

**1Kings 4:1 ¶ So king Solomon was king over all Israel.**

This chapter opens with a listing of those serving in leadership under King Solomon. I will only insert a few comments along the way.

**1Kings 4:2 And these *were* the princes which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the priest,**

**1Kings 4:3 Elihoreph and Ahiah, the sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder.**

**1Kings 4:4 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada *was* over the host: and Zadok and Abiathar *were* the priests:**

Verse 4 stands out because we just learned in the previous chapter that Abiathar the priest had been stripped of his service and sent to Anathoth. Confusing.

The NIV Commentary offers this explanation: “Verses 11, 15 indicate this list was compiled at about the midpoint of Solomon’s reign, since two of the officials are sons-in-law of Solomon. In addition, the names of especially prominent men who served in the earlier part of Solomon’s reign are included. This is certainly true of Abiathar, who was deposed almost immediately, and probably of Zadok, who had already served at length under David and most likely didn’t live long into Solomon’s reign. In Abiathar’s case, it is of course possible that he still carried the title of priest even though he was no longer permitted to function as such.”

**1Kings 4:5 And Azariah the son of Nathan *was* over the officers: and Zabud the son of Nathan *was* principal officer, *and* the king’s friend:**

This verse stands out because it singles out Zabud as “the king’s friend.” We too as part of the redeemed can claim friendship with The King of kings.

*John 15:13–15 “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”*

As His friends, we are expected to obey Him. As His friends, He has given us His word to guide us in accordance with the Father’s will.

**1Kings 4:6 And Ahishar *was* over the household: and Adoniram the son of Abda *was* over the tribute.**

**1Kings 4:7 And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man his month in a year made provision.**

**1Kings 4:8 And these *are* their names: The son of Hur, in mount Ephraim:**

**1Kings 4:9 The son of Dekar, in Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Bethshemesh, and Elonbethhanan:**

**1Kings 4:10 The son of Hesed, in Aruboth; to him *pertained* Sochoh, and all the land of Hopher:**

**1Kings 4:11 The son of Abinadab, in all the region of Dor; which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife:**

It is noted in verse 11 that Abinadab married Taphath, one of Solomon's daughters, and was his son-in-law.

**1Kings 4:12 Baana the son of Ahilud; to him pertained Taanach and Megiddo, and all Bethshean, which is by Zartanah beneath Jezreel, from Bethshean to Abelmeholah, even unto the place that is beyond Jokneam:**

**1Kings 4:13 The son of Geber, in Ramothgilead; to him pertained the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead; to him also pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brasen bars:**

**1Kings 4:14 Ahinadab the son of Iddo had Mahanaim:**

**1Kings 4:15 Ahimaaz was in Naphtali; he also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife:**

It is noted in verse 15 that Ahimaaz was another one of Solomon's sons-in-law; he married Solomon's daughter Basmath.

**1Kings 4:16 Baanah the son of Hushai was in Asher and in Aloth:**

**1Kings 4:17 Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar:**

**1Kings 4:18 Shimei the son of Elah, in Benjamin:**

**1Kings 4:19 Geber the son of Uri was in the country of Gilead, in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; and he was the only officer which was in the land.**

As I was listening to Doug McClean recently, he pointed out how wise it was for Solomon to assemble a group of capable men and delegate authority to help him in the administration of his rule. Some had individual responsibilities, and others had shared responsibilities as appropriate to their sphere of supervision. They were all part of a team, and each one's contribution was vital to the success of the whole. The application to "the church" is obvious I think.

**1Kings 4:20 ¶ Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.**

**1Kings 4:21 And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.**

It is noted that the population of Judah and Israel had grown to such a number that it would not be easily counted. The people are characterized as being happy and prosperous on the whole.

It is also noted that Solomon's kingdom extended over all kingdoms from "the river," a reference to the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and on to the border of Egypt. In other words, there were other nations that paid tribute to Israel and were subject to their governing authority throughout the days of Solomon's reign.

I liked this observation from the NIV Commentary: "Solomon's kingdom in its broad outlines and at the acme of its greatness was a foretaste, a type, of the yet future and far greater fulfillment of God's promise in the millennial reign of Christ. Essential here is the rulership of both David and Solomon. David in his passionate love for the Lord, in his great victories over the enemies of God's people, and in his establishment of a great kingdom is a type of the coming Messiah. Solomon also is such a type, in his wisdom and reign of peace."

The Hebrew for the reference to "river" mentions both the Nile and the Euphrates. We know from God's promise to Abraham and the context of this passage that this reference would be to the Euphrates. Though this defined the extent over which Solomon had rule, it did not define the borders of Israel since other kingdoms were under tribute to them.

