

KHW30 July 18-24

July 18 Su (Optional) — Revelation 5:6, 11-14 — Supreme worth, wisdom, and wealth

We recently read about the wonderful wisdom and wealth of King Solomon, which was beyond any other person in history. There is One greater, however, as pictured in the vision the Apostle John had of a scene in heaven.

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice,

*"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!"*

¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

*"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"*

¹⁴ And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped.

The humble lamb that had been slain is not particularly a picture of greatness but those in heaven recognized that this Lamb was the Savior who gave His life to redeem mankind and was, therefore, indescribably great. The poem in verse 12 is a good one to memorize and express in prayer. It mentions everything that was good about Solomon but takes it to another level. Jesus is supreme.

1 Kings 10

¹ Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions. ² She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. ³ And Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her. ⁴ And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁵ the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his cupbearers,

and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her.

⁶ And she said to the king, “The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, ⁷ but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity surpass the report that I heard. ⁸ Happy are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!

⁹ Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD loved Israel forever, he has made you king, that you may execute justice and righteousness.”

¹⁰ Then she gave the king 120 talents^[fn] of gold, and a very great quantity of spices and precious stones. Never again came such an abundance of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

ESV Footnote

(10:10) A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

2 Chronicles 9

¹ Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon,

she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions, having a very great retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. ² And Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from Solomon that he could not explain to her.

³ And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁴ the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his cupbearers, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more breath in her.

⁵ And she said to the king, “The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, ⁶ but I did not believe the^[fn] reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, half the greatness of your wisdom was not told me; you surpass the report that I heard. ⁷ Happy are your wives!^[fn] Happy are these your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!

⁸ Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on his throne as king for the LORD your God! Because your God loved Israel and would establish them forever, he has made you king over them, that you may execute justice and righteousness.”

⁹ Then she gave the king 120 talents^[fn] of gold, and a very great quantity of spices, and precious stones. There were no spices such as those that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

ESV Footnotes

(9:6) Hebrew *their*

(9:7) Septuagint (compare 1 Kings 10:8); Hebrew *men*

(9:9) A *talent* was about 75 pounds or 34 kilograms

1 Kings 10 (cont.)

¹¹ Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a very great amount of almug wood and precious stones.

¹² And the king made of the almug wood supports for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also lyres and harps for the singers. No such almug wood has come or been seen to this day.

¹³ And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired, whatever she asked besides what was given her by the bounty of King Solomon. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.

2 Chronicles 9 (cont.)

¹⁰ Moreover, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum wood and precious stones. ¹¹ And the king made from the algum wood supports for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers. There never was seen the like of them before in the land of Judah.

¹² And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired, whatever she asked besides what she had brought to the king. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants.

Unsurpassed Wisdom — The fame of Solomon's wisdom had spread far and wide. We were told earlier that *"people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom"* (1 Kings 4:34). Today we read about one specific example through the visit of the Queen of Sheba (currently Yemen, at the SE tip of the Arabian Peninsula, a crow-fly distance of 1366 miles [2198 km] from Jerusalem). She was primarily attracted by Solomon's unusual wisdom. At the beginning of Solomon's reign, he had asked God for wisdom, and it was given to him in abundance. There is one statement in this passage that sounds like God's wisdom was still being given to him as he needed it: *"...there was nothing hidden from the king that he could not explain to her"* (10:3). God was apparently supplying the wisdom he needed for those specific questions. Don't you wish you had that kind of wisdom available to you? You do! The New Testament tells the Christian, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him"* (James 1:5). Maybe we lack wisdom because we are not asking for it. Will you be faced with a difficult question or decision today? Stop to pray about it! Admit your need to God and ask for wisdom to do and say the right thing!

1 Kings 10

¹⁴ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,
¹⁵ besides that which came from the explorers and from the business of the merchants, and from all the kings of the west and from the governors of the land.

¹⁶ King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold; 600 shekels^[fn] of gold went into each shield. ¹⁷ And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; three minas^[fn] of gold went into each shield. And the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸ The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with the finest gold. ¹⁹ The throne had six steps, and the throne had a round top,^[fn] and on each side of the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the armrests, ²⁰ while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. The like of it was never made in any kingdom.

