his own statement of his case.

^{<1196>}**1 Kings 19:15.** The answer is not a justification of the ways of God, nor a direct reproof of the prophet's weakness and despondency, nor an explanation or application of what Elijah had seen. For the present, he is simply directed back into the path of practical duty. His mission is not yet over, there is still work for him to do. He receives special injunctions with respect to Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha; and he is comforted with a revelation well adapted to rouse him from his despondency: there are seven thousand who will sympathize with him in his trials, and who need his care and attention.

The wilderness of Damascus Probably the district north of the prophet's own country, between Bashan and Damascus itself, and which was known in later times as Iturea and Gaulanitis. Here the prophet might be secure from Jezebel, while he could readily communicate with both Israel and Damascus, and execute the commissions with which he was entrusted.

When thou comest, anoint Rather, "and thou shalt go and anoint," Elijah performed one only of the three commissions given to him. He appears to have been left free to choose the time for executing his commissions, and it would seem that he thought the proper occasion had not arisen either for the first or the second before his own translation. But he took care to communicate the divine commands to his successor, who performed them at the fitting moment (marginal references).

^{<1196>}**1 Kings 19:16.** *Jehu, the son of Nimshi* In reality the grandson of Nimshi. But he seems to have been commonly known by the above title (^{<1390>}2 Kings 9:20; ^{<4217>}2 Chronicles 22:7), perhaps because his father had died and his grand-father had brought him up.

Abel-meholah See ^{<0072>}Judges 7:22 note. (Conder identifies it with Ain Helweh.)

Elisha ... shalt thou anoint This is almost the only place where we hear of the anointing of prophets (compare ^{<1362>}1 Chronicles 16:22 and ^{<9455>}Psalms 105:15).

^{<1197>}**1 Kings 19:17.** Compare the marginal references.

Shall Elisha slay i.e., With a spiritual slaying by the “word of the Lord,” which is “sharper than any two-edged sword,” and may be said to slay those whose doom it pronounces (compare the marginal reference; ^{<3010>}Jeremiah 1:10). Elisha does not seem, like Elijah, to have executed God’s judgments on the guilty.

^{<1198>}**1 Kings 19:18.** *Yet I have left me ...* Rather, as in the margin. “Seven thousand” faithful Israelites shall survive all the persecutions of Ahab and Jezebel, and carry down the worship of Yahweh to another generation. Elijah is mistaken in supposing that he only is left. The number is manifestly a “round” number, not an exact estimate. Perhaps it is, moreover, a mystical or symbolic number. Compare ^{<6015>}Revelation 7:5-8. Of all the symbolic numbers used in Scripture, seven is the most common.

Every mouth which hath not kissed him Idolaters sometimes kissed the hand to the object of their worship (^{<8325>}Job 31:26,27); at other times they kissed the actual image (marginal reference).

^{<1199>}**1 Kings 19:19.** *Plowing* Elisha’s occupation is an indication of his character. He is emphatically a man of peace. He passes the year in those rural occupations which are natural to the son of a wealthy yeoman — superintending the field-laborers himself, and taking a share in their toils. He thus presents a strong contrast to the stern, harsh, rugged Gileadite, who is almost half an Arab, who seems to have no settled home, no quiet family circle, who avoids the haunts of men, and is content for months to dwell in a cavern instead of under a roof.

With twelve yoke of oxen He was plowing in a field with eleven other plows at work, each drawn by one yoke of oxen. Plowing with a single pair of oxen was the practice in Egypt, in Assyria, in Palestine, and in modern times throughout Western Asia.

Passed by him Rather, “crossed over to him.” Perhaps it is meant that he crossed the stream of the Jordan.

Cast his mantle upon him The action is explained as constituting a species of adoption, because a father naturally clothes his children. The notion of fatherhood and sonship was evidently understood between them (^{<1111>}2 Kings 2:9-12).

^{<1191>}**1 Kings 19:20.** *Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father ...* Not an unnatural request before following his new spiritual father. Elijah sees in

his address a divided heart, and will not give the permission or accept the service thus tendered. Hence, his cold reply. See ^{<406>}Luke 9:61,62.

Go back again ... i.e., “Go, return to thy plowing ... why shouldst thou quit it? Why take leave of thy friends and come with me? What have I done to thee to require such a sacrifice? for as a sacrifice thou evidently regardst it. Truly I have done nothing to thee. Thou canst remain as thou art.”

^{<1192>}**1 Kings 19:21.** Elisha returns to his oxen and laborers. He indicates his relinquishment of his home and calling by the slaughter of the particular yoke of oxen with which he had himself been plowing, probably the best beasts of the twelve, and by burning the “instruments,” the ploughs and yokes, both made of wood. Next he feasts his people to show his gratitude for his call, Elijah apparently remaining the while; and then, leaving father and mother, cattle and land, good position and comfortable home, Elisha became the “minister” to the wanderer. Compare ^{<1243>}Exodus 24:13; ^{<1100>}Joshua 1:1.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 20

1 Kings 20:1. *Ben-hadad, the king of Syria* Probably the son of the Ben-hadad who assisted Asa against Baasha (^{<1158>}1 Kings 15:18 note).

Thirty and two kings with him Not allies, but feudatories (^{<1214>}1 Kings 20:24). Damascus had in the reign of this Ben-hadad become the center of an important monarchy, which may not improbably have extended from the Euphrates to the northern border of Israel. The Assyrian inscriptions show that this country was about the period in question parcelled out into a multitude of petty kingdoms, the chief tribes who possessed it being the Hittites, the Hamathites, and the Syrians of Damascus.

Horses and chariots The Assyrian inscriptions show us how very important an arm of the service the chariot force was reckoned by the Syrians. A king, who has been identified with this Ben-hadad, brought into the field against Assyria nearly four thousand chariots.

