

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 2

Preparations for Building the Temple

Solomon gave orders to build a temple for the Name of the LORD and a royal palace for himself. ² He conscripted seventy thousand men as carriers and eighty thousand as stonecutters in the hills and thirty-six hundred as foremen over them. ³ Solomon sent this message to Hiram king of Tyre: "Send me cedar logs as you did for my father David when you sent him cedar to build a palace to live in. ⁴ Now I am about to build a temple for the Name of the LORD my God and to dedicate it to him for burning fragrant incense before him, for setting out the consecrated bread regularly, and for making burnt offerings every morning and evening and on Sabbaths and New Moons and at the appointed feasts of the LORD our God. This is a lasting ordinance for Israel. ⁵ "The temple I am going to build will be great, because our God is greater than all other gods. ⁶ But who is able to build a temple for him, since the heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain him? Who then am I to build a temple for him, except as a place to burn sacrifices before him? ⁷ "Send me, therefore, a man skilled to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, and in purple, crimson and blue yarn, and experienced in the art of engraving, to work in Judah and Jerusalem with my skilled craftsmen, whom my father David provided. ⁸ "Send me also cedar, pine and alnum logs from Lebanon, for I know that your men are skilled in cutting timber there. My men will work with yours ⁹ to provide me with plenty of lumber, because the temple I build must be large and magnificent. ¹⁰ I will give your servants, the woodsmen who cut the timber, twenty thousand cors of ground wheat, twenty thousand cors of barley, twenty thousand baths of wine and twenty thousand baths of olive oil."¹¹ Hiram king of Tyre replied by letter to Solomon: "Because the LORD loves his people, he has made you their king." ¹² And Hiram added: "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who made heaven and earth! He has given King David a wise son, endowed with intelligence and discernment, who will build a temple for the LORD and a palace for himself. ¹³ "I am sending you Hiram-Abi, a man of great skill, ¹⁴ whose mother was from Dan and whose father was from Tyre. He is trained to work in gold and silver, bronze and iron, stone and wood, and with purple and blue and crimson yarn and fine linen. He is experienced in all kinds of engraving and can execute any design given to him. He will work with your craftsmen and with those of my lord, David your father. ¹⁵ "Now let my lord send his servants the wheat and barley and the olive oil and wine he promised, ¹⁶ and we will cut all the logs from Lebanon that you need and will float them in rafts by sea down to Joppa. You can then take them up to Jerusalem."¹⁷ Solomon took a census of all the aliens who were in Israel, after the census his father David had taken; and they were found to be 153,600. ¹⁸ He assigned 70,000 of them to be carriers and 80,000 to be stonecutters in the hills, with 3,600 foremen over them to keep the people working.

2:1 *purposed to build.* Solomon's first concern was to secure the necessary labor and materials. His appeal to the king of Tyre for aid met with a favorable reply (vv 11–16). (TLSB)

temple. Hbr “house.” (TLSB)

palace. Although the Chronicler frequently mentions the palace Solomon built (7:11; 8:1; 9:11), he gives no details of its construction (see 1Ki 7:1–12). (CSB)

Cf 7:11; 8:1; 9:11. The Chronicler omits the description of the building of the palace given in 1Ki 7:1–12, focusing entirely on Solomon and the temple. (TLSB)

2:2 Massive workforce is assembled, totaling 150,000 workers plus 3,600 supervisors. (TLSB)

2:3–10 The Chronicler's theological interests appear in his handling of Solomon's correspondence with Hiram of Tyre. In the Kings account the correspondence was initiated by Hiram (1Ki 5:11). The Chronicler omits this (and also the material in 1Ki 5:3–5) but adds his own material, reflecting his concerns with the temple worship in vv. 3–7. (CSB)

While related to 1Ki 5:2–11, the material is reorganized In the Chronicler's account, Solomon initiated the correspondence with Hiram (v 3; cf 1Ki 5:1). The divinely instituted worship rites of the temple and the uniqueness of Israel's God are emphasized in vv 4–6 (but not in 1Ki). Further, the Chronicler connects Solomon's planning to David's by asking for an artisan to join those “whom David my father provided” (v 7). This artisan is skilled in more specialties than 1Ki 7:13–14 reports. (TLSB)

2:3 *Solomon sent.* Delegation from Hiram assured him that friendly relations between the two nations were to continue (1Ki 5:1). Exchange between Solomon and Hiram (Hbr “Hiram”) is expanded from 1Ki 5:1–12. (TLSB)

2:4 See 1Ch 23:28–31. (CSB)

2:7 See Introduction: The Building of the Temple in Chronicles. In the Kings account Solomon's request for a master craftsman is found late in the narrative (1Ki 7:13); to carry out his parallel between Oholiab and Hiram-Abi, the Chronicler includes it in the initial correspondence. Furthermore, here and in vv. 13–14 the list of Hiram-Abi's skills is expanded and matches that of Bezalel and Oholiab (Kings is concerned only with casting bronze). (CSB)

2:10 The payment here differs from that reported in 1Ki 5:11, but the texts speak of two different payments: In Kings the payment is an annual sum delivered to the royal household of Hiram, while Chronicles speaks of one payment to the woodsmen. The goods paid are also not identical; the oil specified in Kings is of a finer quality. (CSB)

2:11–16 Hiram's reply to Solomon. Cf 1Ki 5:7–9. (TLSB)

2:11–12 The Chronicler notes that Hiram blessed the Lord and includes his additional words “God of Israel, who made heaven and earth.” The glory of Solomon caused even a pagan king to acknowledge the omnipotence of the Lord. (TLSB)

2:13 *Hiram-Abi*. See note on v. 7. Kings reports that the ancestry of Hiram-Abi was through a widow of Naphtali (1Ki 7:14); Chronicles strengthens the parallel between Hiram-Abi and Oholiab by assigning him Danite ancestry. These statements are not necessarily contradictory: (1) The mother’s ancestry may have been Danite, though she lived in the territory of Naphtali; or (2) her parents may have been from Dan and Naphtali, allowing her descent to be reckoned to either. The Danites had been previously associated with the Phoenicians (Jdg 18:7). (CSB)

Abi means “my father” or “master of”; thus, the king’s craftsman. The mother of this master craftsman, “a woman of the daughters of Dan” (v 14), apparently also had been a resident of Naphtali (1Ki 7:14). (TLSB)

2:17–18 See 1Ki 5:13–18 and notes. The Chronicler specifies that this levy of forced laborers was from aliens resident in the land, not from Israelites. This is not stated in the parallel passage in Kings, though 1Ki 9:20–22 confirms that alien labor was used (see 8:8). (CSB)

Cf 1Ki 5:12–18. The Chronicler notes that these were “resident aliens” who were pressed into labor (cf 1Ki 9:20–1Ki 9:20–22). (TLSB)

2:17 *aliens*. On their identity and number, see notes, 1Ki 5:15–16. In addition to them, “Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel” (1Ki 5:13). (TLSB)

2:18 *3,600 foremen*. See v. 2. The number given in 1Ki 5:16 is 3,300; however, some manuscripts of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT) also have 3,600. The Chronicler may have been following a different text of Kings from the present Masoretic (traditional Hebrew) text at this point (but see note on 1Ki 5:16). (CSB)