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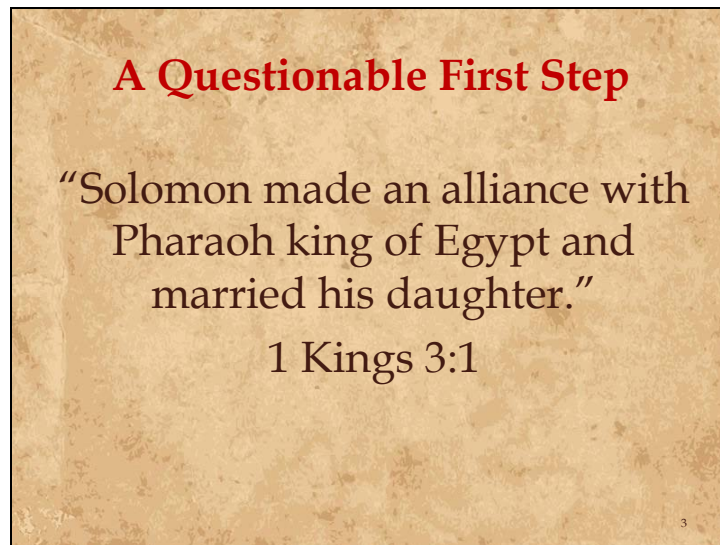
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Solomon Ascends

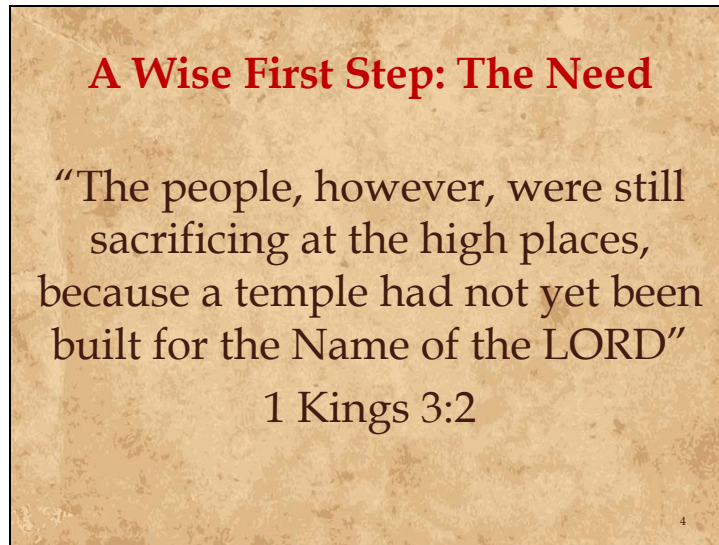
- A Questionable First Step
- A Wise First Step
- A Wise Judgment
- A New Structure
- A Promising Start



Note:

- Several scholars have identified Solomon’s bride as the daughter of Siamun, the sixth Pharaoh of Egypt’s 21st Dynasty (c. 978-959 BC). This alliance will allow Solomon to expand into Philistine territory: “Pharaoh king of Egypt had attacked and captured Gezer. He had set it on fire. He killed its Canaanite inhabitants and then gave it as a wedding gift to his daughter, Solomon’s wife. And Solomon rebuilt Gezer.” 1 Kings 9:16-17
- This marriage seems not to be in line with the Law of Moses: “Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD’s anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.” Deuteronomy 7:3-4; compare 1 Kings 11:1-13. While this command from the Law primarily applied to the nations of Canaan, the principle most likely would also apply to the nation of Egypt which likewise worshipped other gods.
- Solomon was already married by this time, and already had his first son, Rehoboam, with his first wife, Naamah, Ammonite (Note that Rehoboam was 41, when he became king, and Solomon reigned 40 years – 1 Kings 11:41-43; 14:21). So Solomon repeats the sin of his father by taking multiple wives, another clear violation of the Law of Moses: “He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray.” (Deuteronomy 17:17) Notwithstanding this prohibition, Solomon would continue to multiply wives, and this would eventually continue to his downfall: “He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.” 1 Kings 11:3
- Some have speculated that this may be the woman that inspired the “Song of Solomon”, noting that the bride in that work described herself as “dark” (Song of Solomon 1:5-6). Yet,

