

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The history of people and nations is not just a list of facts about wars, rulers, births and deaths, but it should be a vibrant understanding of the events in people's lives. It includes the thoughts, ideas, emotions, and the religious beliefs and practices of people of the past.

This dissertation is intended to provide a survey of the available archaeological sources that have been discovered that would illuminate the history of the Northern Kingdom from King Omri (876 BCE) into the Assyrian Exile (721 BCE). To accomplish this research, several resources have been organized in a systematic approach.

Chapter Two of this dissertation presents the geography of the ancient Near East. It is important because it gives the bases for the location of archaeological sites that are vital to the context of this research.

The portion of the Hebrew scripture that provided a basic chronology of historic events and people significant to this research is found in 1 Kings 16:16 through 2 Kings 17:6. Chapter Three develops this as the Historic Overview from Omri to the Assyrian Exile.

In order to understand how the archaeological sources can elucidate the historic time period of this dissertation (Iron Age II), it is necessary to understand the material culture of the people involved, including the people of the neighboring lands. This topic, titled "Material Culture," is discussed in Chapter Four. The artifacts in this chapter

were discussed according to the type or utility of the article. The section on pottery is extensive because the morphology of pottery is a key to determining the periods of occupation of most levels. In order to obtain a more accurate analysis of the physical sources, it was often necessary to look at the material cultures that occurred prior to the time period of this dissertation. Similarly, the material finds from within the selected 156 year period were valuable in understanding the later times. The artifacts from within that period were the predecessors for later artifacts of the Iron III period and the Babylonian period which followed. For this reason, the writer used this liberty when it was appropriate and needed to bring a better understanding of the cultural background of the historic events that occurred in the 156 year segment of this dissertation.

With the background developed on the material culture the next topic of importance to be considered was the archaeological sites and their relationship to this historic period. This topic is covered in Chapter Five. An important factor that was taken into consideration for this chapter was the need to include other excavated sites that had an affect on Israel. This is why the title of this dissertation specifically included, "Neighboring Lands." This research would have been incomplete if the information regarding the "Neighboring Lands" had not been included.

The conclusion of this dissertation ties together the findings of the material sources with the historic events. The material sources have given considerable light on the history of the Northern kingdom and this was presented in this final section.