1 Kings 20:2. It may be supposed that a considerable time had passed in the siege, that the city had been reduced to an extremity, and that ambassadors had been sent by Ahab to ask terms of peace short of absolute surrender, before Ben-hadad would make such a demand. He would expect and intend his demand to be rejected, and this would have left him free to plunder the town, which was evidently what he desired and purposed.

1 Kings 20:6. Ben-hadad, disappointed by Ahab's consent to an indignity which he had thought no monarch could submit to, proceeds to put a fresh construction on his former demands.

1 Kings 20:7. The political institution of a Council of elders (^{<11816>}Exodus 3:16, etc.), which had belonged to the undivided nation from the sojourn in Egypt downward, had therefore been continued among the ten tribes after their separation, and still held an important place in the system of Government. The Council was not merely called together when the king needed it, but held its regular sittings at the seat of government; and hence, "all the elders of the land" were now present in Samaria. On the "elders of towns," see ^{<1208>}1 Kings 21:8-14.

Apparently the king had not thought it necessary to summon the Council when the first terms were announced to him, inasmuch as they touched only himself. The fresh demands affected the people at large, and it became necessary, or at any rate fitting, that “the elders” should be consulted.

1 Kings 20:8. “The people” had no distinct place in the ordinary Jewish or Israelite constitution; but they were accustomed to signify their approbation or disapprobation of the decisions of the elders by acclamations or complaints (^{<1018>}Joshua 9:18; ^{<1011>}Judges 11:11, etc.).

1 Kings 20:10. *If the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls ...* In its general sense this phrase is undoubtedly a boast that the number of Ben-hadad’s troops was such as to make resistance vain and foolish. We may parallel it with the saying of the Trachinian at Thermopylae, that the Persian arrows would darken the light of the sun. Probably the exact meaning is, “When your town is reduced to ruins, as it will be if you resist, the entire heap will not suffice to furnish a handful of dust to each soldier of my army, so many are they.” There was a threat in the message as well as a boast.

1 Kings 20:11. Ahab’s reply has the air of a proverb, with which Orientals always love to answer a foe.

1 Kings 20:12. *Pavilions* “Booths” (^{<1037>}Genesis 33:17 margin; ^{<1032>}Leviticus 23:42; ^{<1045>}Jonah 4:5). The term seems to be properly applied to a stationary “booth” or “hut,” as distinguished from a moveable “tent.” On military expeditions, and especially in the case of a siege, such “huts” were naturally constructed to shelter the king and his chief officers.

1 Kings 20:13. The rabbinical commentators conjecture that this prophet was Micaiah, the son of Imlah, who is mentioned below (^{<1218>}1 Kings 22:8).

Hast thou seen all this great multitude? The boast of Ben-hadad (^{<1210>}1 Kings 20:10), was not without a basis of truth; his force seems to have exceeded 130,000 (compare ^{<1225>}1 Kings 20:25,29,30). In his wars with the Assyrians we find him sometimes at the head of 100,000 men.

1 Kings 20:14. The “princes of the provinces” are the governors of districts, many of whom may have fled to the capital, as the hostile army

advanced through Galilee and northern Samaria. The “young men” are their attendants, youths unaccustomed to war.

Who shall order the battle? i.e., “Who shall join battle, begin the attack? We or the enemy?” The reply was, that the Israelites were to attack.

^{<1125>}**1 Kings 20:15.** *Seven thousand* Considering how populous Palestine was in the time of the earlier Israelite kings (see ^{<413B>}2 Chronicles 13:3; 14:8; 17:14-18), the smallness of this number is somewhat surprising. If the reading be sound, we must suppose, first, that Ben-hadad’s attack was very sudden, and that Ahab had no time to collect forces from distant parts of the country; and secondly, that during the long siege the garrison of Samaria had been greatly reduced, until it now did not exceed 7,000 men fit for service.

^{<1126>}**1 Kings 20:16.** *drinking himself drunk* Ben-hadad meant probably to mark his utter contempt of his foe. Compare the contempt of Belshazzar (^{<278B>}Daniel 5:1-4).

^{<1127>}**1 Kings 20:17.** *Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him* The Septuagint has a better reading: “they sent and told the king of Syria.”

^{<1122>}**1 Kings 20:22.** *Go, strengthen thyself ...* That is, “collect troops, raise fortifications, obtain allies ... take all the measures thou canst to increase thy military strength. Be not rash, but consider well every step ... for a great danger is impending.”

At the return of the year i.e., “When the season for military operations again comes round.” The wars of the Oriental monarchs at this time, like those of early Rome, were almost always of the nature of annual incursions into the territories of their neighbors, begun in spring and terminating in early autumn. Sustained invasions, lasting over the winter into a second or a third year, are not found until the time of Shalmaneser (^{<277B>}2 Kings 17:5; 18:9,10), and do not become common until the Median and Babylonian period.

^{<1123>}**1 Kings 20:23.** *Their gods are gods of the hills* The local power and influence of deities was a fixed principle of the ancient polytheism. Each country was considered to have its own gods; and wars were regarded as being to a great extent struggles between the gods of the nations engaged in them. This is apparent throughout the Assyrian inscriptions. Compare

also ^{<1283>}2 Kings 18:33-35; 19:12. The present passage gives an unusual modification of this view. The suggestion of the Syrian chiefs may have been a mere politic device — they being really anxious, “an military grounds,” to encounter their enemy on the plain, where alone their chariots would be of much service. In the plain the Israelites had always fought at a disadvantage, and had proved themselves weaker than on the hills (see ^{<1019>}Judges 1:19,27,34).

^{<1124>}**1 Kings 20:24.** The Syrian chiefs evidently thought that want of unity had weakened their army. They therefore proposed the deposition of the kings, and the substitution, in their place, of Syrian governors: not “captains.” The term used always denotes a civil office.