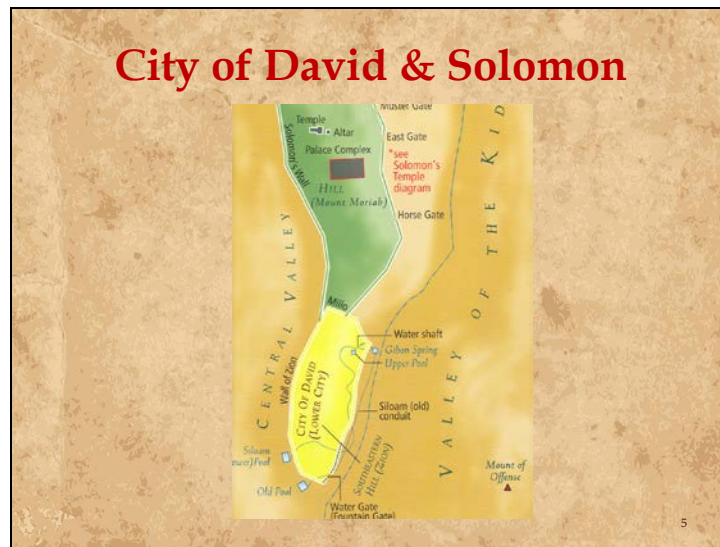
she also describes herself as one who had to take care of vineyard, which would not seem to fit the daughter of a Pharaoh. (Song of Solomon 1:6-7)



Note:

- The author points out that Solomon had not yet begun his massive building campaign, and was still living in the smaller footprint of “the city of David”.
- While the ark had been brought to Jerusalem, and it constituted one place of worship, some of the earlier places of worship were still in place.

Slide 5



Note:

- Image source: <http://www.wall-maps.com/bible/Jerusalem-David&SolomonsTem.gif>

A Wise First Step: The Need

“Solomon showed his love for the LORD by walking according to the instructions given him by his father David, except that he offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places.”

1 Kings 3:3

A Wise First Step: The Dream

“The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.”

1 Kings 3:4

7

Note:

- The fuller account of this event in 2 Chronicles explains why Solomon went to Gibeon to worship: “...and Solomon and the whole assembly went to the high place at Gibeon, for God’s tent of meeting was there, which Moses the LORD’s servant had made in the wilderness. Now David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim to the place he had prepared for it, because he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem. But the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made was in Gibeon in front of the tabernacle of the LORD; so Solomon and the assembly inquired of him there.” (2 Chronicles 1:3-5) This altar had apparently been preserved from the days of Moses: See Exodus 31:2-5; 35:30-33.
- This fuller account also explains that Solomon brought all his leaders with him to the sacrifice, which is consistent with the large number of offerings indicated here. (2 Chronicles 1:2) Recall that these sacrifices provided a feast for the people.

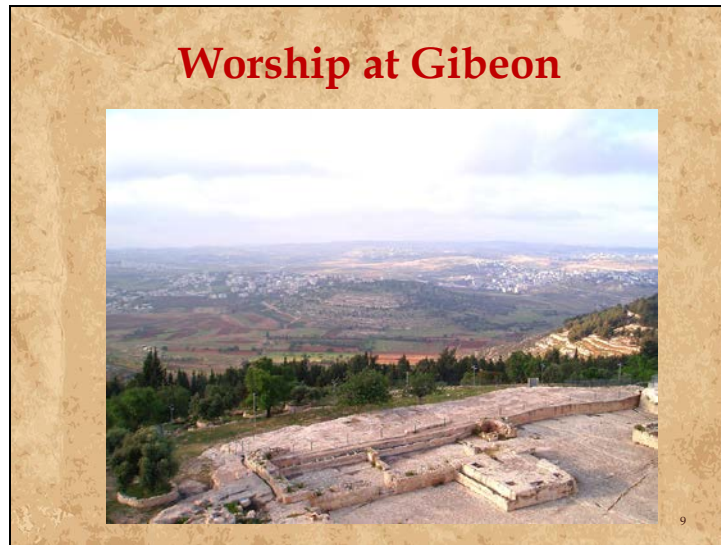
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Note:

