

# From the Death of David to the Death of Ahab

by Flavius Josephus

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*Solomon's reign was marked by his wisdom, justice, and sagacity, as he established a prosperous and peaceful kingdom.*

**Topics:** "Solomon's Reign", "Old Testament History"

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## Description

Solomon, after completing the construction of the temple, focused on fortifying and building cities, including Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. He also built the city of Tadmor (Palmyra) in the desert above Syria. Solomon received ships from Hiram king of Tyre and sent them to Ophir for gold. Additionally, the Queen of Egypt and Ethiopia visited Solomon to test his wisdom with difficult questions, which he successfully answered, impressing her with his knowledge and understanding.

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## Transcript

BOOK VIII.

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE YEARS.

FROM THE DEATH OF DAVID TO THE DEATH OF AHAB.

CHAPTER 1.

HOW SOLOMON, WHEN HE HAD RECEIVED THE KINGDOM TOOK OFF HIS ENEMIES.

1. WE have already treated of David, and his virtue, and of the benefits he was the author of to his countrymen; of his wars also and battles, which he managed with success, and then died an old man, in the foregoing book. And when Solomon his son, who was but a youth in age, had taken the kingdom, and whom David had declared, while he was alive, the lord of that people, according to God's will; when he sat upon the throne, the whole body of the people made joyful acclamations to him, as is usual at the beginning of a reign; and wished that all his affairs might come to a blessed conclusion; and that he might arrive at a great age, and at the most happy state of affairs possible.

2. But Adonijah, who, while his father was living, attempted to gain possession of the government, came to the king's mother Bathsheba, and saluted her with great civility; and when she asked him, whether he came to her as desiring her assistance in any thing or not, and bade him tell her if that were the case, for that she would cheerfully afford it him; he began to say, that she knew herself that the kingdom was his,

both on account of his elder age, and of the disposition of the multitude, and that yet it was transferred to Solomon her son, according to the will of God. He also said that he was contented to be a servant under him, and was pleased with the present settlement; but he desired her to be a means of obtaining a favor from his brother to him, and to persuade him to bestow on him in marriage Abishag, who had indeed slept by his father, but, because his father was too old, he did not lie with her, and she was still a virgin. So Bathsheba promised him to afford him her assistance very earnestly, and to bring this marriage about, because the king would be willing to gratify him in such a thing, and because she would press it to him very earnestly. Accordingly he went away in hopes of succeeding in this match. So Solomon's mother went presently to her son, to speak to him about what she had promised, upon Adonijah's supplication to her. And when her son came forward to meet her, and embraced her, and when he had brought her into the house where his royal throne was set, he sat thereon, and bid them set another throne on the right hand for his mother. When Bathsheba was set down, she said, "O my son, grant me one request that I desire of thee, and do not any thing to me that is disagreeable or ungrateful, which thou wilt do if thou deniest me." And when Solomon bid her to lay her commands upon him, because it was agreeable to his duty to grant her every thing she should ask, and complained that she did not at first begin her discourse with a firm expectation of obtaining what she desired, but had some suspicion of a denial, she entreated him to grant that his brother Adonijah might marry Abishag.

3. But the king was greatly offended at these words, and sent away his mother, and said that Adonijah aimed at great things; and that he wondered that she did not desire him to yield up the kingdom to him, as to his elder brother, since she desired that he might marry Abishag; and that he had potent friends, Joab the captain of the host, and Abiathar the priest. So he called for Benaiah, the captain of the guards, and ordered him to slay his brother Adonijah. He also called for Abiathar the priest, and said to him, "I will not put thee to death because of those other hardships which thou hast endured with my father, and because of the ark which thou hast borne along with him; but I inflict this following punishment upon thee, because thou wast among Adonijah's followers, and wast of his party. Do not thou continue here, nor come any more into my sight, but go to thine own town, and live on thy own fields, and there abide all thy life; for thou hast offended so greatly, that it is not just that thou shouldst retain thy dignity any longer." For the forementioned cause, therefore, it was that the house of Ithamar was deprived of the sacerdotal dignity, as God had foretold to Eli, the grandfather of Abiathar. So it was transferred to the family of Phineas, to Zadok. Now those that were of the family of Phineas, but lived privately during the time that the high priesthood was transferred to the house of Ithamar, (of which family Eli was the first that received it,) were these that follow: Bukki, the son of Abishua the high priest; his son was Joatham; Joatham's son was Meraioth; Meraioth's son was Arophseus; Aropheus's son was Ahitub; and Ahitub's son was Zadok, who was first made high priest in the reign of David.

4. Now when Joab the captain of the host heard of the slaughter of Adonijah, he was greatly afraid, for he was a greater friend to him than to Solomon; and suspecting, not without reason, that he was in danger, on account of his favor to Adonijah, he fled to the altar, and supposed he might procure safety thereby to himself, because of the king's piety towards God. But when some told the king what Joab's supposal was, he sent Benaiah, and commanded him to raise him up from the altar, and bring him to the judgment-seat, in order to make his defense. However, Joab said he would not leave the altar, but would die there rather than in another place. And when Benaiah had reported his answer to the king, Solomon commanded him to cut off his head there (1) and let him take that as a punishment for those two captains of the host whom he had wickedly slain, and to bury his body, that his sins might never leave his family, but that himself and his father, by Joab's death, might be guiltless. And when Benaiah had done what he was commanded to

do, he was himself appointed to be captain of the whole army. The king also made Zadok to be alone the high priest, in the room of Abiathar, whom he had removed.

5. But as to Shimei, Solomon commanded that he should build him a house, and stay at Jerusalem, and attend upon him, and should not have authority to go over the brook Cedron; and that if he disobeyed that command, death should be his punishment. He also threatened him so terribly, that he compelled him to take all oath that he would obey. Accordingly Shimei said that he had reason to thank Solomon for giving him such an injunction; and added an oath, that he would do as he bade him; and leaving his own country, he made his abode in Jerusalem. But three years afterwards, when he heard that two of his servants were run away from him, and were in Gath, he went for his servants in haste; and when he was come back with them, the king perceived it, and was much displeased that he had contemned his commands, and, what was more, had no regard to the oaths he had sworn to God; so he called him, and said to him, "Didst not thou swear never to leave me, nor to go out of this city to another? Thou shalt not therefore escape punishment for thy perjury, but I will punish thee, thou wicked wretch, both for this crime, and for those wherewith thou didst abuse my father when he was in his flight, that thou mayst know that wicked men gain nothing at last, although they be not punished immediately upon their unjust practices; but that in all the time wherein they think themselves secure, because they have yet suffered nothing, their punishment increases, and is heavier upon them, and that to a greater degree than if they had been punished immediately upon the commission of their crimes." So Benaiah, on the king's command, slew Shimei.