^{<1125>}**1 Kings 20:26.** *Aphek* There were several places of this name in Palestine (see the marginal reference). This Aphek has been almost certainly identified with the modern Fik, a large village on the present high road from Damascus to Nablous and Jersalem. The expression “went up to Aphek” is appropriate, for Fik, though in a level country, is at a much higher elevation than Damascus.

^{<1127>}**1 Kings 20:27.** *Were all present* The marginal rendering is adopted by almost all critics.

Like two little flocks of kids The word translated “little flocks” does not occur elsewhere in Scripture. It seems to mean simply “flocks.” Compare the Septuagint, who render ὡσεὶ ^{<516>} δυο ^{<1417>} ποιμνία ^{<168>} αἰγων ^{<122>}.

^{<1128>}**1 Kings 20:28.** *A man of God* Evidently not the prophet who had spoken to Ahab the year before (^{<1123>}1 Kings 20:13,22). He probably dwelt in the neighborhood of Samaria. Now that Ahab and his army had marched out into the Trans-Jordanic territory, another prophet, a native probably of that region, announced God’s will to them.

^{<1129>}**1 Kings 20:30.** *A wall* “The wall,” i.e., the wall of the town. We may suppose a terrific earthquake during the siege of the place, while the Syrians were manning the defenses in full force, which threw down the wall where they were most thickly crowded upon it, and buried them in its ruins. Ben-hadad fled from the wall, where he had been at the time of the disaster, into the inner parts of the city — probably to some massive stronghold — and there concealed himself.

1 Kings 20:31. *And ropes upon our heads* “Ropes about our necks” is probably meant. They, as it were, put their lives at Ahab’s disposal, who, if he pleased, might hang them at once.

1 Kings 20:32. Ben-hadad is now as humble as Ahab had been a year before (**1 Kings 20:9**). He professes himself the mere “slave” of his conqueror.

1 Kings 20:33. The meaning of this verse is that the men from the first moment of their arrival were on the watch to note what Ahab would say; and the moment he let fall the expression “He is my brother,” they caught it up and repeated it, fixing him to it, as it were, and preventing his retreat. By the Oriental law of “dakheel” anyone is at any time entitled to put himself under the protection of another, be that other his friend or his greatest enemy; and if the man applied to does not at once reject him, if the slightest forms of friendly speech pass between the two, the bond is complete, and must not be broken. Ben-hadad’s friends were on the watch to obtain for him “dakheel;” and the single phrase “He is my brother,” having been accepted by them on his part, was sufficient to complete the bond, and secure the life of the captive. Ahab having called Ben-hadad his brother, treated him as he would a brother; he took him up into his chariot, than which there could not be a greater honor.

1 Kings 20:34. Ben-hadad, secure of his life, suggests terms of peace as the price of his freedom. He will restore to Ahab the Israelite cities taken from Omri by his father, among which Ramoth Gilead was probably the most important (**1 Kings 22:3**); and he will allow Ahab the privilege of making for himself “streets,” or rather squares, in Damascus, a privilege which his own father had possessed with respect to Samaria. Commercial advantages, rather than any other, were probably sought by this arrangement.

So he made a covenant with him ... Ahab, without “inquiring of the Lord,” at once agreed to the terms offered; and, without even taking any security for their due observance, allowed the Syrian monarch to depart. Considered politically, the act was one of culpable carelessness and imprudence. Ben-hadad did not regard himself as bound by the terms of a covenant made when he was a prisoner — as his after conduct shows (**1 Kings 22:3**). Ahab’s conduct was even more unjustifiable in one who held his crown under a theocracy. “Inquiry at the word of the Lord” was still

possible in Israel (^{<1121f>}1 Kings 22:5,8), and would seem to have been the course that ordinary gratitude might have suggested.

^{<1128>}**1 Kings 20:35.** *The sons of the prophets* The expression occurs here for the first time. It signifies (marginal references), the schools or colleges of prophets which existed in several of the Israelite, and probably of the Jewish, towns, where young men were regularly educated for the prophetic office. These “schools” make their first appearance under Samuel (^{<1091>}1 Samuel 19:20). There is no distinct evidence that they continued later than the time of Elisha; but it is on the whole most probable that the institution survived the captivity, and that the bulk of the “prophets,” whose works have come down to us belonged to them. Amos (^{<1074>}Amos 7:14,15) seems to speak as if his were an exceptional case.

Said unto his neighbor Rather, “to his friend” or “companion” — to one who was, like himself, “a prophet’s son,” and who ought therefore to have perceived that his colleague spoke “in the word of the Lord.”

^{<1128>}**1 Kings 20:38.** *Ashes* Rather, “a bandage” (and in ^{<1124>}1 Kings 20:41). The object of the wound and bandage was double. Partly, it was to prevent Ahab from recognizing the prophet’s face; partly, to induce him to believe that the man had really been engaged in the recent war.

^{<1124>}**1 Kings 20:41.** *He was of the prophets* Josephus and others conjecture that this prophet was Micaiah, the son of Imlah (but compare ^{<1123>}1 Kings 20:13 note).

^{<1122>}**1 Kings 20:42.** *A man whom I appointed to utter destruction* or to [~cherem] ^{<1276>}, i.e., a man on whom My curse had been laid (^{<1272>}Leviticus 27:28 note).

^{<1124>}**1 Kings 20:43.** *Heavy and displeased* Rather, “sullen and angry” (and so marginal reference), not repentant, as after Elijah’s warning (^{<1127>}1 Kings 21:27) — not acknowledging the justice of his sentence — but full of sullenness and suppressed anger.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 21

1 Kings 21:1. *A vineyard ... in Jezreel* The name Jezreel is applied in Scripture, not merely to the town (¹¹⁸⁴⁶1 Kings 18:46), but also to the valley or plain which lies below it, between Mount Gilboa and Little Hermon (¹⁰¹¹⁹2 Samuel 2:9; ¹²⁹⁰2 Kings 9:10; ²⁰⁰⁵Hosea 1:5; etc.).