²¹ All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were of silver; silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon.

²² For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.^[fn]

²³ Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. ²⁴ And the whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. ²⁵ Every one of them brought his present, articles of silver and gold, garments, myrrh,^[fn] spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

ESV Footnotes

(10:16) A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
 (10:17) A *mina* was about 1 1/4 pounds or 0.6 kilogram
 (10:19) Or *and at the back of the throne was a calf's head*
 (10:22) Or *baboons*
 (10:25) Or *armor*

2 Chronicles 9

¹³ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold,
¹⁴ besides that which the explorers and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon.

¹⁵ King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold; 600 shekels^[fn] of beaten gold went into each shield. ¹⁶ And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; 300 shekels of gold went into each shield; and the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁷ The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with pure gold. ¹⁸ The throne had six steps and a footstool of gold, which were attached to the throne, and on each side of the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the armrests, ¹⁹ while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. Nothing like it was ever made for any kingdom.

²⁰ All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. Silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon.

²¹ For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.^[fn]

²² Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. ²³ And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. ²⁴ Every one of them brought his present, articles of silver and of gold, garments, myrrh,^[fn] spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

ESV Footnotes

(9:15) A *shekel* was about 2/5 ounce or 11 grams
 (9:21) Or *baboons*
 (9:24) Or *armor*

1 Kings 10 (cont.)

²⁶ *And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.*

²⁷ *And the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah.*

²⁸ *And Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's traders received them from Kue at a price. ²⁹ A chariot could be imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver and a horse for 150, and so through the king's traders they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.*

2 Chronicles 9 (cont.)

²⁵ *And Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.*

²⁶ *And he ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates^[fn] to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt.*

²⁷ *And the king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah.*

²⁸ *And horses were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.*

ESV Footnote

(9:26) Hebrew *the River*

Too much of a good thing? — God had promised to give Solomon not only the wisdom he asked for but also “*both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you*” (1 Kings 3:13). We certainly see the emphasis on those riches in our passage for today. Every year, Solomon received 666 talents of gold. How much was that? It was more than the 600 talents of gold plastered on the inside walls of the Most Holy Place, which we said weighed as much as a bus loaded with people. And he received 666 talents every year for 40 years! That was so extravagant that it made “*silver as common in Jerusalem as stone*” (1 Kings 10:27). Centuries earlier, God had warned that Israel's future king should not “*acquire for himself excessive silver and gold*” (Deut. 17:17). Well, if God gave it to him, what was he supposed to do with it?! Most of us in America are faced with a similar dilemma. God has blessed us far beyond our needs. What are we doing with the surplus? In a chapter about giving in the New Testament, Paul instructs us: “*You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God*” (2 Cor. 9:11). Enriched to be generous. We are to use the extra God has given us to minister to the needs of others. How about having a family conference tonight to decide what you can do to help with the financial needs of someone else? Make it significant!

Meditation: Here is a note that might prevent confusion: Where was Tarshish? It was probably the same as Tartessus, an ancient port city on the southwest coast of Spain, which is the length of the Mediterranean Sea from Jerusalem. Tarshish was often connected with ships. That is where Jonah was heading before he was cast overboard and swallowed by the great fish (Jonah 1:3). It should not be confused with the hometown of Saul (Paul) of Tarsus, which is on the northwest coast of the Mediterranean Sea, much nearer to Jerusalem.

1 Kings 11

¹ Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, ² from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. ³ He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart. ⁴ For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. ⁸ And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

⁹ And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice ¹⁰ and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the LORD commanded.

¹¹ Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. ¹² Yet for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³ However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem that I have chosen."

¹⁴ And the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He was of the royal house in Edom. ¹⁵ For when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the slain, he struck down every male in Edom ¹⁶ (for Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom). ¹⁷ But Hadad fled to Egypt, together with certain Edomites of his father's servants, Hadad still being a little child. ¹⁸ They set out from Midian and came to Paran and took men with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and assigned him an allowance of food and gave him land. ¹⁹ And Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him in marriage the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. ²⁰ And the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house. And Genubath was in Pharaoh's house among the sons of Pharaoh. ²¹ But when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, that I may go to my own country." ²² But Pharaoh said to him, "What have you lacked with me that you are now seeking to go to your own country?" And he said to him, "Only let me depart."