## CHAPTER 2.

### CONCERNING THE WIFE OF SOLOMON; CONCERNING HIS WISDOM AND RICHES; AND CONCERNING WHAT HE OBTAINED OF HIRAM FOR THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

1. SOLOMON having already settled himself firmly in his kingdom, and having brought his enemies to punishment, he married the daughter of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and built the walls of Jerusalem much larger and stronger than those that had been before, (2) and thenceforward he managed public affairs very peaceably. Nor was his youth any hinderance in the exercise of justice, or in the observation of the laws, or in the remembrance of what charges his father had given him at his death; but he discharged every duty with great accuracy, that might have been expected from such as are aged, and of the greatest prudence. He now resolved to go to Hebron, and sacrifice to God upon the brazen altar that was built by Moses. Accordingly he offered there burnt-offerings, in number a thousand; and when he had done this, he thought he had paid great honor to God; for as he was asleep that very night God appeared to him, and commanded him to ask of him some gifts which he was ready to give him as a reward for his piety. So Solomon asked of God what was most excellent, and of the greatest worth in itself, what God would bestow with the greatest joy, and what it was most profitable for man to receive; for he did not desire to have bestowed upon him either gold or silver, or any other riches, as a man and a youth might naturally have done, for these are the things that generally are esteemed by most men, as alone of the greatest worth, and the best gifts of God; but, said he, "Give me, O Lord, a sound mind, and a good understanding, whereby I may speak and judge the people according to truth and righteousness." With these petitions God was well pleased; and promised to give him all those things that he had not mentioned in his option, riches, glory, victory over his enemies; and, in the first place, understanding and wisdom, and this in such a degree as no other mortal man, neither kings nor ordinary persons, ever had. He also promised to preserve the kingdom to his posterity for a very long time, if he continued righteous and obedient to him, and imitated his father in those things wherein he excelled. When Solomon heard this from God, he presently leaped out of his bed; and when he had worshipped him, he returned to Jerusalem; and after he

had offered great sacrifices before the tabernacle, he feasted all his own family.

2. In these days a hard cause came before him in judgment, which it was very difficult to find any end of; and I think it necessary to explain the fact about which the contest was, that such as light upon my writings may know what a difficult cause Solomon was to determine, and those that are concerned in such matters may take this sagacity of the king for a pattern, that they may the more easily give sentence about such questions. There were two women, who were harlots in the course of their lives, that came to him; of whom she that seemed to be injured began to speak first, and said, "O king, I and this other woman dwell together in one room.

Now it came to pass that we both bore a son at the same hour of the same day; and on the third day this woman overlaid her son, and killed it, and then took my son out of my bosom, and removed him to herself, and as I was asleep she laid her dead son in my arms. Now, when in the morning I was desirous to give the breast to the child, I did not find my own, but saw the woman's dead child lying by me; for I considered it exactly, and found it so to be. Hence it was that I demanded my son, and when I could not obtain him, I have recourse, my lord, to thy assistance; for since we were alone, and there was nobody there that could convict her, she cares for nothing, but perseveres in the stout denial of the fact."

When this woman had told this her story, the king asked the other woman what she had to say in contradiction to that story. But when she denied that she had done what was charged upon her, and said that it was her child that was living, and that it was her antagonist's child that was dead, and when no one could devise what judgment could be given, and the whole court were blind in their understanding, and could not tell how to find out this riddle, the king alone invented the following way how to discover it.

He bade them bring in both the dead child and the living child; and sent one of his guards, and commanded him to fetch a sword, and draw it, and to cut both the children into two pieces, that each of the women might have half the living and half the dead child. Hereupon all the people privately laughed at the king, as no more than a youth. But, in the mean time, she that was the real mother of the living child cried out that he should not do so, but deliver that child to the other woman as her own, for she would be satisfied with the life of the child, and with the sight of it, although it were esteemed the other's child; but the other woman was ready to see the child divided, and was desirous, moreover, that the first woman should be tormented.

When the king understood that both their words proceeded from the truth of their passions, he adjudged the child to her that cried out to save it, for that she was the real mother of it; and he condemned the other as a wicked woman, who had not only killed her own child, but was endeavoring to see her friend's child destroyed also. Now the multitude looked on this determination as a great sign and demonstration of the king's sagacity and wisdom, and after that day attended to him as to one that had a divine mind.

3. Now the captains of his armies, and officers appointed over the whole country, were these: over the lot of Ephraim was Ures; over the toparchy of Bethlehem was Dioclerus; Abinadab, who married Solomon's daughter, had the region of Dora and the sea-coast under him; the Great Plain was under Benaiah, the son of Achilus; he also governed all the country as far as Jordan; Gabaris ruled over Gilead and Gaulanitis, and had under him the sixty great and fenced cities [of Og]; Achinadab managed the affairs of all Galilee as far as Sidon, and had himself also married a daughter of Solomon's, whose name was Basima; Banacates had the seacoast about Arce; as had Shaphat Mount Tabor, and Carmel, and [the Lower] Galilee, as far as the river Jordan; one man was appointed over all this country; Shimei was

intrusted with the lot of Benjamin; and Gabares had the country beyond Jordan, over whom there was again one governor appointed. Now the people of the Hebrews, and particularly the tribe of Judah, received a wonderful increase when they betook themselves to husbandry, and the cultivation of their grounds; for as they enjoyed peace, and were not distracted with wars and troubles, and having, besides, an abundant fruition of the most desirable liberty, every one was busy in augmenting the product of their own lands, and making them worth more than they had formerly been.

4. The king had also other rulers, who were over the land of Syria and of the Philistines, which reached from the river Euphrates to Egypt, and these collected his tributes of the nations. Now these contributed to the king's table, and to his supper every day (3) thirty cori of fine flour, and sixty of meal; as also ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and a hundred fat lambs; all these were besides what were taken by hunting harts and buffaloes, and birds and fishes, which were brought to the king by foreigners day by day. Solomon had also so great a number of chariots, that the stalls of his horses for those chariots were forty thousand; and besides these he had twelve thousand horsemen, the one half of which waited upon the king in Jerusalem, and the rest were dispersed abroad, and dwelt in the royal villages; but the same officer who provided for the king's expenses supplied also the fodder for the horses, and still carried it to the place where the king abode at that time.