The palace of Ahab at Jezreel was on the eastern side of the city, looking toward the Jordan down the valley above described. It abutted on the town wall (¹¹⁸⁸⁰2 Kings 9:30,31). Immediately below it was a dry moat. Beyond, in the valley, either adjoining the moat, or at any rate at no great distance, was the plot of ground belonging to Naboth (¹¹⁹²¹2 Kings 9:21).

1 Kings 21:2. *I will give thee the worth of it in money* literally, "I will give thee silver, the worth of it." Money, in our sense of the word, that is to say, coins of definite values, did not yet exist. The first coin known to the Jews was the Persian daric, with which they became acquainted during the captivity. (¹³²⁰⁷1 Chronicles 29:7 note).

1 Kings 21:3. *The LORD forbid it me* Or, "Yahweh forbid it me." Naboth, as a worshipper of Yahweh, not of Baal, considers it would be wrong for him to comply with the king's request, as contrary to the Law (margin). His was not a mere refusal arising out of a spirit of sturdy independence, or one based upon the sentiment which attaches men to ancestral estates.

1 Kings 21:4. *Upon his bed* That is, "upon his couch." The Jews, like other Orientals, reclined upon couches at their meals (³⁰⁶⁸Amos 6:4; ⁵²³⁴Ezekiel 23:41, etc.). Ahab turns his face toward the back of the couch, rejecting all converse with others, and so remains, after the banquet is served, refusing to partake of it. Such an open manifestation of ill temper is thoroughly characteristic of an Oriental king.

1 Kings 21:7. The meaning is, "Art thou king, and yet sufferest thyself to be thwarted in this way by a mere subject? I, the queen, the weak woman, will give thee the vineyard, if thou, the king, the strong man, wilt do nothing."

1 Kings 21:8. *Seal* The seal is a very ancient invention. Judah's signet and Pharaoh's signet-ring are mentioned in Genesis (^{<0318>}Genesis 38:18; 41:42). Signets of Egyptian kings have been found which are referred to about 2000 B.C. Sennacherib's signet, and an impression of Sargon's, are still extant. There can be no doubt that in the East, from a very remote antiquity, kings had seals and appended them to all documents which they set forth under their authority. (Compare also ^{<0312>}Esther 3:12; 8:8; ^{<0167>}Daniel 6:17). The Hebrew mode of sealing seems to have been by attaching a lump of clay to the document, and impressing the seal thereupon (^{<0384>}Job 38:14).

His city i.e., Jezreel (^{<1200>}1 Kings 21:1). The mode in which it is spoken of here, and in ^{<1211>}1 Kings 21:11, seems to imply that it was not the city from which Jezebel wrote. The court was evidently at this time residing at Samaria (^{<1204>}1 Kings 20:43); and Ahab may either have met Naboth there, or have gone down (compare ^{<1216>}1 Kings 21:16) to Jezreel to make his request, and then, on being refused, have returned to Samaria. The distance is not more than seven miles.

1 Kings 21:9. The object of this fast was at once to raise a prejudice against Naboth, who was assumed by the elders to have disgraced the town; and at the same time to give an air of religion to the proceedings, which might blind persons to their real injustice.

Set Naboth on high among his people This was not an order to do Naboth any, even apparent, honor; but simply a command to bring him forward before a court or assembly, where he might be seen by all, tried, and condemned.

1 Kings 21:10. *Sons of Belial* i.e., "worthless persons" (^{<0513>}Deuteronomy 13:13 note). Witnesses must be two in number according to the Law (^{<0531>}Numbers 35:30; ^{<0576>}Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15).

The word rendered "blaspheme" is that which commonly means "bless." The opposite sense of "cursing," seems, however, to be required here and in ^{<0305>}Job 1:5,11; 2:5. Perhaps the best explanation of the bad sense of the original word is to be found in the practice of blessing by way of salutation, not only on meeting, but also on taking leave (^{<0477>}Genesis 47:7,10). From the latter custom the word came to mean "bidding farewell to," and so "renouncing," "casting off," "cursing."

Carry him out and stone him Naboth's offence would be twofold, and in both cases capital; blasphemy against God being punishable with death by the Law (marginal reference), and blasphemy against the king being a capital offence by custom (^{<1108>}1 Kings 2:8; ^{<1069>}2 Samuel 16:9; 19:21). The punishment would be stoning, since the greater crime would absorb the lesser, and the Law made stoning the punishment for blasphemy against God. As stoning always took place outside the city (see ^{<4078>}Acts 7:58), Jezebel told the elders to "carry Naboth out."

^{<1211>}**1 Kings 21:11.** The ready submission of the elders and nobles implies a deep moral degradation among the Israelites, the fruit of their lapse into idolatry.

^{<1213>}**1 Kings 21:13.** Naboth had sons who were also put to death at this time (marginal reference). It is not improbable that they were stoned together with their parent (compare ^{<1072>}Joshua 7:24,25). In the East, a parent's guilt constantly involves the punishment of his children. Contrast ^{<2416>}2 Kings 14:6.

^{<1216>}**1 Kings 21:16.** *To take possession of it* The goods of traitors appear to have been forfeited to the crown by the Jewish law as they still are almost universally throughout the East. Compare ^{<1064>}2 Samuel 16:4.

^{<1219>}**1 Kings 21:19.** *Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?* These words rebuke especially Ahab's indecent haste. He went to Jezreel the very day after Naboth's execution (^{<1326>}2 Kings 9:26).

