



A QUESTION OF CHARACTER

LESSON 5

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SPRING 2021

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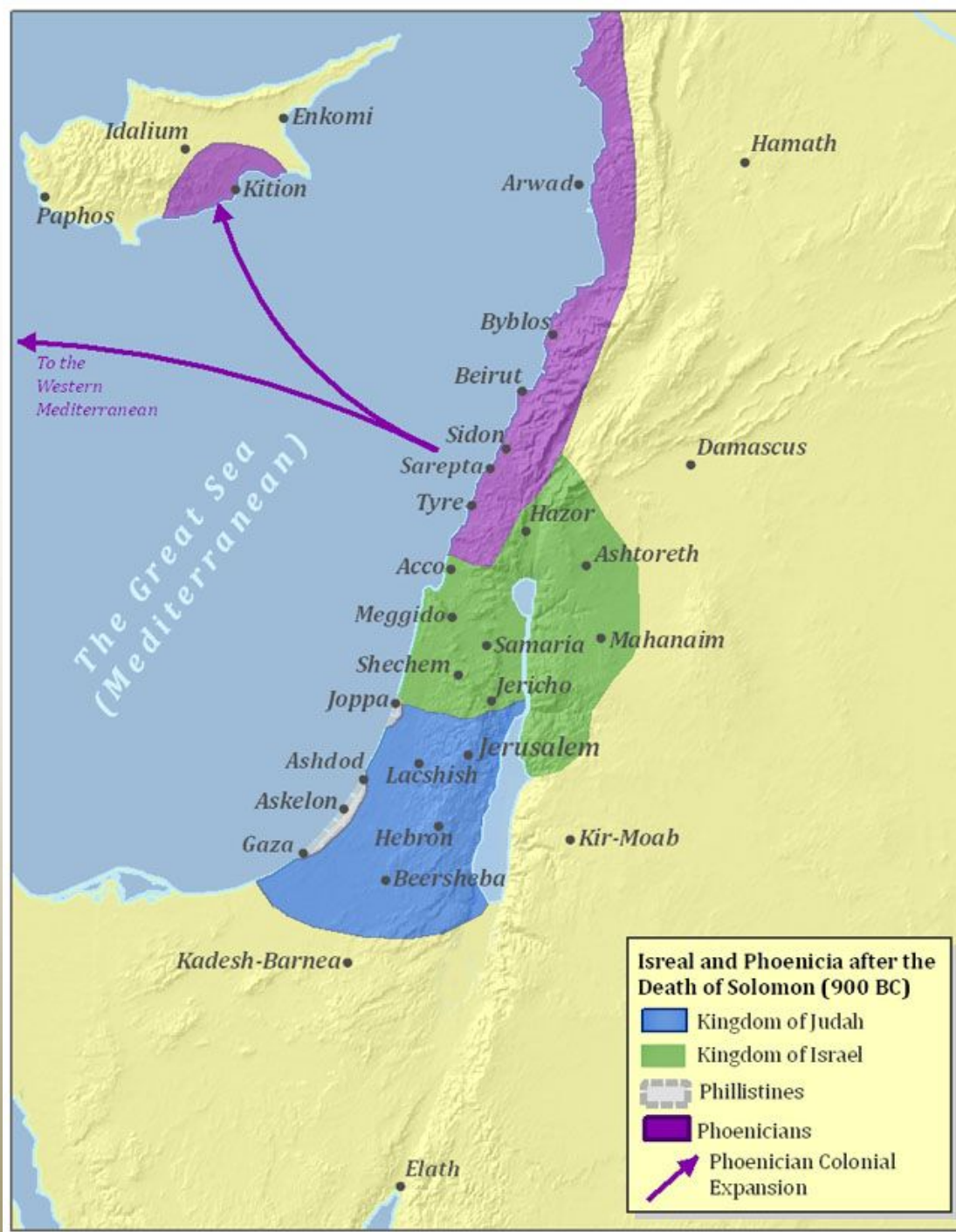
WORD FOR THE JOURNEY

- **James 1:21-22** Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.
- Doers: *poietai*: a performer; especially a poet
- Hearers: *akroatai*: those who listen without participation
- **LEARNING GOAL FOR THIS CLASS:**
Learning to hear God and respond to Him in such a way that His purposes can be fulfilled in us

**PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO FEAR OF GOD
HAVE NO FEAR OF PERSECUTING HIS PEOPLE**

THE DEADLY D'S

- Distraction, deception, disappointment, dejection, discouragement, despair, demoralization
- **Ecclesiastes 4:1** Then I looked again at all the acts of oppression which were being done under the sun. And behold *I saw* the tears of the oppressed and *that* they had no one to comfort *them*; and on the side of their oppressors was power, but they had no one to comfort *them*.
- **Ecclesiastes 4:2-3** So I congratulated the dead who are already dead more than the living who are still living. But better *off* than both of them is the one who has never existed, who has never seen the evil activity that is done under the sun.
- **Ecclesiastes 5:2** Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let



WHAT HAPPENED TO SOLOMON?

• **2 Chronicles 6:12-14** Then he stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. Now Solomon had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits wide and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. He said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and *showing* loving kindness to Your servants..

700 wives; 300 concubines; many daughters; son Rehoboam

• **1 Kings 11:6-8** Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father *had done*. Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned

THOUGHTS ON SOVEREIGNTY

- Sovereign: *dunastes*: from *dunamai*: one who has power or ability (in God: to do anything at any time)
- **Jeremiah 32:17** 'Ah Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You...
- Lord GOD: *adon YHWH*: sovereign controller
- We cannot acknowledge or trust God's sovereignty unless we have understood his heart, character, and attributes
- In the refining process, it is important to keep our eyes on the refiner and the work He is doing through the refining process; Solomon took his eyes off of God

CAN YOU TRUST GOD?

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES

- **An attribute** is a property intrinsic to its subject and by which the subject is distinguished or identified
- Some attributes belong only to God (omniscience); some belong to God and people (although in a more limited way)
- **Simplicity:** God is indivisible
- **Unity:** God is one
- **Infinite:** God has no beginning or end
- **Eternal:** free from succession of time
- **Immutable:** God is unchanging and unchangeable
- **Omnipresent:** God is everywhere (not in everything)
- **Omniscience:** God knows all actual and possible things
- **Omnipotence:** God is all powerful

EXALTING HIS ATTRIBUTES

- **Psalm 103:17-22**...the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to those who keep His covenant and remember His precepts to do them. The LORD has established His throne in the heavens; His sovereignty rules over all. Bless the LORD, you His **angels**, mighty in strength, **who perform His word**, obeying the voice of His word! Bless the LORD, all you His **hosts**, you
- Him, doing His will. Bless the LORD, all you works of His, in all places of His dominion; Bless the LORD, O my soul!
- Hosts: *tsaba*: armies (Greek equivalent: *stratia*)
- Angels: *malak*: messengers (Greek equivalent: *aggelos*)
- God's armies seem to have structure and purpose just like earthly armies do

ANGELIC ORGANIZATION

- **Colossians 1:16** For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.
- **Ephesians 3:8-10** To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places*.
- **Ephesians 6:12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual

POWER STRUGGLE

- **Daniel 10:11-13** He said to me, "O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding *this* and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.
- Michael is the only archangel identified in scripture
- Jewish traditional literature says there are seven; but the list of seven isn't always the same names: Gabriel is in all lists: Tobit 12:15 lists Raphael: Esdras 4 lists Uriel

THOUGHTS FROM THE EARLY CHURCH

- **Acts 2:22-24** "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

- Predetermined: *horizo*: marked off by boundaries, limit

- **Acts 4:27-29** "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

- Predestined: *proorizo*: to limit in advance

WE LIVE IN THE MYSTERY

- **Ecclesiastes 7:13-14** Consider the work of God, for who is able to straighten what He has bent? In the day of prosperity be happy, but in the day of adversity consider— God has made the one as well as the other so that man will not discover anything *that will be* after him.
- **1 Corinthians 2:7** ...but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our glory;
- **Ephesians 3:3-5**...that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;
- **Revelation 10:7**...but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery

ALL THAT WE SEE AND KNOW...

- In God's sovereignty, He is working out His plan for the ages
- We are living in the working out of God's plan
- A sovereign God could be a dictator (God is not)
- A sovereign God could abdicate the use of his powers (God has not)
- God will not do anything that would deny His character
- **2 Timothy 2:13** If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.
- God will not contradict Himself
- God will not forgive sin without payment being made
- God will not force anyone to love Him or receive Christ
- Evil cannot appeal to God's nature