5. Now the sagacity and wisdom which God had bestowed on Solomon was so great, that he exceeded the ancients; insomuch that he was no way inferior to the Egyptians, who are said to have been beyond all men in understanding; nay, indeed, it is evident that their sagacity was very much inferior to that of the king's. He also excelled and distinguished himself in wisdom above those who were most eminent among the Hebrews at that time for shrewdness; those I mean were Ethan, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol. He also composed books of odes and songs a thousand and five, of parables and similitudes three thousand; for he spake a parable upon every sort of tree, from the hyssop to the cedar; and in like manner also about beasts, about all sorts of living creatures, whether upon the earth, or in the seas, or in the air; for he was not unacquainted with any of their natures, nor omitted inquiries about them, but described them all like a philosopher, and demonstrated his exquisite knowledge of their several properties. God also enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons, (4) which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return; and this method of cure is of great force unto this day; for I have seen a certain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of the cure was this: He put a ring that had a Foot of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils; and when the man fell down immediately, he abjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man; and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon was shown very manifestly: for which reason it is, that all men may know the vastness of Solomon's abilities, and how he was beloved of God, and that the extraordinary virtues of every kind with which this king was endowed may not be unknown to any people under the sun for this reason, I say, it is that we have proceeded to speak so largely of these matters.

6. Moreover Hiram, king of Tyre, when he had heard that Solonion succeeded to his father's kingdom, was very glad of it, for he was a friend of David's. So he sent ambassadors to him, and saluted him, and congratulated him on the present happy state of his affairs. Upon which Solomon sent him an epistle, the contents of which here follow:

#### SOLOMON TO KING HIRAM.

"(5)Know thou that my father would have built a temple to God, but was hindered by wars, and continual expeditions; for he did not leave off to overthrow his enemies till he made them all subject to tribute. But I give thanks to God for the peace I at present enjoy, and on that account I am at leisure, and design to build a house to God, for God foretold to my father that such a house should he built by me; wherefore I desire thee to send some of thy subjects with mine to Mount Lebanon to cut down timber, for the Sidonians are more skillful than our people in cutting of wood. As for wages to the hewers of wood, I will pay whatsoever price thou shalt determine."

7. When Hiram had read this epistle, he was pleased with it; and wrote back this answer to Solomon.

#### HIRAM TO KING SOLOMON.

"It is fit to bless God that he hath committed thy father's government to thee, who art a wise man, and endowed with all virtues. As for myself, I rejoice at the condition thou art in, and will be subservient to thee in all that thou sendest to me about; for when by my subjects I have cut down many and large trees of cedar and cypress wood, I will send them to sea, and will order my subjects to make floats of them, and to sail to what place soever of thy country thou shalt desire, and leave them there, after which thy subjects may carry them to Jerusalem. But do thou take care to procure us corn for this timber, which we stand in need of, because we inhabit in an island."

8. The copies of these epistles remain at this day, and are preserved not only in our books, but among the Tyrians also; insomuch that if any one would know the certainty about them, he may desire of the keepers of the public records of Tyre to show him them, and he will find what is there set down to agree with what we have said. I have said so much out of a desire that my readers may know that we speak nothing but the truth, and do not compose a history out of some plausible relations, which deceive men and please them at the same time, nor attempt to avoid examination, nor desire men to believe us immediately; nor are we at liberty to depart from speaking truth, which is the proper commendation of an historian, and yet be blameless: but we insist upon no admission of what we say, unless we be able to manifest its truth by demonstration, and the strongest vouchers.

9. Now king Solomon, as soon as this epistle of the king of Tyre was brought him, commended the readiness and good-will he declared therein, and repaid him in what he desired, and sent him yearly twenty thousand cori of wheat, and as many baths of oil: now the bath is able to contain seventy-two sextaries. He also sent him the same measure of wine. So the friendship between Hiram and Solomon hereby increased more and more; and they swore to continue it for ever. And the king appointed a tribute to be laid on all the people, of thirty thousand laborers, whose work he rendered easy to them by prudently dividing it among them; for he made ten thousand cut timber in Mount Lebanon for one month; and then to come home, and rest two months, until the time when the other twenty thousand had finished their task at the appointed time; and so afterward it came to pass that the first ten thousand returned to their work every fourth month: and it was Adoram who was over this tribute. There were also of the strangers who were left by David, who were to carry the stones and other materials, seventy thousand; and of those that

cut the stones, eighty thousand. Of these three thousand and three hundred were rulers over the rest. He also enjoined them to cut out large stones for the foundations of the temple, and that they should fit them and unite them together in the mountain, and so bring them to the city. This was done not only by our own country workmen, but by those workmen whom Hiram sent also.

### CHAPTER 3.

#### OF THE BUILDING OF THIS TEMPLE

1. SOLOMON began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, on the second month, which the Macedonians call Artemisius, and the Hebrews Jur, five hundred and ninety-two years after the Exodus out of Egypt; but one thousand and twenty years from Abraham's coming out of Mesopotamia into Canaan, and after the deluge one thousand four hundred and forty years; and from Adam, the first man who was created, until Solomon built the temple, there had passed in all three thousand one hundred and two years. Now that year on which the temple began to be built was already the eleventh year of the reign of Hiram; but from the building of Tyre to the building of the temple, there had passed two hundred and forty years.

2. Now, therefore, the king laid the foundations of the temple very deep in the ground, and the materials were strong stones, and such as would resist the force of time; these were to unite themselves with the earth, and become a basis and a sure foundation for that superstructure which was to be erected over it; they were to be so strong, in order to sustain with ease those vast superstructures and precious ornaments, whose own weight was to be not less than the weight of those other high and heavy buildings which the king designed to be very ornamental and magnificent.

They erected its entire body, quite up to the roof, of white stone; its height was sixty cubits, and its length was the same, and its breadth twenty. There was another building erected over it, equal to it in its measures; so that the entire altitude of the temple was a hundred and twenty cubits. Its front was to the east. As to the porch, they built it before the temple; its length was twenty cubits, and it was so ordered that it might agree with the breadth of the house; and it had twelve cubits in latitude, and its height was raised as high as a hundred and twenty cubits.