The prophecy following had a double fulfillment. The main fulfillment was by the casting of the dead body of Jehoram into Naboth's plot of ground at Jezreel, where, like Naboth's, it was left for the dogs to eat (^{<1325>}2 Kings 9:25). This spot, which was just outside the city wall, and close to a gate (^{<1331>}2 Kings 9:31), was probably the actual scene of Naboth's execution. Here did dogs lick Ahab's blood, that is, his son's blood, the execution of the full retaliatory sentence having been deferred to the days of his son, formally and explicitly, on Ahab's repentance (^{<1229>}1 Kings 21:29). But, besides this, there was a secondary fulfillment of the prophecy, when, not at Jezreel but at Samaria (marginal reference), the actual blood of Ahab himself, was licked by dogs, only in a way that implied no disgrace. These two fulfillments are complementary to each other.

<123>1 Kings 21:20. The words “O mine enemy,” may refer partly to the old antagonism (marginal reference; **<170>1 Kings 17:1; 19:2,3**); but the feeling which it expresses is rather that of present oppositions — the opposition between good and evil, light and darkness (**<30>John 3:20**.)

Thou hast sold thyself to work evil Compare the marginal references. The metaphor is taken from the practice of men’s selling themselves into slavery, and so giving themselves wholly up to work the will of their master. This was a widespread custom in the ancient world.

<122>1 Kings 21:21. The prophet changes, without warning, from speaking in his own person to speaking in the person of God. The transition is abrupt, probably because the compiler follows his materials closely, compressing by omission. One fragment omitted here is preserved in **<305>2 Kings 9:26**.

<123>1 Kings 21:23. *And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying* These are not the words of Elijah, but of the writer, who notes a special prophecy against Jezebel, whose guilt was at least equal to her husband’s.

Wall The marginal rendering “ditch,” is preferable. There is always in Oriental towns a space outside the walls which lies uncultivated, and which is naturally used for the deposit of refuse of every kind. Here the dogs prowl, and the kites and vultures find many a feast.

<125>1 Kings 21:25. *whom Jezebel stirred up* The history of Ahab’s reign throughout exhibits him as completely governed by his imperious wife. Instances of her influence are seen in **<1207>1 Kings 21:7,15**, marginal reference, **<1804>1 Kings 18:4; 19:2**.

<123>1 Kings 21:26. The Amorites appear here as representatives of the old Canaanite nations (**<0156>Genesis 15:16** note). It seems to be implied here that their idolatries were in the main identical with those of the Phoenicians which Ahab had adopted.

<127>1 Kings 21:27. The repentance of Ahab resembles that of the Ninevites (**<305>Jonah 3:5**). It has the same outward signs — fasting and sackcloth — and it has much the same inward character. It springs, not from love, nor from hatred of sin, but from fear of the consequences of sin. It is thus, although sincere and real while it lasts, shallow and exceedingly short-lived. God, however, to mark His readiness to receive the sinner who

turns to Him, accepted the imperfect offering (as He likewise accepted the penitence of the Ninevites), and allowed it to delay the execution of the sentence (^{<1219>}1 Kings 21:29). So the penitence of the Ninevites put off the fall of Nineveh for a century.

And lay in sackcloth In this particular he seems to have gone beyond the usual practice. We do not read elsewhere of mourners passing the night in sackcloth.

And went softly “As if he had no heart to go about any business” (Patrick).

^{<1219>}**1 Kings 21:29.** *The evil* i.e., the main evil. See ^{<1219>}1 Kings 21:19 note; and compare ^{<1228>}1 Kings 22:38 with marginal reference.

NOTES ON 1 KINGS 22

1 Kings 22:1. *Three years* These must be counted from the close of the second campaign of Ben-hadad (^{<1234>}1 Kings 20:34). They were not full years, as is evident from the next verse. Probably the first year is that of Ben-hadad's dismissal after his defeat; the second is a year of actual peace; while the third is that in which Jehoshaphat paid his visit, and the Ramoth-Gilead expedition took place. The pause, here noticed, in the war between Israel and Syria was perhaps the result of a common danger. It was probably in the year following Ben-hadad's dismissal by Ahab, that the first great Assyrian expedition took place into these parts. Shalmaneser II relates that on his first invasion of southern Syria, he was met by the combined forces of Ben-hadad, Ahab, the king of Hamath, the kings of the Hittites, and others, who gave him battle, but suffered a defeat.

1 Kings 22:2. This visit indicates an entire change in the relations which we have hitherto found subsisting between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The common danger to which the two kingdoms were exposed from the growing power of Syria had probably induced them to forget their differences. Jehoshaphat's eldest son, Jehoram, was married to Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab: but apparently the bond between the two families had not hitherto led to any very close intimacy, much less to any joint military expeditions. Jehoshaphat seems to have taken no part in the former Syrian wars of Ahab, nor did he join in the great league against the Assyrians (^{<1235>}1 Kings 22:1 note). His visit now was probably one of mere friendliness, without any political object. Ahab, however, turned the visit to political advantage. From this time until the displacement of Ahab's dynasty by Jehu, very intimate relations subsisted between the two kingdoms (^{<1236>}1 Kings 22:49; ^{<1237>}2 Kings 3:7; 8:28,29; ^{<1238>}2 Chronicles 20:36, etc.).

1 Kings 22:3. By the terms of Ahab's covenant with Ben-hadad, Ramoth in Gilead ought, long ere this, to have been restored (^{<1239>}1 Kings 20:34). Hence, the claim "is ours," i.e., "it belongs to us of right though the Syrians still hold possession of it."

1 Kings 22:4. Ahab, well aware of the military strength of Syria, and feeling that he cannot now expect divine aid (^{<1240>}1 Kings 20:42; 21:21),

asks the aid of Jehoshaphat, whose military resources were very great (^{<4472>}2 Chronicles 17:12-19). Jehoshaphat's answer is one of complete acquiescence, without reserve of any kind (compare ^{<4483>}2 Chronicles 18:3). Jehoshaphat was afterward rebuked for thus consenting to "help the ungodly" (^{<4492>}2 Chronicles 19:2). He probably acted not merely from complaisance, but from a belief that the interests of his own kingdom would be advanced by the step which he agreed to take. The power of Syria was at this time very menacing.

