

law denounced them (Lev. 17: 8, 9; Deut. 12: 5, 6, 11, 13, 26, 27; Josh. 22: 29), and in all later times they are regarded as schismatic and semi-idolatrous. They were finally put down by Josiah (2 Kings 23: 19). Che'mosh was a war-god. He was also worshipped by the Ammonites (Judg. 11: 24). He is depicted upon coins with sword, lance and shield and two torches by his side. His worship was similar to that of Molech. The name occurs upon the famous Moabite Stone and it is not unlikely that to this deity the sacrifice mentioned in 2 Kings 3: 27 was offered. His worship was very widespread throughout Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. His symbol was a black star. *Carchemish* means "the fort of Chemosh." The Moabites were descendants of Lot and lived on the east of the Dead Sea, south of the Ammonites. In Judges 21: 29 they are called "the people of Chemosh." "The hill that is before Jerusalem" i. e. the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. It is said to be before it, or in front of it (Zech. 14: 4), because the Hebrews faced the east in naming the points of the compass (Green), or it may be because its height overshadowed the city. In 2 Kings 23: 13 the position of this "high place" is described as "on the right hand" i. e. at the southern spur of the mountain. In later times this hill was called, from this circumstance "the Mount of Offence." It was finally suppressed by Josiah (2 Kings 23: 13). That these shrines should have survived the reforms of Asa, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah is supposed to be due to the fact that they were erected for foreigners, and were resorted to only by such. (Green). The village of Siloam, where Solomon is said to have put his "strange" wives, is situated on the north-west slope of the Mount of Offence.

8. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods—"Strange" here means "foreign" and is synonymous with "idolatrous." See the many references to "strange women" as a source of moral corruption. It is noticed that Pharaoh's daughter (see verse 1) did not ask for an Egyptian temple and there never was any trace of the idolatry of that country in Israel. By this exceedingly impolitic liberality Solomon shews that he had forgotten the wisdom which led him to inaugurate his reign by awakening at Gibeon a national religious sentiment, and by erecting

the temple to unite the often rival tribes to it as their common centre. Now the religious fervor had cooled, and false religions were respectable. Had Solomon been true to his first and wisest policy, rival fanes could never have been erected by Jeroboam at Bethel and at Dan.

9. And the Lord was angry with Sol'o-mon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Is'ra-el, which had appeared unto him twice—Solomon had justly incurred the divine displeasure. There is a holy antagonism, deep and eternal, between God and sin, but Solomon had been so signally favored that his lukewarmness was inexcusable. He knew all the kindness that God had shewn to David; he owned that he owed his throne to the promise made to him; his wisdom and prosperity were by the divine favor as he did not hesitate to let the world know. Twice God had spoken directly with him in words of rich promise and stern warning (ch. 3: 5; 9: 2). All these facts made his conduct the more inexcusable (Amos 3: 2; Luke 10: 12, 15). That God was angry with Solomon does not prove that he did not love him (2 Sam. 12: 24) but quite the reverse (Deut. 8: 5; 2 Sam. 7: 14; Ps. 89: 30-32).

10. And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he kept not that which the Lord commanded—Twice the direct command was uttered (ch. 6: 12; 9: 6), but in the law he had read his duty and was warned by the pictures therein of unworthy sovereigns (1 Sam. 8: 10-18; Deut. 17: 14-20).

11. Wherefore the Lord said unto Sol'o-mon, farasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant—This communication was doubtless made by Ahi'jah the prophet (verse 29). Here the root evil of all the national corruption and oppression is pointed out and denounced. The disruption of the kingdom and the moral ruin of the covenant people is traceable to the failure of Solomon to maintain the purity of that worship which he had established in such magnificence. The "bitter bit" in his punishment was that an underling and not one of the seed royal should succeed him (Ecc. 2: 18). The reference is to Jeroboam whom