He also built round about the temple thirty small rooms, which might include the whole temple, by their closeness one to another, and by their number and outward position round it. He also made passages through them, that they might come into on through another. Every one of these rooms had five cubits in breadth, (7) and the same in length, but in height twenty. Above these there were other rooms, and others above them, equal, both in their measures and number; so that these reached to a height equal to the lower part of the house; for the upper part had no buildings about it.

The roof that was over the house was of cedar; and truly every one of these rooms had a roof of their own, that was not connected with the other rooms; but for the other parts, there was a covered roof common to them all, and built with very long beams, that passed through the rest, and rough the whole building, that so the middle walls, being strengthened by the same beams of timber, might be thereby made firmer: but as for that part of the roof that was under the beams, it was made of the same materials, and was all made smooth, and had ornaments proper for roofs, and plates of gold nailed upon them.

And as he enclosed the walls with boards of cedar, so he fixed on them plates of gold, which had sculptures upon them; so that the whole temple shined, and dazzled the eyes of such as entered, by the

splendor of the gold that was on every side of them, Now the whole structure of the temple was made with great skill of polished stones, and those laid together so very harmoniously and smoothly, that there appeared to the spectators no sign of any hammer, or other instrument of architecture; but as if, without any use of them, the entire materials had naturally united themselves together, that the agreement of one part with another seemed rather to have been natural, than to have arisen from the force of tools upon them.

The king also had a fine contrivance for an ascent to the upper room over the temple, and that was by steps in the thickness of its wall; for it had no large door on the east end, as the lower house had, but the entrances were by the sides, through very small doors. He also overlaid the temple, both within and without, with boards of cedar, that were kept close together by thick chains, so that this contrivance was in the nature of a support and a strength to the building.

3. Now when the king had divided the temple into two parts, he made the inner house of twenty cubits [every way], to be the most secret chamber, but he appointed that of forty cubits to be the sanctuary; and when he had cut a door-place out of the wall, he put therein doors of Cedar, and overlaid them with a great deal of gold, that had sculptures upon it. He also had veils of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and the brightest and softest linen, with the most curious flowers wrought upon them, which were to be drawn before those doors. He also dedicated for the most secret place, whose breadth was twenty cubits, and length the same, two cherubims of solid gold; the height of each of them was five cubits (8) they had each of them two wings stretched out as far as five cubits; wherefore Solomon set them up not far from each other, that with one wing they might touch the southern wall of the secret place, and with another the northern: their other wings, which joined to each other, were a covering to the ark, which was set between them; but nobody can tell, or even conjecture, what was the shape of these cherubims. He also laid the floor of the temple with plates of gold; and he added doors to the gate of the temple, agreeable to the measure of the height of the wall, but in breadth twenty cubits, and on them he glued gold plates. And, to say all in one word, he left no part of the temple, neither internal nor external, but what was covered with gold. He also had curtains drawn over these doors in like manner as they were drawn over the inner doors of the most holy place; but the porch of the temple had nothing of that sort.

4. Now Solomon sent for an artificer out of Tyre, whose name was Hiram; he was by birth of the tribe of Naphtali, on the mother's side, (for she was of that tribe,) but his father was Ur, of the stock of the Israelites. This man was skillful in all sorts of work; but his chief skill lay in working in gold, and silver, and brass; by whom were made all the mechanical works about the temple, according to the will of Solomon. Moreover, this Hiram made two [hollow] pillars, whose outsides were of brass, and the thickness of the brass was four fingers' breadth, and the height of the pillars was eighteen cubits and their circumference twelve cubits; but there was cast with each of their chapters lily-work that stood upon the pillar, and it was elevated five cubits, round about which there was net-work interwoven with small palms, made of brass, and covered the lily-work. To this also were hung two hundred pomegranates, in two rows. The one of these pillars he set at the entrance of the porch on the right hand, and called it Jachin (9) and the other at the left hand, and called it Booz.

5. Solomon also cast a brazen sea, whose figure was that of a hemisphere. This brazen vessel was called a sea for its largeness, for the laver was ten feet in diameter, and cast of the thickness of a palm. Its middle part rested on a short pillar that had ten spirals round it, and that pillar was ten cubits in diameter. There stood round about it twelve oxen, that looked to the four winds of heaven, three to each wind, having their hinder parts depressed, that so the hemispherical vessel might rest upon them, which itself

was also depressed round about inwardly. Now this sea contained three thousand baths.

6. He also made ten brazen bases for so many quadrangular lavers; the length of every one of these bases was five cubits, and the breadth four cubits, and the height six cubits. This vessel was partly turned, and was thus contrived: There were four small quadrangular pillars that stood one at each corner; these had the sides of the base fitted to them on each quarter; they were parted into three parts; every interval had a border fitted to support [the laver]; upon which was engraven, in one place a lion, and in another place a bull, and an eagle. The small pillars had the same animals engraven that were engraven on the sides. The whole work was elevated, and stood upon four wheels, which were also cast, which had also naves and felloes, and were a foot and a half in diameter. Any one who saw the spokes of the wheels, how exactly they were turned, and united to the sides of the bases, and with what harmony they agreed to the felloes, would wonder at them. However, their structure was this: Certain shoulders of hands stretched out held the corners above, upon which rested a short spiral pillar, that lay under the hollow part of the laver, resting upon the fore part of the eagle and the lion, which were adapted to them, insomuch that those who viewed them would think they were of one piece: between these were engravings of palm trees. This was the construction of the ten bases. He also made ten large round brass vessels, which were the lavers themselves, each of which contained forty baths; (10) for it had its height four cubits, and its edges were as much distant from each other. He also placed these lavers upon the ten bases that were called Mechonoth; and he set five of the lavers on the left side of the temple (11) which was that side towards the north wind, and as many on the right side, towards the south, but looking towards the east; the same [eastern] way he also set the sea Now he appointed the sea to be for washing the hands and the feet of the priests, when they entered into the temple and were to ascend the altar, but the lavers to cleanse the entrails of the beasts that were to be burnt-offerings, with their feet also.