^{<1226>}**1 Kings 22:5.** Jehoshaphat, with characteristic piety (^{<1228>}1 Kings 22:43) takes advantage of his position as Ahab's friend and ally, to suggest inquiry of the Lord (Yahweh) before the expedition is undertaken. Lest Ahab should consent in word and put off the inquiry in act, he asks to have the prophets called in at once: "today."

^{<1226>}**1 Kings 22:6.** *The prophets* i.e., In all probability the prophets attached to the worship of the calves; not real prophets of Yahweh. This seems evident both from Jehoshaphat's dissatisfaction (^{<1227>}1 Kings 22:7), and from the strong antagonism apparent between the true Yahweh-prophet Micaiah, and these self-styled "prophets of the Lord" (^{<1222>}1 Kings 22:22-25).

The Lord shall deliver it In the Hebrew the word here used for "Lord" is (*Adonai*) ^{<136>}. Later (i.e., in ^{<1221>}1 Kings 22:11,12) LORD or (Jehovah) ^{<3068>} is used. It would seem as if the idolatrous prophets shrank from employing the latter title until they found that Jehoshaphat insisted on learning the will of Yahweh in the matter.

^{<1227>}**1 Kings 22:7.** Jehoshaphat was dissatisfied. These men — creatures of Ahab, tainted with the worship of calves if not with Baal-worship — had promised victory, but not in the name of Yahweh. Jehoshaphat, therefore, asked, "Is there not here a true prophet of Yahweh besides these 400 professed prophets?"

^{<1228>}**1 Kings 22:8.** *There is yet one man, Micaiah* Elijah, it appears, had withdrawn again after the events of the last chapter, and there was no known prophet of Yahweh within reach of Samaria except Micaiah.

He doth not prophesy good concerning me but evil Whether the tradition in ^{<1224>}1 Kings 20:41 note be true or not, it is certain that Ahab had imprisoned him (^{<1226>}1 Kings 22:26), and probable that the imprisonment

was on account of threatening prophecies. Ahab suggests to Jehoshaphat that Micaiah is one who allows his private feelings to determine the utterances which he delivers as if from Yahweh. Hence, the force of Jehoshaphat's answer, "Let not the king say so;" i.e., "Let not the king suppose that a prophet would be guilty of such impiety," — an impiety from which even Balaam shrank (^{<0218>}Numbers 22:18).

^{<1219>}**1 Kings 22:9.** *An officer* More properly, as in the margin, "a eunuch." Eunuchs seem to have been first introduced among the Israelites by David (^{<1301>}1 Chronicles 28:1 note). They were a natural accompaniment of the seraglio of Solomon. The present passage is the first which shows that, after the separation of the kingdom, the kings of Israel employed them (compare ^{<1316>}2 Kings 8:6; 9:32).

^{<1220>}**1 Kings 22:10.** *Sat each on his throne* Or, "were sitting." They had removed from the banquet (^{<1412>}2 Chronicles 18:2) to the void place, or empty space at the entrance of the gate (^{<0801>}Ruth 4:1; ^{<1015>}2 Samuel 15:2), where Ahab daily sat to hear complaints and decide causes. Each was seated upon his throne, the Oriental kings having portable thrones, which they took with them upon their journeys.

^{<1221>}**1 Kings 22:11.** *Horns of iron* The horn in Scripture is the favorite symbol of power; and pushing with the horn is a common metaphor for attacking and conquering enemies (see ^{<1517>}Deuteronomy 33:17; Compare ^{<0415>}Psalms 44:5; ^{<0704>}Daniel 8:4). Zedekiah, in employing a symbolic action, was following the example of a former Israelite prophet (^{<1113>}1 Kings 11:30).

Thus saith the LORD Or, Jehovah. Zedekiah lays aside the unmeaningful "Lord" (*Adonai*) ^{<1136>} of the general company of Israelite prophets (^{<1216>}1 Kings 22:6), and professes to have a direct message from Yahweh to Ahab. He may have believed his own words, for the "lying spirit" (^{<1222>}1 Kings 22:22) may have seemed to him a messenger from Yahweh. All the rest followed his example (^{<1222>}1 Kings 22:12).

^{<1223>}**1 Kings 22:13.** *And the messenger spake unto him ...* There seems to have been a widespread notion among the irreligious and the half-religious of the ancient world, that their prophets were not the mere mouth-pieces of the god, but that they were persons who had power with the god, and could compel, or at least induce, Him to work their will (compare

^{<0240>}Numbers 24:10; ^{<2310>}Isaiah 30:10). They saw that the prophet's word was accomplished; they did not understand that if he falsified his message the accomplishment would no longer follow.

^{<1224>}**1 Kings 22:14.** Micaiah, as a true prophet of Yahweh, of course rejected the counsel offered him, which he felt to be at once wicked and foolish. Compare also the resolution of Balaam, marginal reference.

^{<1225>}**1 Kings 22:15.** *And he answered him ...* Micaiah speaks the exact words of the 400 in so mocking and ironical a tone, that the king cannot mistake his meaning, or regard his answer as serious. The king's rejoinder implies that this mocking manner was familiar to Micaiah, who had used it in some former dealings with the Israelite monarch. Hence, in part, the king's strong feeling of dislike (compare ^{<1218>}1 Kings 22:8).

^{<1227>}**1 Kings 22:17.** Thus adjured, Micaiah wholly changes his tone. Ahab cannot possibly mistake the meaning of his vision, especially as the metaphor of "sheep and shepherd" for king and people was familiar to the Israelites from the prayer of Moses (^{<0277>}Numbers 27:17).

^{<1228>}**1 Kings 22:18.** See ^{<1228>}1 Kings 22:8. Ahab implies that he believes Micaiah to have spoken out of pure malevolence, without any authority for his prediction from God. By implication he invites Jehoshaphat to disregard this pseudo-prophecy, and to put his trust in the unanimous declaration of the 400. Micaiah, therefore, proceeds to explain the contradiction between himself and the 400, by recounting another vision.