²³ God also raised up as an adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah. ²⁴ And he gathered men about him and became leader of a marauding band, after the killing by David. And they went to Damascus and lived there and made him king in Damascus. ²⁵ He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, doing harm as Hadad did. And he loathed Israel and reigned over Syria.

1 Kings 11 (cont.)

²⁶ Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king. ²⁷ And this was the reason why he lifted up his hand against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the breach of the city of David his father. ²⁸ The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph. ²⁹ And at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed himself in a new garment, and the two of them were alone in the open country. ³⁰ Then Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. ³¹ And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes' ³² (but he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), ³³ because they have^[fn] forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and they have not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my rules, as David his father did. ³⁴ Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of David my servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and my statutes. ³⁵ But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and will give it to you, ten tribes. ³⁶ Yet to his son I will give one tribe, that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name. ³⁷ And I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel. ³⁸ And if you will listen to all that I command you, and will walk in my ways, and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you and will build you a sure house, as I built for David, and I will give Israel to you. ³⁹ And I will afflict the offspring of David because of this, but not forever.'" ⁴⁰ Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam arose and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

⁴¹ Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon?

⁴² And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years.

⁴³ And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

ESV Footnotes

(11:33) Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate *he has*; twice in this verse

2 Chronicles 9 (cont.)

²⁹ Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, are they not written in

the history of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

³⁰ Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ³¹ And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father, and Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.

Torn Kingdoms — Do you remember when Samuel told Saul that, because of his disobedience, God had rejected him as king? As Samuel turned to leave, Saul grabbed and tore Samuel's robe and Samuel said, "*The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours who is better than you*" (1 Sam. 15:28). A very similar thing happened when the prophet Ahijah met Jeroboam on the road outside Jerusalem. After tearing his robe into 12 pieces, Ahijah gave Jeroboam this word from the Lord: "*Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes*" (1 Kings 11:31). The united kingdom of Saul and Solomon was torn away because of disobedience. A major sin of Solomon was loving many foreign women, against God's direct command in Deuteronomy 17:17, which is quoted in 1 Kings 11:2. The power of a wife's influence on her husband was multiplied many times with Solomon's huge harem. His toleration and provision for them had this result: "*his wives turned away his heart after other gods*" (v. 4). His action turned into allegiance. This should alert us that we cannot associate with the sinful things of the world without also affecting our heart's desire. We cannot safely excuse or play with sin. We should also note that Solomon's heart-turning happened "*when Solomon was old*" (v. 4). Solomon started out well but didn't finish well. Don't relax in your walk as you get older!

Meditation: Let's do the math. Ahijah tore his robe into 12 pieces (v. 30) and gave Jeroboam 10 pieces, representing the 10 northern tribes (v. 31). Then God said through Ahijah that Solomon "*shall have one tribe ... for the sake of Jerusalem, the city I have chosen*" (v. 32), representing Judah. Ten plus one doesn't equal 12. What was missing? It was the tribe of Benjamin, the small area on Judah's northern border. In fact, according to the border descriptions for Judah in Joshua 15:8 and for Benjamin in Joshua 18:28, the city of Jerusalem was actually just in the territory of Benjamin. So, Benjamin was the twelfth tribe but it was only suggested by mentioning Jerusalem. The border-city of Jerusalem was often considered to be a city shared by both tribes, even though it is mostly mentioned in connection with Judah. The next chapter shows that Benjamin stayed with Judah when the kingdom was divided (1 Kings 12:23).