7. He also made a brazen altar, whose length was twenty cubits, and its breadth the same, and its height ten, for the burnt-offerings. He also made all its vessels of brass, the pots, and the shovels, and the basons; and besides these, the snuffers and the tongs, and all its other vessels, he made of brass, and such brass as was in splendor and beauty like gold. The king also dedicated a great number of tables, but one that was large and made of gold, upon which they set the loaves of God; and he made ten thousand more that resembled them, but were done after another manner, upon which lay the vials and the cups; those of gold were twenty thousand, those of silver were forty thousand. He also made ten thousand candlesticks, according to the command of Moses, one of which he dedicated for the temple, that it might burn in the day time, according to the law; and one table with loaves upon it, on the north side of the temple, over against the candlestick; for this he set on the south side, but the golden altar stood between them. All these vessels were contained in that part of the holy house, which was forty cubits long, and were before the veil of that most secret place wherein the ark was to be set.

8. The king also made pouring vessels, in number eighty thousand, and a hundred thousand golden vials, and twice as many silver vials: of golden dishes, in order therein to offer kneaded fine flour at the altar, there were eighty thousand, and twice as many of silver. Of large basons also, wherein they mixed fine flour with oil, sixty thousand of gold, and twice as many of silver. Of the measures like those which Moses called the Hin and the Assaron, (a tenth deal,) there were twenty thousand of gold, and twice as many of silver. The golden censers, in which they carried the incense to the altar, were twenty thousand; the other censers, in which they carried fire from the great altar to the little altar, within the temple, were fifty thousand. The sacerdotal garments which belonged to the high priest, with the long robes, and the oracle, and the precious stones, were a thousand. But the crown upon which Moses wrote [the name of

God],]was only one, and hath remained to this very day. He also made ten thousand sacerdotal garments of fine linen, with purple girdles for every priest; and two hundred thousand trumpets, according to the command of Moses; also two hundred thousand garments of fine linen for the singers, that were Levites. And he made musical instruments, and such as were invented for singing of hymns, called ,Nablee and Cindree, [psalteries and harps,] which were made of electrum, [the finest brass,] forty thousand.

9. Solomon made all these things for the honor of God, with great variety and magnificence, sparing no cost, but using all possible liberality in adorning the temple; and these things he dedicated to the treasures of God. He also placed a partition round about the temple, which in our tongue we call Gison, but it is called Thrigcos by the Greeks, and he raised it up to the height of three cubits; and it was for the exclusion of the multitude from coming into the temple, and showing that it was a place that was free and open only for the priests. He also built beyond this court a temple, whose figure was that of a quadrangle, and erected for it great and broad cloisters; this was entered into by very high gates, each of which had its front exposed to one of the [four] winds, and were shut by golden doors. Into this temple all the people entered that were distinguished from the rest by being pure and observant of the laws. But he made that temple which was beyond this a wonderful one indeed, and such as exceeds all description in words; nay, if I may so say, is hardly believed upon sight; for when he had filled up great valleys with earth, which, on account of their immense depth, could not be looked on, when you bended down to see them, without pain, and had elevated the ground four hundred cubits, he made it to be on a level with the top of the mountain, on which the temple was built, and by this means the outmost temple, which was exposed to the air, was even with the temple itself. He encompassed this also with a building of a double row of cloisters, which stood on high upon pillars of native stone, while the roofs were of cedar, and were polished in a manner proper for such high roofs; but he made all the doors of this temple of silver.

#### CHAPTER 4.

#### HOW SOLOMON REMOVED THE ARK INTO THE TEMPLE HOW HE MADE SUPPLICATION TO GOD, AND OFFERED PUBLIC SACRIFICES TO HIM.

1. WHEN king Solomon had finished these works, these large and beautiful buildings, and had laid up his donations in the temple, and all this in the interval of seven years, and had given a demonstration of his riches and alacrity therein, insomuch that any one who saw it would have thought it must have been an immense time ere it could have been finished; and would be surprised that so much should be finished in so short a time; short, I mean, if compared with the greatness of the work: he also wrote to the rulers and elders of the Hebrews, and ordered all the people to gather themselves together to Jerusalem, both to see the temple which he had built, and to remove the ark of God into it; and when this invitation of the whole body of the people to come to Jerusalem was every where carried abroad, it was the seventh month before they came together; which month is by our countrymen called Thisri, but by the Macedonians Hyperberetoets. The feast of tabernacles happened to fall at the same time, which was celebrated by the Hebrews as a most holy and most eminent feast. So they carried the ark and the tabernacle which Moses had pitched, and all the vessels that were for ministration, to the sacrifices of God, and removed them to the temple. (13) The king himself, and all the people and the Levites, went before, rendering the ground moist with sacrifices, and drink-offerings, and the blood of a great number of oblations, and burning an immense quantity of incense, and this till the very air itself every where round about was so full of these odors, that it met, in a most agreeable manner, persons at a great distance, and was an indication of God's presence; and, as men's opinion was, of his habitation with them in this newly built and consecrated place, for they did not grow weary, either of singing hymns or of dancing, until they came to the temple;

and in this manner did they carry the ark. But when they should transfer it into the most secret place, the rest of the multitude went away, and only those priests that carried it set it between the two cherubims, which embracing it with their wings, (for so were they framed by the artificer,) they covered it, as under a tent, or a cupola. Now the ark contained nothing else but those two tables of stone that preserved the ten commandments, which God spake to Moses in Mount Sinai, and which were engraved upon them; but they set the candlestick, and the table, and the golden altar in the temple, before the most secret place, in the very same places wherein they stood till that time in the tabernacle. So they offered up the daily sacrifices; but for the brazen altar, Solomon set it before the temple, over against the door, that when the door was opened, it might be exposed to sight, and the sacred solemnities, and the richness of the sacrifices, might be thence seen; and all the rest of the vessels they gathered together, and put them within the temple.