^{<1229>}**1 Kings 22:19.** David's Psalms had familiarised the Israelites with Yahweh sitting upon a throne in the heavens (^{<3007>}Psalms 9:7; 11:4; 45:6; 103:19, etc.); but to be allowed to see in vision the ineffable glory of the Almighty thus seated, was a rare favor. It was granted to Isaiah, to Daniel (marginal references), to Ezekiel (^{<3026>}Ezekiel 1:26), and in Christian times to Stephen (^{<4175>}Acts 7:56), and John (^{<6042>}Revelation 4:2).

^{<1221>}**1 Kings 22:21.** *A spirit* "The spirit" — which some explain as "the evil spirit" — i.e. Satan; others as simply "the spirit" who should "persuade."

^{<1222>}**1 Kings 22:22.** The difficulties which attach to this passage are considerable. On the one hand, it is hard to suppose one of the holy Angels a "lying spirit;" on the other, hard to find Satan, or an evil spirit, included

among “the host of heaven” (^{<1229>}1 Kings 22:19) and acting as the minister of God. Still, ^{<1806>}Job 1:6; 2:1, lend countenance to the latter point, and ^{<3211>}2 Thessalonians 2:11 to the former. But it may be doubted whether we ought to take literally, and seek to interpret exactly, each statement of the present narrative. Visions of the invisible world can only be a sort of parables; revelations, not of the truth as it actually is, but of so much of the truth as can be shown through such a medium. The details of a vision, therefore, cannot safely be pressed, anymore than the details of a parable. Portions of each must be accommodations to human modes of thought, and may very inadequately express the realities which they are employed to shadow forth to us.

^{<1224>}**1 Kings 22:24.** *Smote Micaiah on the cheek* As Micaiah had been brought from prison (^{<1226>}1 Kings 22:26), it is probable that his hands were bound.

The prophet, thus standing before the great ones of the earth, bound and helpless, bearing testimony to the truth, and for his testimony smitten on the face by an underling, whose blow he receives without either shame or anger, is a notable type of our Lord before Caiaphas suffering the same indignity.

Which way ... Zedekiah’s meaning may perhaps be expounded as follows:

“The Spirit of Yahweh certainly came to me, and inspired me with the answer which I gave. If He afterward went to thee, as thou sayest that He did, perhaps thou canst tell us — as all the secrets of the invisible world are, thou pretendest, open to thee — which way He took.”

^{<1225>}**1 Kings 22:25.** Micaiah addresses himself not so much to Zedekiah’s question, as to the main point which lies in dispute — which of them, namely, is a true prophet. “When the news, i.e., of Ahab’s death, caused by his following thy counsels, reaches Samaria, and thou hast to hide thyself from the vengeance of Ahaziah or Jezebel, then, in that day, thou wilt know whether I or thou be the true prophet.”

^{<1226>}**1 Kings 22:26.** *Carry him back* literally, “cause him to return.” Micaiah had been in custody before, and was brought by Ahab’s messenger from his prison.

The governor of the city This is one out of several notices respecting what may be called the “constitution” of the Israelite kingdom. The king

consulted on important matters a Council of elders (^{<1107>}1 Kings 20:7,8). The general administration was carried on by means of the governors of provinces (^{<1104>}1 Kings 20:14) and of cities (^{<1105>}2 Kings 10:5). The governors of cities, like the monarch, were assisted and checked by councils of elders, the wise men of the several towns (^{<1208>}1 Kings 21:8-12; ^{<1205>}2 Kings 10:5). Thus Samaria, as we see from the present passage, was under a special governor, who, among his other duties, had the control of the public prison, and directed the treatment of the prisoners.

The king's son The phrase seems to designate a state office, rather than relationship to the sovereign. Compare ^{<1437>}2 Chronicles 28:7.

^{<1127>}**1 Kings 22:27.** *Feed him with bread of affliction ...* Micaiah is to be once more put in prison, but, in order to punish him for his uncomplying spirit, upon a poorer and scantier diet than he had been previously allowed. This is to continue until Ahab returns in peace. Ahab introduces this expression purposely, in order to show his entire disbelief of Micaiah's prophecy.

^{<1129>}**1 Kings 22:29.** It might have been expected that Jehoshaphat would have withdrawn from the expedition when he heard Micaiah denounce it. He had, however, rashly committed himself to take part in the war by a solemn promise, before he bethought himself of inquiring what was the will of God in the matter. Now he was ashamed to draw back, especially as Ahab, whom the prophecy chiefly threatened, was resolved to brave it. He may also have had a personal affection for Ahab, and so have been loth to desert him in his need. Compare ^{<1491>}2 Chronicles 19:2.

^{<1221>}**1 Kings 22:30.** *I will disguise myself* Ahab had probably heard of Ben-hadad's order to his captains (^{<1221>}1 Kings 22:31).

^{<1221>}**1 Kings 22:31.** *Commanded* "Had commanded." Ben-hadad delivers his order in the hyperbolic style common in the East. His meaning is, "Make it your chief object to kill or take the king of Israel." Apparently, his own defeat and captivity were still rankling in his mind, and he wished to retaliate on Ahab, the humiliation which he considered himself to have suffered. He shows small appreciation of the generosity which had spared his life and restored him to his kingdom.

^{<1123>}**1 Kings 22:32.** *Surely it is the king of Israel* This was a natural supposition, as Jehoshaphat alone wore royal robes.

And Jehoshaphat cried out Jehoshaphat called to his men for help, using perhaps his own special battle-cry, which would be distinct from that of Ahab, and would probably be known to the Syrians.

~~1223~~ **1 Kings 22:34.** *At a venture* literally, as in the margin, i.e. without intent to kill the king.