1 Kings 12

¹ Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. ² And as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from^[fn] Egypt. ³ And they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, ⁴ “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve you.” ⁵ He said to them, “Go away for three days, then come again to me.” So the people went away.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men, who had stood before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, “How do you advise me to answer this people?” ⁷ And they said to him, “If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever.” ⁸ But he abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him. ⁹ And he said to them, “What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father put on us’?” ¹⁰ And the young men who had grown up with him said to him, “Thus shall you speak to this people who said to you, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you lighten it for us,’ thus shall you say to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s thighs. ¹¹ And now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’”

ESV Footnote

(12:2) Septuagint, Vulgate (compare 2 Chronicles 10:2); Hebrew *lived in*

2 Chronicles 10

¹ Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. ² And as soon as Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it (for he was in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. ³ And they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all Israel came and said to Rehoboam, ⁴ “Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke on us, and we will serve you.” ⁵ He said to them, “Come to me again in three days.” So the people went away.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the old men,^[fn] who had stood before Solomon his father while he was yet alive, saying, “How do you advise me to answer this people?” ⁷ And they said to him, “If you will be good to this people and please them and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.” ⁸ But he abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him. ⁹ And he said to them, “What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father put on us’?” ¹⁰ And the young men who had grown up with him said to him, “Thus shall you speak to the people who said to you, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, but you lighten it for us’; thus shall you say to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s thighs. ¹¹ And now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’”

ESV Footnote

(10:6) Or *the elders*; also verses 8, 13

1 Kings 12 (cont.)

¹² So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king said, "Come to me again the third day." ¹³ And the king answered the people harshly, and forsaking the counsel that the old men had given him, ¹⁴ he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

¹⁶ And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, "What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David." So Israel went to their tents. ¹⁷ But Rehoboam reigned over the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah. ¹⁸ Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was taskmaster over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him to death with stones.

And King Rehoboam hurried to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

²⁰ And when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was none that followed the house of David but the tribe of Judah only.

2 Chronicles 10 (cont.)

¹² So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king said, "Come to me again the third day." ¹³ And the king answered them harshly; and forsaking the counsel of the old men, ¹⁴ King Rehoboam spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by God that the LORD might fulfill his word, which he spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

¹⁶ And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, "What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. Each of you to your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David." So all Israel went to their tents. ¹⁷ But Rehoboam reigned over the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah. ¹⁸ Then King Rehoboam sent Hadoram,^[fn] who was taskmaster over the forced labor, and the people of Israel stoned him to death with stones.

And King Rehoboam quickly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

ESV Footnote

(10:18) Spelled Adoram in 1 Kings 12:18

1 Kings 12 (cont.)

²¹ *When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 chosen warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam the son of Solomon.*

²² *But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God: ²³ “Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people,*

²⁴ *‘Thus says the LORD, You shall not go up or fight against your relatives the people of Israel. Every man return to his home, for this thing is from me.’” So they listened to the word of the LORD and went home again, according to the word of the LORD.*

2 Chronicles 11 (cont.)

¹ *When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled the house of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 chosen warriors, to fight against Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.*

² *But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God: ³ “Say to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin,*

⁴ *‘Thus says the LORD, You shall not go up or fight against your relatives. Return every man to his home, for this thing is from me.’” So they listened to the word of the LORD and returned and did not go against Jeroboam.*