2. Now as soon as the priests had put all things in order about the ark, and were gone out, there came down a thick cloud, and stood there, and spread itself, after a gentle manner, into the temple; such a cloud it was as was diffused and temperate, not such a rough one as we see full of rain in the winter season. This cloud so darkened the place, that one priest could not discern another, but it afforded to the minds of all a visible image and glorious appearance of God's having descended into this temple, and of his having gladly pitched his tabernacle therein. So these men were intent upon this thought. But Solomon rose up, (for he was sitting before,) and used such words to God as he thought agreeable to the Divine nature to receive, and fit for him to give; for he said, "Thou hast an eternal house, O Lord, and such a one as thou hast created for thyself out of thine own works; we know it to be the heaven, and the air, and the earth, and the sea, which thou pervadest, nor art thou contained within their limits. I have indeed built this temple to thee, and thy name, that from thence, when we sacrifice, and perform sacred operations, we may send our prayers up into the air, and may constantly believe that thou art present, and art not remote from what is thine own; for neither when thou seest all things, and hearest all things, nor now, when it pleases thee to dwell here, dost thou leave the care of all men, but rather thou art very near to them all, but especially thou art present to those that address themselves to thee, whether by night or by day." When he had thus solemnly addressed himself to God, he converted his discourse to the multitude, and strongly represented the power and providence of God to them; - how he had shown all things that were come to pass to David his father, as many of those things had already come to pass, and the rest would certainly come to pass hereafter; and how he had given him his name, and told to David what he should be called before he was born; and foretold, that when he should be king after his father's death, he should build him a temple, which since they saw accomplished, according to his prediction, he required them to bless God, and by believing him, from the sight of what they had seen accomplished, never to despair of any thing that he had promised for the future, in order to their happiness, or suspect that it would not come to pass.

3. When the king had thus discoursed to the multitude, he looked again towards the temple, and lifting up his right hand to the multitude, he said, "It is not possible by what men can do to return sufficient thanks to God for his benefits bestowed upon them, for the Deity stands in need of nothing, and is above any such requital; but so far as we have been made superior, O Lord, to other animals by thee, it becomes us to bless thy Majesty, and it is necessary for us to return thee thanks for what thou hast bestowed upon our house, and on the Hebrew people; for with what other instrument can we better appease thee when thou art angry at us, or more properly preserve thy favor, than with our voice? which, as we have it from the air, so do we know that by that air it ascends upwards [towards thee]."

I therefore ought myself to return thee thanks thereby, in the first place, concerning my father, whom thou hast raised from obscurity unto so great joy; and, in the next place, concerning myself, since thou hast performed all that thou hast promised unto this very day. And I beseech thee for the time to come to afford us whatsoever thou, O God, hast power to bestow on such as thou dost esteem; and to augment our house for all ages, as thou hast promised to David my father to do, both in his lifetime and at his death, that our kingdom shall continue, and that his posterity should successively receive it to ten thousand generations.

Do not thou therefore fail to give us these blessings, and to bestow on my children that virtue in which thou delightest. And besides all this, I humbly beseech thee that thou wilt let some portion of thy Spirit come down and inhabit in this temple, that thou mayst appear to be with us upon earth. As to thyself, the entire heavens, and the immensity of the things that are therein, are but a small habitation for thee, much more is this poor temple so; but I entreat thee to keep it as thine own house, from being destroyed by our enemies for ever, and to take care of it as thine own possession: but if this people be found to have sinned, and be thereupon afflicted by thee with any plague, because of their sin, as with dearth or pestilence, or any other affliction which thou usest to inflict on those that transgress any of thy holy laws, and if they fly all of them to this temple, beseeching thee, and begging of time to deliver them, then do thou hear their prayers, as being within thine house, and have mercy upon them, and deliver them from their afflictions.

Nay, moreover, this help is what I implore of thee, not for the Hebrews only, when they are in distress, but when any shall come hither from any ends of the world whatsoever, and shall return from their sins and implore thy pardon, do thou then pardon them, and hear their prayer. For hereby all shall learn that thou thyself wast pleased with the building of this house for thee; and that we are not ourselves of an unsociable nature, nor behave ourselves like enemies to such as are not of our own people; but are willing that thy assistance should be communicated by thee to all men in common, and that they may have the enjoyment of thy benefits bestowed upon them."

4. When Solomon had said this, and had cast himself upon the ground, and worshipped a long time, he rose up, and brought sacrifices to the altar; and when he had filled it with unblemished victims, he most evidently discovered that God had with pleasure accepted of all that he had sacrificed to him, for there came a fire running out of the air, and rushed with violence upon the altar, in the sight of all, and caught hold of and consumed the sacrifices. Now when this Divine appearance was seen, the people supposed it to be a demonstration of God's abode in the temple, and were pleased with it, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped. Upon which the king began to bless God, and exhorted the multitude to do the same, as now having sufficient indications of God's favorable disposition to them; and to pray that they might always have the like indications from him, and that he would preserve in them a mind pure from all wickedness, in righteousness and religious worship, and that they might continue in the observation of those precepts which God had given them by Moses, because by that means the Hebrew nation would be happy, and indeed the most blessed of all nations among all mankind. He exhorted them also to be mindful, that by what methods they had attained their present good things, by the same they must preserve them sure to themselves, and make them greater and more than they were at present; for that it was not sufficient for them to suppose they had received them on account of their piety and righteousness, but that they had no other way of preserving them for the time to come; for that it is not so great a thing for men to acquire somewhat which they want, as to preserve what they have acquired, and to be guilty of no sin whereby it may be hurt.

5. So when the king had spoken thus to the multitude, he dissolved the congregation, but not till he had completed his oblations, both for himself and for the Hebrews, insomuch that he sacrificed twenty and two thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep; for then it was that the temple did first of all taste of the victims, and all the Hebrews, with their wives and children, feasted therein: nay, besides this, the king then observed splendidly and magnificently the feast which is called the Feast of Tabernacles, before the temple, for twice seven days; and he then feasted together with all the people.