Between the joints of the harness literally, as in the margin. The “joints” were probably pieces of armor which attached the breast-plate to the helmet or to the greaves. The arrow entered between the breastplate and one of these “joints.” breastplates made of metal scales were common both in Egypt and Assyria.

Turn thine hand literally, “turn thy hands.” The driver of a chariot, both in Egypt and Assyria, held the reins with his two hands.

~~1225~~ **1 Kings 22:35.** *The battle increased* See the margin; i.e. the tide of battle rose higher. Compare ~~2307~~ Isaiah 8:7,8.

The king was stayed up in his chariot The king’s wound made it impossible for him to remain standing without help; he therefore had himself supported in his chariot by attendants, in order that his soldiers might not lose heart, as they would be sure to do, if they knew of his peril. Ahab must not be denied the credit of right princely fortitude on this occasion.

The midst of the chariot literally, as in the margin. The “bosom” of the chariot is the rounded front, with the portion of the standing board that adjoined it. Here the blood would naturally collect, forming a pool, in which the king and his charioteer must have stood.

~~1226~~ **1 Kings 22:36.** *About the going down of the sun* i.e. as soon as Ahab was dead. The abandonment of the expedition and dispersion of the army on the death of the king is thoroughly Oriental.

The Septuagint version reads ~~1226~~ 1 Kings 22:36,37, “Every man to his city, and every man to his own country, for the king is dead: And they came to Samaria,” etc.

~~1228~~ **1 Kings 22:38.** *They washed his armour* Rather, “the harlots bathed in it.” The “pool of Samaria,” which was stained with Ahab’s blood by the washing of his chariot in it, was, according to Josephus, the usual bathing-

place of the Samaritan harlots. A large tank or reservoir, probably identical with this pool, still remains on the slope of the hill of Samaria, immediately outside the walls.

<123>**1 Kings 22:39.** *The ivory house* So called from the character of its ornamentation. Ivory was largely used in the ancient world as a covering of wood-work, and seems to have been applied, not only to furniture, but to the doors and walls of houses.

Nothing is known of the cities built by Ahab; but the fact is important as indicating the general prosperity of the country in his time, and his own activity as a ruler. Prosperity, it is plain, may for a while co-exist with causes — such as, the decay of religions — which are sapping the vital power of a nation, and leading it surely, if slowly, to destruction.

The book of the chronicles ... See above, <1149>1 Kings 14:19; 15:31; 16:5,14,20,27.

<124>**1 Kings 22:41.** The writer returns to the history of the kingdom of Judah (connect this verse with <1153>1 Kings 15:24), sketching briefly a reign much more fully given by the writer of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 17—20). Compare also the marginal references.

<125>**1 Kings 22:43.** On the general piety of Asa, see above, <1151>1 Kings 15:11-15 and references. Jehoshaphat seems to have been a still better king, for he did not, like Asa, fall away in his old age (<1462>2 Chronicles 16:2-12).

The high places were not taken away This seems to contradict <1476>2 Chronicles 17:6. Probably the writer of Chronicles refers to the desire and intention of the monarch, while the author of Kings records the practical failure of his efforts.

<124>**1 Kings 22:44.** This refers probably to an early period in Jehoshaphat's reign — about his eighth or his ninth year — when he closed the long series of wars between the two kingdoms by a formal peace, perhaps at once cemented by a marriage between Jehoram and Athaliah (<1222>1 Kings 22:2 note).

<125>**1 Kings 22:45.** *The book of the chronicles ...* Compare <1229>1 Kings 22:39 note. The biographer of Jehoshaphat appears to have been Jehu, the son of Hanani (<1478>2 Chronicles 20:34).

1 Kings 22:46. See the marginal references notes.

1 Kings 22:47. In the time of Solomon, Hadad (~~1 Kings 11:14~~), according to the Septuagint, “reigned over Edom.” It appears by the present passage that the country had been again reduced either by Jehoshaphat, or by an earlier king, and was dependent on the kingdom of Judah, being governed by a “deputy” or viceroy, who, however, was allowed the royal title (compare ~~2 Kings 3:9,12,26~~). This government of dependencies by means of subject-kings was the all but universal practice in the East down to the time of Cyrus (the ~~1 Kings 4:21~~ note).

1 Kings 22:48. The expression, “ships of Tharshish,” probably designates ships of a particular class, ships (i.e.) like those with which the Phoenicians used to trade to Tharshish (Tartessus, ~~1 Kings 10:22~~ note). Compare the use of “India-man” for a vessel of a certain class. Jehoshaphat’s fleet was constructed at Ezion-Gaber, on the Red Sea (~~2 Chronicles 20:36~~), where Solomon had previously built a navy (~~1 Kings 9:26~~). Being lord-paramount of Edom, Jehoshaphat had the right of using this harbor.

1 Kings 22:49. ~~2 Chronicles 20:35,36~~, explains that the two kings conjointly built the fleet with which the Ophir trade (~~1 Kings 9:28~~ note) was to be re-opened. Ahaziah had thus an interest in the ships; and when they were wrecked, attributing, as it would seem, the calamity to the unskillfulness of his ally’s mariners, he proposed that the fleet should be manned in part by Israelite sailors — men probably accustomed to the sea, perhaps trained at Tyre. This proposal Jehoshaphat refused, either offended at the reflection on his subjects’ skill, or accepting the wreck of the ships, which Eliezer had prophesied, as a proof that God was against the entire undertaking.

1 Kings 22:51. *Two years* According to our reckoning, not much more than a twelve-month year.

1 Kings 22:52. *In the way of his mother* In this phrase, which does not occur anywhere else, we see the strong feeling of the writer as to the influence of Jezebel (compare ~~1 Kings 16:31~~).

1 Kings 22:51-53. It would be of advantage if these verses were transferred to the Second Book of Kings, which would thus open with the

commencement of Ahaziah's reign. The division of the books does not proceed from the author. See the introduction to the Book of Kings.