

Exegetical Notes – 1 Kings 9:10-28

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1 Kings 9:10-28

Verses 10-14

¹⁰ At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon built these two buildings—the temple of the Lord and the royal palace— ¹¹ King Solomon gave twenty towns in Galilee to Hiram king of Tyre, because Hiram had supplied him with all the cedar and juniper and gold he wanted. ¹² But when Hiram went from Tyre to see the towns that Solomon had given him, he was not pleased with them. ¹³ “What kind of towns are these you have given me, my brother?” he asked. And he called them the Land of Kabul, a name they have to this day. ¹⁴ Now Hiram had sent to the king 120 talents of gold.

- After completing the building of the Temple and the royal palace, Solomon repaid Hiram, the king of Tyre, for the materials that Hiram had sent to Solomon to use in constructing these buildings by giving Hiram 20 twenty towns in Israel.
- But when Hiram went to see the towns, he did not like the gift Solomon had given him and let Solomon know of his displeasure. He named the area “Kabul” which means “good for nothing.”
- Later, Solomon retook these towns (see 2 Chronicles 8:2).

Verses 15-25

¹⁵ Here is the account of the forced labor King Solomon conscripted to build the Lord’s temple, his own palace, the terraces, the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer. ¹⁶ (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. ¹⁷ And Solomon rebuilt Gezer.) He built up Lower Beth Horon, ¹⁸ Baalath, and Tadmor in the desert, within his land, ¹⁹ as well as all his store cities and the towns for his chariots and for his horses—whatever he desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon and throughout all the territory he ruled.

²⁰ *There were still people left from the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites (these peoples were not Israelites). ²¹ Solomon conscripted the descendants of all these peoples remaining in the land—whom the Israelites could not exterminate—to serve as slave labor, as it is to this day. ²² But Solomon did not make slaves of any of the Israelites; they were his fighting men, his government officials, his officers, his captains, and the commanders of his chariots and charioteers. ²³ They were also the chief officials in charge of Solomon’s projects—550 officials supervising those who did the work. ²⁴ After Pharaoh’s daughter had come up from the City of David to the palace Solomon had built for her, he constructed the terraces. ²⁵ Three times a year Solomon sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the altar he had built for the Lord, burning incense before the Lord along with them, and so fulfilled the temple obligations.*

- Solomon’s building projects were extensive throughout the kingdom.
- These projects required many workers. There were non-Jews living in the kingdom of Israel. Those who the Israelites were forbidden by God from executing Solomon conscripted as slaves to work on his building projects. He did not enslave Israelites as slave labor, but he did use them in various other ways. So the people of Israel were enriched by Solomon’s projects.
- Solomon kept the required feasts of Israel and offered the appropriate sacrifices. On the surface, He appeared to be worshipping YHWH only.

Verses 26-28

²⁶ *King Solomon also built ships at Ezion Geber, which is near Elath in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea. ²⁷ And Hiram sent his men—sailors who knew the sea—to serve in the fleet with Solomon’s men. ²⁸ They sailed to Ophir and brought back 420 talents of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.*

- Solomon also built a navy. His ships sailed to Ophir. Ophir’s location is not known. Some speculate that it was in Arabia, East Africa, or India. They brought back 16 tons of gold.

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