6. When all these solemnities were abundantly satisfied, and nothing was omitted that concerned the Divine worship, the king dismissed them; and they every one went to their own homes, giving thanks to the king for the care he had taken of them, and the works he had done for them; and praying to God to preserve Solomon to be their king for a long time. They also took their journey home with rejoicing, and making merry, and singing hymns to God. And indeed the pleasure they enjoyed took away the sense of the pains they all underwent in their journey home. So when they had brought the ark into the temple, and had seen its greatness, and how fine it was, and had been partakers of the many sacrifices that had been offered, and of the festivals that had been solemnized, they every one returned to their own cities. But a dream that appeared to the king in his sleep informed him that God had heard his prayers; and that he would not only preserve the temple, but would always abide in it; that is, in case his posterity and the whole multitude would be righteous. And for himself, it said, that if he continued according to the admonitions of his father, he would advance him to an immense degree of dignity and happiness, and that then his posterity should be kings of that country, of the tribe of Judah, for ever; but that still, if he should be found a betrayer of the ordinances of the law, and forget them, and turn away to the worship of strange gods, he would cut him off by the roots, and would neither suffer any remainder of his family to continue, nor would overlook the people of Israel, or preserve them any longer from afflictions, but would utterly destroy them with ten thousand wars and misfortunes; would cast them out of the land which he had given their fathers, and make them sojourners in strange lands; and deliver that temple which was now built to be burnt and spoiled by their enemies, and that city to be utterly overthrown by the hands of their enemies; and make their miseries deserve to be a proverb, and such as should very hardly be credited for their stupendous magnitude, till their neighbors, when they should hear of them, should wonder at their calamities, and very earnestly inquire for the occasion, why the Hebrews, who had been so far advanced by God to such glory and wealth, should be then so hated by him? and that the answer that should be made by the remainder of the people should be, by confessing their sins, and their transgression of the laws of their country. Accordingly we have it transmitted to us in writing, that thus did God speak to Solomon in his sleep.

## CHAPTER 5.

### HOW SOLOMON BUILT HIMSELF A ROYAL PALACE, VERY COSTLY AND SPLENDID; AND HOW HE SOLVED THE RIDDLES WHICH WERE SENT HIM BY HIRAM.

1. AFTER the building of the temple, which, as we have before said, was finished in seven years, the king laid the foundation of his palace, which he did not finish under thirteen years, for he was not equally zealous in the building of this palace as he had been about the temple; for as to that, though it was a great work, and required wonderful and surprising application, yet God, for whom it was made, so far co-operated therewith, that it was finished in the forementioned number of years: but the palace, which was a building much inferior in dignity to the temple, both on account that its materials had not been so long beforehand gotten ready, nor had been so zealously prepared, and on account that this was only a habitation for kings, and not for God, it was longer in finishing. However, this building was raised so

magnificently, as suited the happy state of the Hebrews, and of the king thereof. But it is necessary that I describe the entire structure and disposition of the parts, that so those that light upon this book may thereby make a conjecture, and, as it were, have a prospect of its magnitude.

2. This house was a large and curious building, and was supported by many pillars, which Solomon built to contain a multitude for hearing causes, and taking cognizance of suits. It was sufficiently capacious to contain a great body of men, who would come together to have their causes determined. It was a hundred cubits long, and fifty broad, and thirty high, supported by quadrangular pillars, which were all of cedar; but its roof was according to the Corinthian order, (14) with folding doors, and their adjoining pillars of equal magnitude, each fluted with three cavities; which building as at once firm, and very ornamental.

There was also another house so ordered, that its entire breadth was placed in the middle; it was quadrangular, and its breadth was thirty cubits, having a temple over against it, raised upon massy pillars; in which temple there was a large and very glorious room, wherein the king sat in judgment. To this was joined another house that was built for his queen. There were other smaller edifices for diet, and for sleep, after public matters were over; and these were all floored with boards of cedar.

Some of these Solomon built with stones of ten cubits, and wainscoted the walls with other stones that were sawed, and were of great value, such as are dug out of the earth for the ornaments of temples, and to make fine prospects in royal palaces, and which make the mines whence they are dug famous. Now the contexture of the curious workmanship of these stones was in three rows, but the fourth row would make one admire its sculptures, whereby were represented trees, and all sorts of plants; with the shades that arose from their branches, and leaves that hung down from them.

Those trees and plants covered the stone that was beneath them, and their leaves were wrought so prodigious thin and subtle, that you would think they were in motion; but the other part up to the roof, was plastered over, and, as it were, embroidered with colors and pictures. He, moreover, built other edifices for pleasure; as also very long cloisters, and those situate in an agreeable place of the palace; and among them a most glorious dining room, for feasting and computations, and full of gold, and such other furniture as so fine a room ought to have for the conveniency of the guests, and where all the vessels were made of gold.

Now it is very hard to reckon up the magnitude and the variety of the royal apartments; how many rooms there were of the largest sort, how many of a bigness inferior to those, and how many that were subterraneous and invisible; the curiosity of those that enjoyed the fresh air; and the groves for the most delightful prospect, for the avoiding the heat, and covering of their bodies. And, to say all in brief, Solomon made the whole building entirely of white stone, and cedar wood, and gold, and silver.

He also adorned the roofs and walls with stones set in gold, and beautified them thereby in the same manner as he had beautified the temple of God with the like stones. He also made himself a throne of prodigious bigness, of ivory, constructed as a seat of justice, and having six steps to it; on every one of which stood, on each end of the step two lions, two other lions standing above also; but at the sitting place of the throne hands came out and received the king; and when he sat backward, he rested on half a bullock, that looked towards his back; but still all was fastened together with gold.

3. When Solomon had completed all this in twenty years' time, because Hiram king of Tyre had contributed a great deal of gold, and more silver to these buildings, as also cedar wood and pine wood, he also rewarded Hiram with rich presents; for he sent him also year by year, and wine and oil, which were

the principal things that he stood in need of, because he inhabited an island, as we have already said. And besides these, he granted him certain cities of Galilee, twenty in number, that lay not far from Tyre; which, when Hiram went to, and viewed, and did not like the gift, he sent word to Solomon that he did not want such cities as they were; and after that time these cities were called the land of Cabul; which name, if it be interpreted according to the language of the Phoenicians, denotes what does not please.

Moreover, the king of Tyre sent sophisms and enigmatical sayings to Solomon, and desired he would solve them, and free them from the ambiguity that was in them. Now so sagacious and understanding was Solomon, that none of these problems were too hard for him; but he conquered them all by his reasonings, and discovered their hidden meaning, and brought it to light. Menander also, one who translated the Tyrian archives out of the dialect of the Phoenicians into the Greek language, makes mention of these two kings, where he says thus: "When Abibalus was dead, his son Hiram received the kingdom from him, who, when he had lived fifty-three years, reigned thirty-four.

He raised a bank in the large place, and dedicated the golden pillar which is in Jupiter's temple. He also went and cut down materials of timber out of the mountain called Libanus, for the roof of temples; and when he had pulled down the ancient temples, he both built the temple of Hercules and that of Astarte; and he first set up the temple of Hercules in the month Peritius; he also made an expedition against the Euchii, or Titii, who did not pay their tribute, and when he had subdued them to himself he returned.