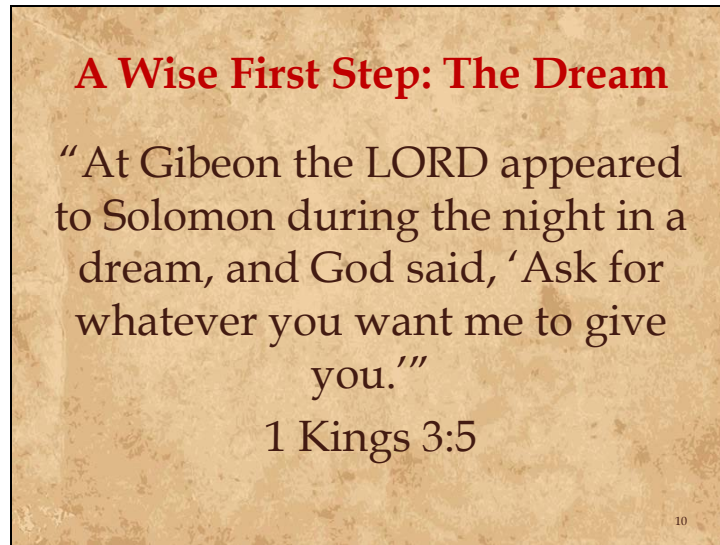
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Note:

Image Source: <http://emp.byui.edu/SATTERFIELDDB/Ancient%20Israel/Gibeon.htm>; Photo taken by Bruce Satterfield.



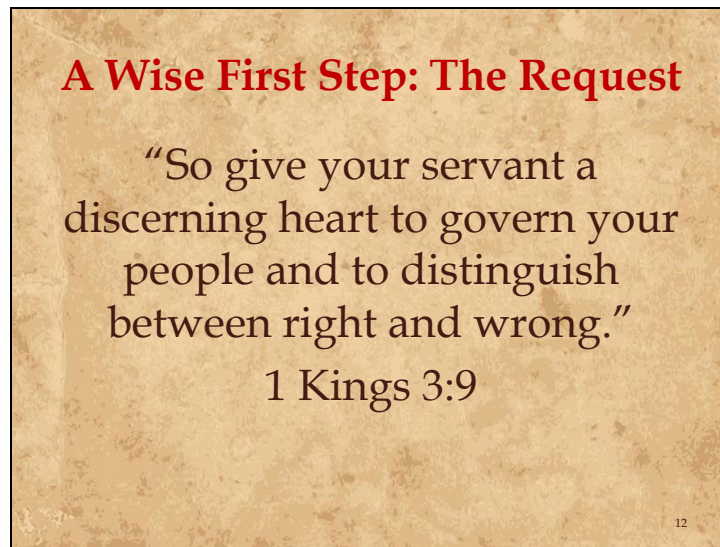
Note:

- God will appear three more times to Solomon in a dream: 1 Kings 6:11–13; 9:1–9; 11:11–13
- We may note that this was also the way that God communicated with Joseph, the son of Jacob (Genesis 37, etc.)
- One wonders if God intended this to be a test for Solomon



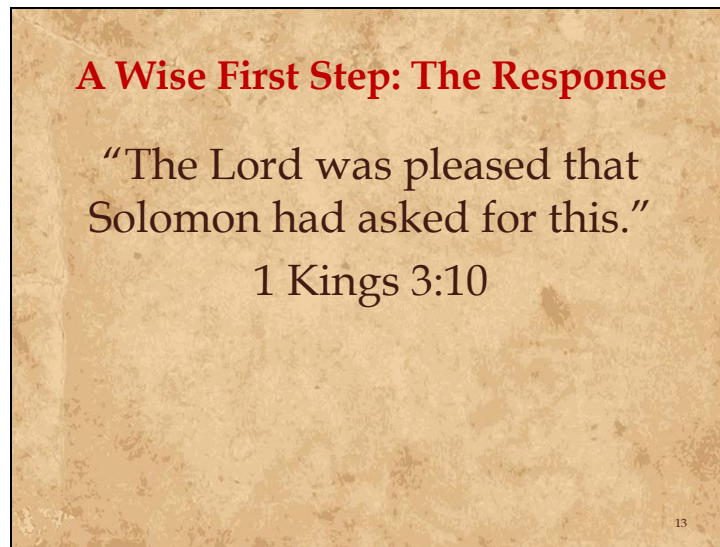
Note:

- Solomon begins with an acknowledgement of God’s grace to father, and also to him.
- He confesses, “But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties.” (1 Kings 3:7) An hyperbole; Solomon was probably in his early 20’s by now; he was married and had a son.