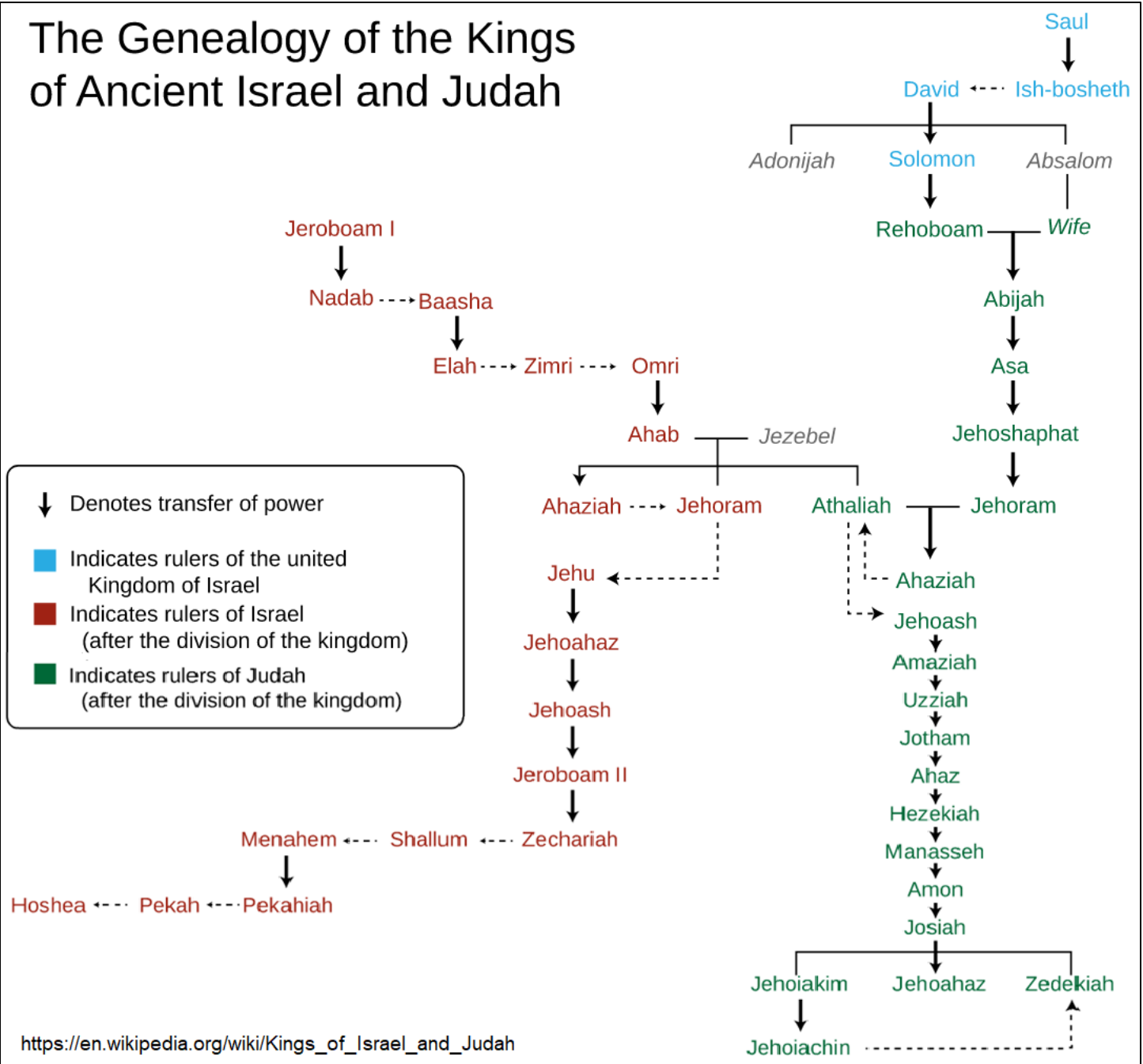
Slave-master or Servant-leader? — Rehoboam had a leadership choice—to serve with harshness or gentleness, with mastery or mercy. The people of Israel had promised “*we will serve you*” (1 Kings 12:4) if the king would lighten the workload Solomon had imposed later in his reign. The old, wise, and experienced men advised Rehoboam that “*if you will be a servant ... they will be your servants forever*” (v. 7). But the king followed his peers’ bullying advice to come down hard on them, promising to “*add to your yoke*” (v. 11). It didn’t end well. This story painfully reminded me of having a leadership position taken away from me because I was determined to lead with an unbending firmness. You might be reminded of the harsh way you handled a situation in your home. What Rehoboam’s story teaches us is that people want to follow leaders, not tyrants. Tyrants may get the job done but their workers are slaves, not followers. Followers voluntarily agree to serve, so leaders must lead them as volunteers, not slaves. You are probably in some kind of leadership position now, even if it is limited to being one of the “old men” who give wise advice. Be a servant!