Under this king there was Abdemon, a very youth in age, who always conquered the difficult problems which Solomon, king of Jerusalem, commanded him to explain. Dius also makes mention of him, where he says thus: "When Abibalus was dead, his son Hiram reigned. He raised the eastern parts of the city higher, and made the city itself larger. He also joined the temple of Jupiter, which before stood by itself, to the city, by raising a bank in the middle between them; and he adorned it with donations of gold.

Moreover, he went up to Mount Libanus, and cut down materials of wood for the building of the temples." He says also, that Solomon, who was then king of Jerusalem, sent riddles to Hiram, and desired to receive the like from him, but that he who could not solve them should pay money to them that did solve them, and that Hiram accepted the conditions; and when he was not able to solve the riddles proposed by Solomon, he paid a great deal of money for his fine; but that he afterward did solve the proposed riddles by means of Abdemon, a man of Tyre; and that Hiram proposed other riddles, which, when Solomon could not solve, he paid back a great deal of money to Hiram." This it is which Dius wrote.

## CHAPTER 6.

HOW SOLOMON FORTIFIED THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, AND BUILT GREAT CITIES; AND HOW HE BROUGHT SOME OF THE CANAANITES INTO SUBJECTION, AND ENTERTAINED THE QUEEN OF EGYPT AND OF ETHIOPIA.

1. Now when the king saw that the walls of Jerusalem stood in need of being better secured, and made stronger, (for he thought the walls that encompassed Jerusalem ought to correspond to the dignity of the city,) he both repaired them, and made them higher, with great towers upon them; he also built cities which might be counted among the strongest, Hazor and Megiddo, and the third Gezer, which had indeed belonged to the Philistines; but Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, had made an expedition against it, and besieged it, and taken it by force; and when he had slain all its inhabitants, he utterly overthrew it, and gave it as a present to his daughter, who had been married to Solomon; for which reason the king rebuilt it, as a city that was naturally strong, and might be useful in wars, and the mutations of affairs that

sometimes happen. Moreover, he built two other cities not far from it, Beth-horon was the name of one of them, and Baalath of the other. He also built other cities that lay conveniently for these, in order to the enjoyment of pleasures and delicacies in them, such as were naturally of a good temperature of the air, and agreeable for fruits ripe in their proper seasons, and well watered with springs. Nay, Solomon went as far as the desert above Syria, and possessed himself of it, and built there a very great city, which was distant two days' journey from Upper Syria, and one day's journey from Euphrates, and six long days' journey from Babylon the Great. Now the reason why this city lay so remote from the parts of Syria that are inhabited is this, that below there is no water to be had, and that it is in that place only that there are springs and pits of water. When he had therefore built this city, and encompassed it with very strong walls, he gave it the name of Tadmor, and that is the name it is still called by at this day among the Syrians, but the Greeks name it Palmyra.

2. Now Solomon the king was at this time engaged in building these cities. But if any inquire why all the kings of Egypt from Menes, who built Memphis, and was many years earlier than our forefather Abraham, until Solomon, where the interval was more than one thousand three hundred years, were called Pharaohs, and took it from one Pharaoh that lived after the kings of that interval, I think it necessary to inform them of it, and this in order to cure their ignorance, and to make the occasion of that name manifest. Pharaoh, in the Egyptian tongue, signifies a king (15) but I suppose they made use of other names from their childhood; but when they were made kings, they changed them into the name which in their own tongue denoted their authority; for thus it was also that the kings of Alexandria, who were called formerly by other names, when they took the kingdom, were named Ptolemies, from their first king. The Roman emperors also were from their nativity called by other names, but are styled Caesars, their empire and their dignity imposing that name upon them, and not suffering them to continue in those names which their fathers gave them. I suppose also that Herodotus of Halicarnassus, when he said there were three hundred and thirty kings of Egypt after Menes, who built Memphis, did therefore not tell us their names, because they were in common called Pharaohs; for when after their death there was a queen reigned, he calls her by her name Nicaule, as thereby declaring, that while the kings were of the male line, and so admitted of the same nature, while a woman did not admit the same, he did therefore set down that her name, which she could not naturally have. As for myself, I have discovered from our own books, that after Pharaoh, the father-in-law of Solomon, no other king of Egypt did any longer use that name; and that it was after that time when the forenamed queen of Egypt and Ethiopia came to Solomon, concerning whom we shall inform the reader presently; but I have now made mention of these things, that I may prove that our books and those of the Egyptians agree together in many things.

3. But king Solomon subdued to himself the remnant of the Canaanites that had not before submitted to him; those I mean that dwelt in Mount Lebanon, and as far as the city Hamath; and ordered them to pay tribute. He also chose out of them every year such as were to serve him in the meanest offices, and to do his domestic works, and to follow husbandry; for none of the Hebrews were servants [in such low employments]: nor was it reasonable, that when God had brought so many nations under their power, they should depress their own people to such mean offices of life, rather than those nations; while all the Israelites were concerned in warlike affairs, and were in armor; and were set over the chariots and the horses, rather than leading the life of slaves. He appointed also five hundred and fifty rulers over those Canaanites who were reduced to such domestic slavery, who received the entire care of them from the king, and instructed them in those labors and operations wherein he wanted their assistance.

4. Moreover, the king built many ships in the Egyptian Bay of the Red Sea, in a certain place called Ezion-geber: it is now called Berenice, and is not far from the city Eloth. This country belonged formerly to the Jews, and became useful for shipping from the donations of Hiram king of Tyre; for he sent a sufficient number of men thither for pilots, and such as were skillful in navigation, to whom Solomon gave this command: That they should go along with his own stewards to the land that was of old called Ophir, but now the Aurea Chersonesus, which belongs to India, to fetch him gold. And when they had gathered four hundred talents together, they returned to the king again.

5. There was then a woman queen of Egypt and Ethiopia; (16) she was inquisitive into philosophy, and one that on other accounts also was to be admired. When this queen heard of the virtue and prudence of Solomon, she had a great mind to see him; and the reports that went every day abroad induced her to come to him, she being desirous to be satisfied by her own experience, and not by a bare hearing; (for reports thus heard are likely enough to comply with a false opinion, while they wholly depend on the credit of the relators;) so she resolved to come to him, and that especially in order to have a trial of his wisdom, while she proposed questions of very great difficulty, and entreated that he would solve their hidden meaning. Accordingly she came to Jerusalem with great sple

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