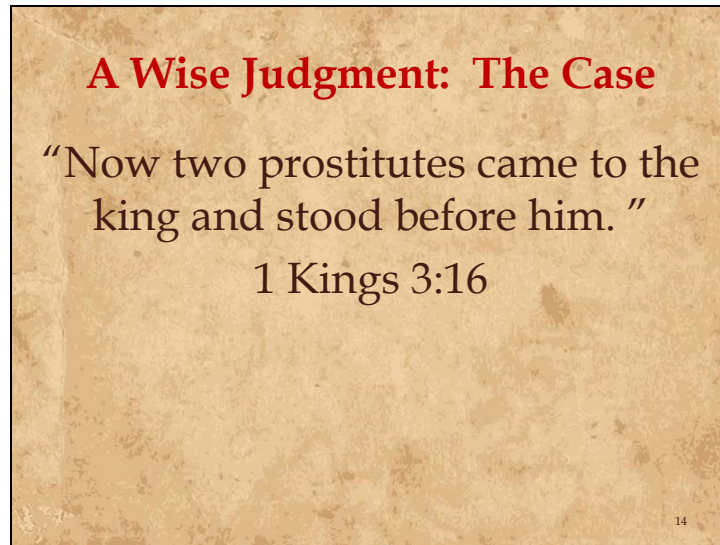
Note:

- Solomon’s request is for a “discerning” heart, instead of riches, honor or longevity.
- “The Hebrew verb used for this activity carries the ideas of judging and justice. This is in keeping with the fact that in Israel the king himself was the final court of appeal (2 Sa. 14:4–17; 15:2; 1 Ki. 3:16–28) and was personally responsible for the promotion of justice.” (New Bible commentary: 21st century edition. 1994 (D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer & G. J. Wenham, Ed.) (4th ed.) (342). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.)
- Compare Ps. 72; attributed to Solomon, which begins, “Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness. May he judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.” (Psalm 72:1-2) It is interesting that this is last Psalm of the ‘Second Book’ of Psalms, which carry the ancient note, “This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse.” (Psalm 72:20)



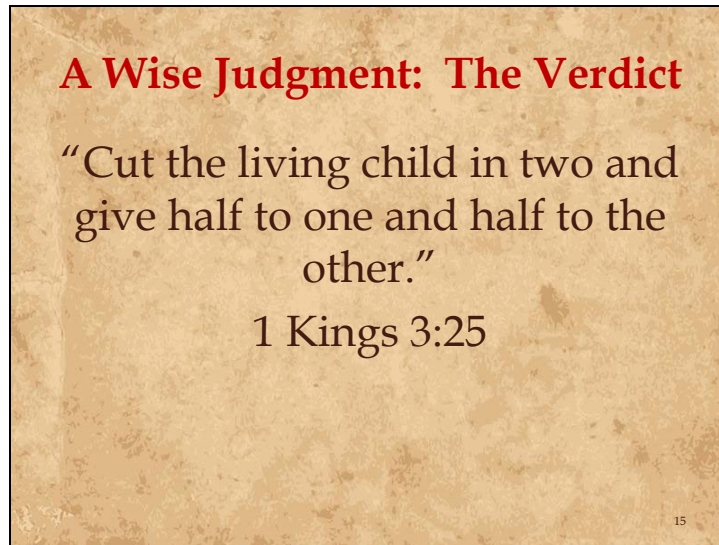
Note:

- God does promise to give Solomon wisdom “so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be.” (1 Kings 3:12) Solomon is most likely the author of Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon, and many of the Proverbs which comprise the “Wisdom” literature in the Hebrew scriptures. (Proverbs 1:1; Ecclesiastes 1:1, Song of Solomon 1:1.
- Note the comment in 2 Chronicles 9:23: “All the kings of the earth sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart.”; See below, “A Promising Start: Wisdom”
- God adds to this promise of wisdom: “Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both wealth and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings.” 1 Kings 3:13; cf. 2 Chronicles 1:11-12. The extent of Solomon’s wealth is described later in the text: 1 Kings 10:14-29; cf. 2 Chronicles 1:14-17 ;9:13-28. Note especially this comment: “The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills.” 1 Kings 10:27; 2 Chronicles 1:15). See below, “A Promising Start: Prosperity”
- God also promises longevity, but this promise has a condition: “And if you walk in obedience to me and keep my decrees and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life.” 1 Kings 3:14. We will have to watch and see whether Solomon meets this condition.
- Solomon then wakes up, “and he realized it had been a dream.” 1 Kings 3:15a
- He then returns to Jerusalem, the other center of worship that housed the Ark. (1 Kings 3:15b)



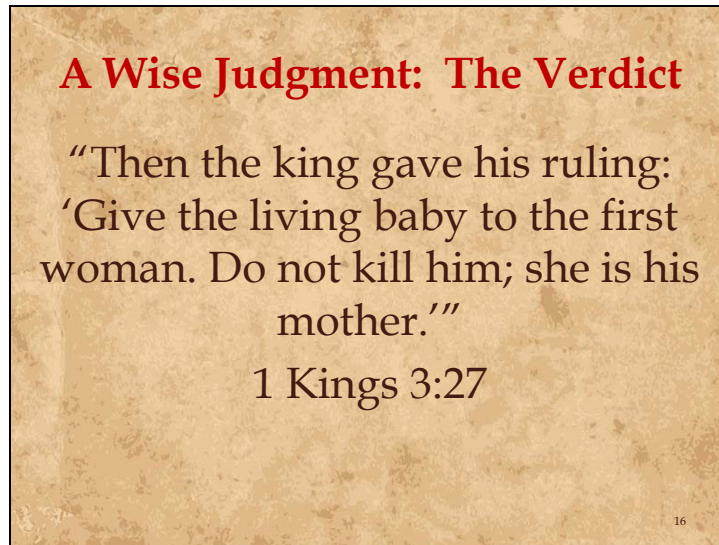
Note:

- The story suggests some significant questions that the author feels no compulsion to address: Why was prostitution so readily accepted in the reformed Israelite culture of David and Solomon? Was this prostitution related to worship of foreign gods? Why was Solomon deciding a case that involved such mundane circumstances?
- One of the woman has accidentally killed a child by rolling over him while sleeping. The two women then each claimed that the surviving child belonged to her. (1 Kings 3:17-22)



Note:

- This judgment is obviously cruel given our modern sensibilities. Unfortunately this cruelty was all too common in the author's day.



Note:

- Despite its cruelty, the judgment produced its intended result; the truth was determined and justice was accomplished.

A Wise Judgment: The Result

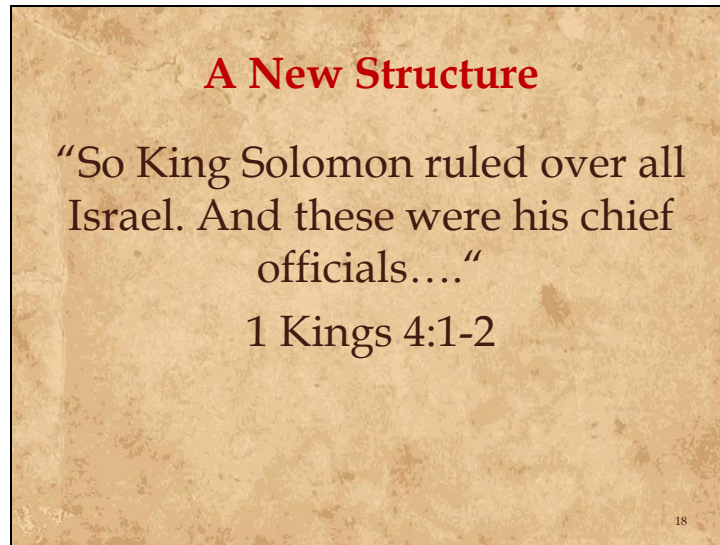
“When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice. “

