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Dear Associates and Friends,

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“[Israel and Judah: 17. Solomon’s Early Reign](#)” is the title of this month’s article. It covers Solomon’s empire, his wealth and power, his reputation for wisdom, his final preparations for the Temple, his relationship with Hiram, King of Tyre, construction of the Jewish Temple, and some of his other building projects, such as his palace. He seems to be a success.

Solomon’s Story

Yet in a way, Solomon’s life is a tragedy. He begins with such great promise. King of a mighty empire, arguably the most powerful ruler in the world, but limited by God. He has riches and fame. He fulfills the commission given to him to build the Temple of YHWH. He was given wisdom directly from YHWH, more than any other man until Jesus Christ. He knew all the correct and right things to do with his life.

**“I spoke with my heart, saying,
‘Behold, I have grown great and have added in wisdom
over all who were over Jerusalem before me’;
My heart has seen much of wisdom and knowledge.
Then I applied my heart to know wisdom,
As well as to know about raving and frivolity;
I realize that even this, it is a grazing on wind.”**

Ecclesiastes 1:16–17, Concordant Literal Version

“**Grazing on wind**” is an unusual translation, but the word “grazing” is a common term used to describe a flock of sheep grazing. “**Grazing on wind**” is not nutritious and does not promote growth. The KJV translation has “**vexation of spirit**.” Other translations have “**striving after wind**,” or “**chasing the wind**,” my personal favorites. All indicate efforts in our lives that are unproductive and eventually harmful. Ecclesiastes 1:14 is a verse many of us are familiar with, and expresses the same concept:

**“I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun,
And behold, the whole is vanity and a grazing on wind.”**

• *Ecclesiastes 1:16–17, CLV*¹

Solomon understood the limitations of every human being, even the wisest of men. He details his accomplishments, some of which are discussed in this month’s article:

**“I made great things as my works;
I built houses for myself;
I planted vineyards for myself;
I made gardens and parks for myself, And
I planted in them trees of every fruit.**

¹ The King James Version may be even more familiar: “I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit” (Ecclesiastes 1:14).

**I made reservoirs of water for myself,
To irrigate from them the sprouting grove of trees.”**

Ecclesiastes 2:4–6, CLV

Note the first person references, they seem excessive but Solomon does this with a purpose. He is emphasizing his main point, that although he may be the wisest of men, even he lacks sufficient wisdom to live a happy life beyond transitory pleasures. In Ecclesiastes 1:16 when he writes about having “**wisdom over all who were over Jerusalem before me,**” he means his father King David in particular and all the wise men who were his advisors.

Not only did Solomon build his palace, but he built “houses,” plural, for himself, likely in different parts of Israel. We also know he built a house for his wife who was Pharaoh’s daughter (1 Kings 7:8 and 2 Chronicles 8:11). Yet Solomon was also a very productive person who made things better than he found them. Houses, vineyards, gardens, parks, reservoirs of water — all these are good things. Solomon was actively and effectively following God’s command to subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28) for his own benefit.

Solomon’s most important teachings about wisdom itself were presented in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.² He considered these teachings about wisdom to be more important than how to build houses, plant vineyards, etc.

**“Acquire wisdom; acquire understanding;
Do not forget, and do not turn aside from the sayings of my mouth.”**

Proverbs 4:5

**“The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom,
And with all your acquisition, acquire understanding.”**

Proverbs 4:7

The usual and simpler translation is “**Get wisdom, get understanding.**” The beginning of wisdom is to seek and acquire wisdom. He seems to say that wisdom is readily available. Most of you are familiar with another verse: “**The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom; All who practice it have a good insight. His praise is standing into the future**” (Psalm 111:10, CLV). Solomon with all his wisdom was still subject to the flesh, sin, and death. He needed Christ his Savior as much you and I do, remember, he was not deceived.

New Timeline Update

A new update of the “[ELM Timeline Project](#)” from Henry Dye and Tim Parrott is online. One excellent new feature is the graphic of TL-1j1 and TL-1j2, pages 26 and 27. You might want to print them out and keep them handy every time you read any Gospel portion of Christ’s final movements. Or, you might keep it handy when you read (or reread) Dr. Martin’s *Secrets of Golgotha*. These pages have the correct site and location of the Temple, and Christ’s movements to His crucifixion and burial are made clear.

Thank You

Know that your support of ASK in prayer, encouraging notes, and financial support are greatly appreciated. We are dependent on God first and your support second. We understand that He motivates you to help us continue operating even when times are not good. Thank all of you who continue your faithful generosity in contributions to help ASK maintain and even expand Dr. Martin’s research and sharing it with others. God bless you all.

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² See Dr. Martin’s analysis: “[Appendix Two: The Book of Proverbs: Its Structure, Design and Teaching](#)” from his book *Restoring the Original Bible*, and his article “[The Book of Ecclesiastes](#).” These two writings by Dr. Martin will not only tell you about the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, but they will also give you more information about Solomon.