It seems like Rehoboam learned a lesson from this experience. His first reaction was to raise an army to fight against the ten rebelling tribes, but when Shemaiah, the man of God, advised against it (v. 22), the response of Judah and Benjamin was that “*they listened to the word of the LORD and went home again*” (v. 24). Rehoboam wouldn’t listen to the old men but he decided that he had better listen to God’s prophet. Lesson learned.

July 23 F Reading 146 — 1 Kings 12:25–33 — Israel’s Jeroboam makes golden calves

I found a diagram on Wikipedia that should help us to keep from being confused about the different kings of Judah and Israel, since we will be jumping back and forth between them in our readings. I would suggest that you print it out and keep it in the back of your Bible or in another handy place for future reference as we read through the rest of the Kingdom History of Judah and Israel.

The Genealogy of the Kings of Ancient Israel and Judah



²⁵ Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. ²⁶ And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David." ²⁷ If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah." ²⁸ So the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." ²⁹ And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ Then this thing became a sin, for the people went as far as Dan to be before one.^[fn] ³¹ He also made temples on high places and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not of the Levites. ³² And Jeroboam appointed a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the feast that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made. ³³ He went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he had

devised from his own heart. And he instituted a feast for the people of Israel and went up to the altar to make offerings.

ESV Footnote

(12:30) Septuagint *went to the one at Bethel and to the other as far as Dan*

Inventing Worship — King Jeroboam was afraid. His first fear was physical—a potential attack from Judah to regain the northern tribes, so “*Jeroboam built Shechem ... and Penuel*” (v. 25). Both cities, one on each side of the Jordan River, had been destroyed earlier, so Jeroboam rebuilt them and fortified them with walls for defense. His second fear was spiritual, that the people would continue to travel to Jerusalem for key days of worship, maintaining a connection with Judah. His separation strategy was to introduce substitutes for what God had commanded. The two golden calves substituted for God Himself. Even if he thought they represented Yahweh, he was breaking the first and second commandments: “*You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image*” (Ex. 20:3-4). In addition to inventing these objects of worship, as Aaron did with his golden calf (Ex. 32:4), he devised a substitute festival to replace the Feast of Tabernacles and established his own priesthood of non-Levites. Once in a while, I hear professing Christians who neglect church attendance say that, instead of going to church to worship God, they hike in the mountains or go to a lake or the ocean where they worship God by enjoying His creation. That sounds like Jeroboam. Jesus said that “*the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth*” (John 4:23). We need to be careful that our worship is in truth, not in substitute.

Meditation: There are several significant parallels here between the actions of Jeroboam and Aaron. Both not only made a golden calf but introduced them with almost identical statements.

Aaron	Jeroboam
<i>“These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt”</i> (Ex. 32:28).	<i>“Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt”</i> (1 Kings 12:28).

Remember that Aaron spent most of his life in Egypt and Jeroboam had fled from Solomon to live in Egypt for many years. Perhaps they were both influenced by the primary Egyptian god, Apis, that was represented by a bull. A stone statue of one is displayed in the Louvre in Paris.

Both Aaron and Jeroboam invented a festival (cf. Ex. 32:5) and both of them excluded the God-appointed Levite priests in their false worship (cf. Ex. 32:26).

July 24 Sa (Optional) — John 13:1-17 — Washing Feet

The names Rehoboam and Jeroboam are close enough to sound like they have been twins but they weren't even from the same tribe. They were alike, however, in that they both seemed to be driven by the pride of thinking, “I'm number one!” What a leadership contrast that is to that which Jesus demonstrated in our reading for today!

¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon

Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?”⁷ Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.”⁸ Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.”⁹ Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet,^[fn] but is completely clean. And you^[fn] are clean, but not every one of you.”¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you?”¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant^[fn] is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

ESV Footnotes

(13:10) Some manuscripts omit *except for his feet*

(13:10) The Greek words for *you* in this verse are plural

(13:16) Or *bondservant*, or *slave* (for the contextual rendering of the Greek word *doulos*, see Preface)

- What characteristics of godly leadership do you see from Jesus in this passage? (Share what you discover in the “Leave a Reply” space below.)
- How was Peter like Rehoboam and Jeroboam in his response to Jesus?