1 Kings 3:28

17

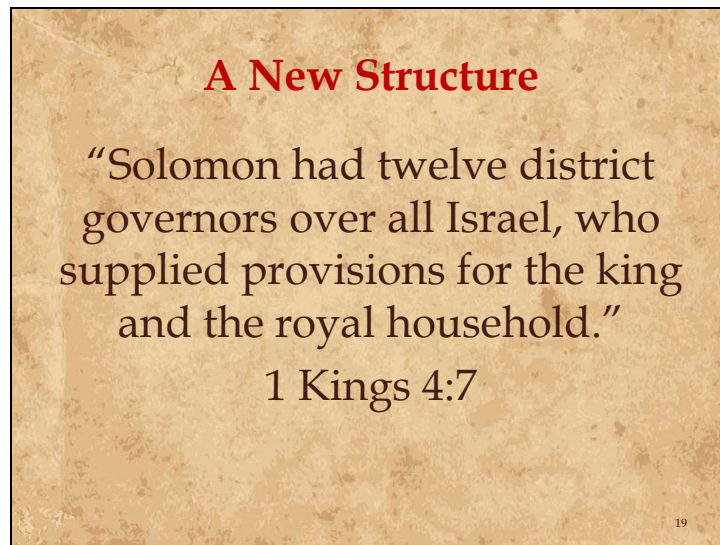
Note:

- This incident became an oft-repeated example of Solomon’s wisdom among the people.
- The author may have intended some prophetic irony here, in that, after Solomon’s death, we will see Rehoboam and Jeroboam fight over the “baby”, which results in a divided kingdom.



Note:

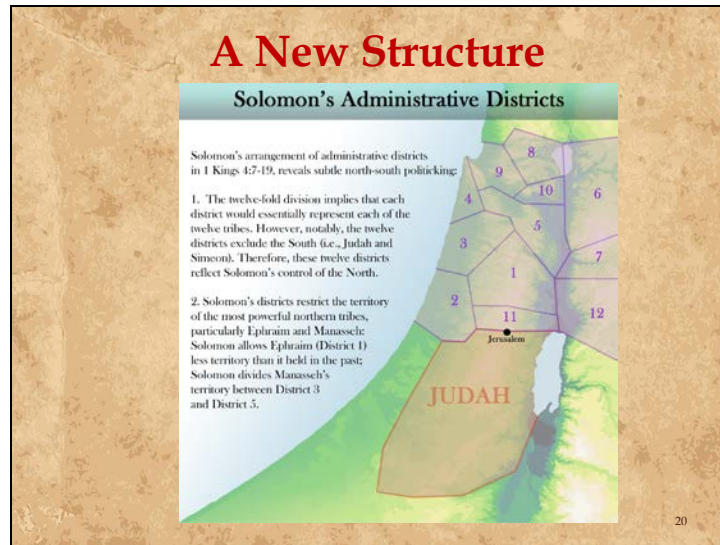
- As evidence of the fact that Solomon was now in full control of his kingdom, the author records his new administrative structure. The structure probably took time to implement and was not in its final form until later in Solomon's reign
- Azariah (1 Kings 4:2) was actually the grandson of Zadok (1 Chronicles 6:10). He would later become High Priest and protest Uzziah's decision to burn incense before the LORD, a task that, according to the law, should be reserved for priests. (2 Chronicles 26:17-18)
- Jehoshaphat is carried over from David's administration (1 Kings 4:3; 2 Samuel 8:16; 20:24)
- Benaiah son of Jehoiada is officially listed as "commander in chief" (1 Kings 4:4)
- Zadok now listed as "priest"; the office of high priest is certainly implied. (1 Kings 4:4)
- Abiathar is still listed as priest, though Solomon had restricted him to his home (1 Kings 4:4)
- Some debate about whether the "Nathan" mentioned in 1 Kings 4:5 refers to the prophet, David's son, by that name, or some other person.
- This is the first time that we hear about the office of "palace administrator"; it does not seem to exist in David's reign. (1 Kings 4:6)
- Adoniram also seems to be kept from David's administration (1 Kings 4:3; 2 Samuel 20:24); he remains for a short time in this office under Rehoboam (1 Kings 12:18)
- Note that "forced labor," formed largely from captive prisoners and other slaves, is a central component of the economy, requiring its own governing official (1 Kings 4:6)



Note:

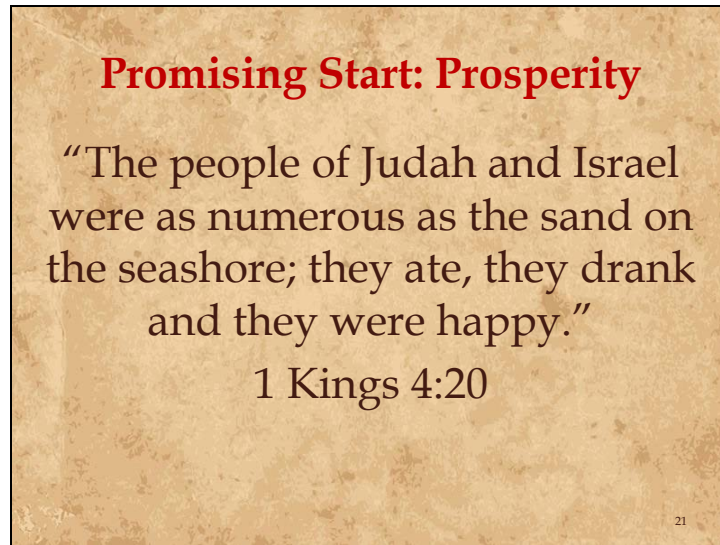
- This description represents a significant restructuring of the northern kingdom, one that replaces the older divisions according to tribes. (See the following Map)
- These 12 districts did not include Judah, which continued to operate separately. These 12 districts, however, were taxed to provide for the royal court in Judah. Clearly the tensions between Judah and the rest of Israel will continue.
- “Ben” is the Hebrew word for “Son of ...”
- Note Ben-Hur – NOT the guy from the movie! (1 Kings – 4:8)
- Ben-Abinadab – a special note indicates he was Solomon’s son-in-law, but he may also have been the king’s cousin, since David had an older brother named, “Abinadab” (1 Kings 4:11; 1 Samuel 16:8; 17:13)
- Baana, Son of Ahilud – perhaps the brother of “Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud—recorder” mentioned above (1 Kings 4:3, 12)
- Ahimaaz – special note indicates he was also married to one of Solomon’s daughters. (1 Kings 4:15)
- Baana, Son of Hushai – perhaps the same Hushai who supported David in his struggle against Absalom (1 Kings 4:16; 2 Samuel 15:32-37)
- Shimei – Son of Ela – in Benjamin; the same Shimei that Solomon judged? – this seems unlikely.

- “the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and the country of Og king of Bashan” indicates the land on the east of the Jordan that the people of Israel captured and occupied before they crossed the river into the “promised land”. (1 Kings 4:19; cf. Numbers 32)



Note:

- Map Source: <http://biblestudyandthecristianlife.com/kings-12-solomon-organizes-his-kingdom-1-kings-4-1-19/>



Note:

- The people were happy and prosperous, so this should provide Solomon with strong popular support. 1 Kings 4:20 Recall God’s promise to Abraham: “I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.” Genesis 22:17-18.



Image from: <http://www.keyway.ca/gif/solkingd.gif>

“And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. These countries brought tribute and were Solomon’s subjects all his life. “ (1 Kings 4:21)

“For he ruled over all the kingdoms west of the Euphrates River, from Tiphah to Gaza, and had peace on all sides. During Solomon’s lifetime Judah and Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, lived in safety, everyone under their own vine and under their own fig tree.” (1 Kings 4:24-25)

This land is approximately (but not exactly) the land that God originally promised to Abraham: “On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates—the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.” (Genesis 15:18-22)