**1Kings 4:22 And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal,  
1Kings 4:23 Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl.**

The provisions needed to supply Solomon's household for one day were many. Included were: 30 measures of fine flour, 60 measures of meal, 10 fat oxen, 20 oxen fed from the pastures, 100 sheep, plus male deer, gazelles, other deer and fatted fowl.

JFB provides this note: This provision was "...not for the king's table only, but for all connected with the court, including, besides the royal establishment, those of his royal consorts, his principal officers, his bodyguards, his foreign visitors, etc. The quantity of fine flour used is estimated at two hundred forty bushels; that of meal or common flour at four hundred eighty."

Guzik adds the following: "This list is not meant to stress the idea of opulence and luxury; the stress is on the idea that this daily provision indicated the great prosperity of the kingdom."

**1Kings 4:24 For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side the river, from Tiphseh even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him.  
1Kings 4:25 And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.**

Tiphseh = Eerdman's Dictionary: "A city on the west shore of the Euphrates River, ca. 110 km. (68 mi.) S of Carchemish. An important river crossing, Tiphseh was the northern frontier of Solomon's empire."

Azzah = Gaza (from the Hebrew)

Again it is noted that Solomon's rule encompassed all the land this side "the river," the Euphrates, from Tiphseh to Azzah (from north and east to west), all

the kingdoms “this side,” or west of the river. He was blessed with peace on all sides of his kingdom. Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man “under his vine and under his fig tree,” from Dan to Beersheba (from north to south in the nation of Israel’s entirety) during Solomon’s reign.

The phrase “under his vine and under his fig tree” is a reference to the peace and security experienced by each individual. It is another statement that declares Solomon’s kingdom to be a type of the coming kingdom of the Messiah as foretold by the prophet Micah.

*Micah 4:1–4 “But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But **they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree**; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.”*

**1Kings 4:26 And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.**

Solomon had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots and 12,000 horsemen. Though this is another fact testifying to the wealth of Solomon’s kingdom, it was not in accordance with God’s will.

*Deuteronomy 17:15–16 “Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.”*

Why did God make such a command? Because He wanted the people to trust in Him.

*Deuteronomy 20:1–4 “When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the LORD thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people, And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them; For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.”*

Many commentators note that “40,000” is probably a copy error and that 4,000 is

probably the correct number as stated in Chronicles.

*2 Chronicles 9:25 "And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem."*

The NIV Commentary notes: "Typically a chariot team included three horses with only two being used at any one time and the third kept as a reserve. The three would be stabled together, so twelve thousand horses for four thousand pens is the correct proportion indicating the potential for four thousand chariot teams (though some may have been used for cavalry)."

**1Kings 4:27 And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.**

**1Kings 4:28 Barley also and straw for the horses and dromedaries brought they unto the place where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.**

These verses note that the officers appointed to supervise gathering the provisions to provide the food needed daily to serve Solomon's huge household, performed their duties well. Nothing was lacking. This included providing barley and straw for the horses and "dromedaries." In looking at the Hebrew, this term seems to reference those animals that were swift and used to relay news or accomplish errands throughout the kingdom in a timely manner.

**1Kings 4:29 ¶ And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that *is* on the sea shore.**

**1Kings 4:30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.**

**1Kings 4:31 For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.**

Emphasis is again made on the fact that God gave Solomon great wisdom and understanding as well as a generous heart. He possessed those traits beyond what can be easily expressed. His wisdom exceeded that of the children of the east country and all of Egypt. He was wiser than all men, including Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Chalcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol (evidently widely recognized for their wisdom). His fame extended to all the nations surrounding Israel.

The NIV Commentary notes that Ethan and Heman were noted composers, having penned Psalm 89 and 88 respectively.

**1Kings 4:32 And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.**

**1Kings 4:33 And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is* in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.**

**1Kings 4:34 And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.**

Solomon was known for expounding 3,000 proverbs (wise sayings) and composing 1005 songs. We have a record of many of Solomon's sayings in the book of Proverbs. Scripture also contains at least three of his songs—Song of Solomon and Psalms 72 and 127.

His sayings and songs revealed his knowledge about much of creation—of trees and plants of all kinds, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, insects and fishes.

Guzik includes this bit of information from Dilday: "Ancient rankings put the cedar tree at the top of the list of plants and hyssop at the lowest level; thus Solomon's botanical interests were all-inclusive."

People came from all over the neighboring kingdoms to hear the wisdom of Solomon; this included other kings that had heard about him.

Though Solomon was given a very special gift of wisdom, every true believer should realize that God is ready to do the same for each one of His children.

*James 1:5 "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."*

*Ephesians 1:3–8 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ....In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence...."*

*Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*