Promising Start: Prosperity

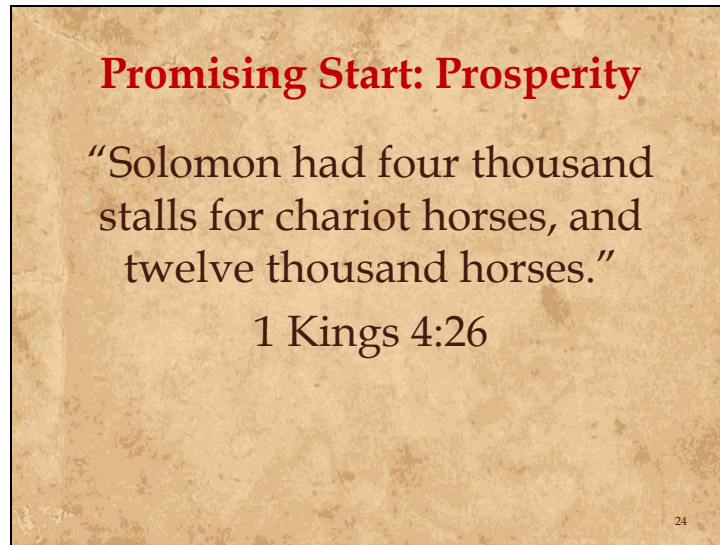
“Solomon’s daily provisions were thirty cors of the finest flour and sixty cors of meal, ten head of stall-fed cattle, twenty of pasture-fed cattle and a hundred sheep and goats, as well as deer, gazelles, roebucks and choice fowl.”

1 Kings 4:22-23

23

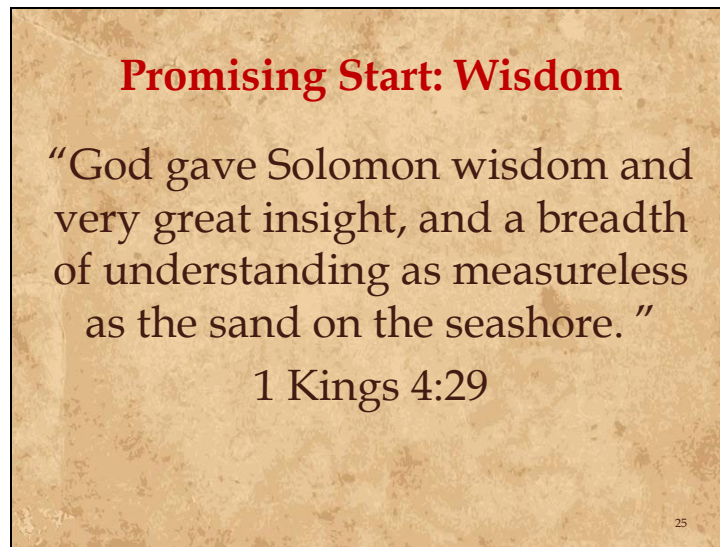
Note:

- Note that these are “daily” provisions.
- Regarding the quantities in 1 Kings 4:22, The rough equivalent in modern terms would be 5.5 tons of flour, and 11 tons of meal.
- The provisions required by Solomon’s court on one hand gives us a picture of its vast size and splendor, but these come at the expense of a large tax burden, primarily to northern tribes of Israel. Recall Samuel’s warning to people as they clamored for a king: “This is what the king who will reign over you will claim as his rights: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. Your male and female servants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.” (1 Samuel 8:11-18)



Note:

- The number of chariots are listed to show the size of Solomon’s army, and the relative peace of the kingdom that lived under the protection of this army.
- Elsewhere we learn that Solomon had some 1400 chariots, which means that he had two horses for each chariot, with another 1200 horses to spare. (1 Kings 10:26; 2 Chronicles 1:14)
- For a comparison, note that in 853 BC, about 100 years after Solomon, we read from a monument celebrating the listing the victories of the Assyrian King, Shalmaneser III, that King Ahab of Israel supplied 2000 chariots and 10,000 soldiers for battle. Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). Baker encyclopedia of the Bible (1935). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.



Note:

- The writer emphasizes that Solomon’s wisdom was a gift from God in response to Solomon’s prayer, noted above.
- The subtitles of Psalm 88: “A maskil of Heman the Ezrahite,” and Psalm 89: “A maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.”; perhaps the same person mentioned in 1 Kings 4:31.
- “Ethan, Heman, Kalkol and Darda” are also listed elsewhere as the “sons of Zerah”, and thus descended from Judah himself. (1 Chronicles 2:6; cf. Genesis 38) Here in 1 Kings, however, they are listed as the sons of Mahol (1 Kings 4:31) The two accounts can be reconciled if we recognize that the list in Chronicles, as elsewhere in the scriptures, sometimes groups lines of descent together under major heads of the family, and does not list every individual in that line.
- We obviously do not have all 3000 proverbs or 1005 songs that Solomon wrote.
- Solomon’s knowledge of the natural world is sometimes reflected in his proverbs: “Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.” Proverbs 6:6-8