

# 2 Chronicles 8 Commentary

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SECOND CHRONICLES							
The Kingdom of Israel							
From Splendor to Disaster							
Splendor				Disaster			
King Solomon of Judah 2 Chronicles 1-9				Successive Kings of Judah 2Chr 10-36			
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Inaugural 2Chr 1:1-17	Solomon's Temple 2Chr 2:1-7:22	Solomon's Glory 2Chr 8:1-9:31					
Building of the Temple			Decline & Destruction of the Temple				Temple Destroyed
~40 Years			~393 Years				

Click chart to enlarge  
 Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
 Click Chart from [Charles Swindoll](#)

TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES									
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1Samuel	2 Samuel				1Kings	1Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	

1 Chronicles 10		1Chr 11-19	1Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36
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**Legend:** B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "**Judah**" and the Northern Kingdom as "**Israel**." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.

**NOTE: THESE COMMENTS ARE OFFERED IN AN "AS IS" FORMAT - IF I HAVE TIME IN THE FUTURE, THEY WILL BE UPDATED.**

**CLICK [2 CHRONICLES COMMENTARIES](#) FOR MULTIPLE SERMONS AND COMMENTARIES**

**2 Chronicles 8:1 Now it came about at the end of the twenty years in which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house**

- at the end (KJV): 1Ki 9:10
- See [BELOW FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 1-2 CHRONICLES](#) - adapted from [Paul Apple's Bible Outlines](#)

**Martin Selman:** The final section of Solomon's reign (chs. 8-9) concentrates on the theme of praise for all that God has done for Solomon (see especially 9:8). This unit is clearly connected with the opening section about Solomon (2 Ch. 1-2), both of which deal with Solomon's achievements and reputation. The chief difference is that whereas the earlier chapters describe Solomon's preparations in response to God's revelation at Gibeon, now that work is fulfilled. The real subject of chapters 8-9, therefore, is what God achieved through Solomon, rather than Solomon's own achievements.

**Iain Kunkel:** 2Ch 8:1 and 2Ch 8:16 are a frame suggesting both that (a) the expanding rule and associated building works and administrative structures were blessings associated with obedience in building the temple, and that (b) the central purpose of all was to support the building and ongoing maintaining of the "house of the Lord" and the worship there.

**Mark Boda:** The focus of the Chronicler's account largely shifts to Solomon's "secular" pursuits, that is, pursuits not directly related to the Temple and its services. For the Chronicler these pursuits are not provided for mere historical interest. Rather, it is essential to his portrayal of Solomon as the ideal royal figure whose obedience and faithfulness were divinely blessed by success: building projects, military prowess, economic achievement, international fame, and border expansion. The account of Solomon ends with the summary notice that is typical of the Chronicler's method. ([Paul Apple](#))

**J.A. Thompson: Chapters 8–9 describe four glorious aspects of Solomon's reign:**

1. his power,
2. his worship of God,
3. his wealth, and
4. his wisdom.

**Now it came about at the end of the twenty years in which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house**

**John Olley** - Since the northern border of Israelite land was commonly labeled as "Lebo-hamath" (2 Chron. 7:8) and David had previously controlled the city-states of Hamath and Zobah in northern Syria (1 Chron. 18:3–10), Solomon's action was possibly to reassert Israelite hegemony (as Jeroboam II did in 2 Kings 14:25). This gave Solomon control along the main trade route to Mesopotamia, while "Tadmor," 125 miles (200 km) northeast of Damascus, was a major oasis on the shorter desert route, later named Palmyra. The building of "store cities" supported the gathering of revenue (including grain, oil, wine, etc.; e.g., 2 Chron. 32:28; 1 Chron. 27:25–31), enabling the maintenance of governmental and defense forces. Another strategic location was along the ridge of the Valley of Aijalon that led to the plateau of the northern approach to Jerusalem, forming the major route linking Jerusalem with the coast. The "fortified cities" of "Upper Beth-horon and Lower Bethhoron," approximately 10 and 11 miles (16 and 18 km) northwest of Jerusalem, had earlier been settled as pasturelands on the border between Benjamin and Ephraim (1 Chron. 6:68; 7:24; cf. Josh. 10:10–11; 16:5; 18:13–14). The location of "Baalath" is uncertain, contenders being near Gezer (Josh. 19:44) or, less likely, suggested by its association in 1 Kings 9:18 MT with the southeastern "Tamar," in the land allocated to Simeon in the

southeast (Josh. 19:8), or equated with “Baalath,” that is, Kiriath-jearim (1 Chron. 13:6).

**David Guzik:** It took Solomon seven years to build the temple and 13 years to build his palace. At the end of these twenty years his kingdom was secure, stable, and blessed.

**Thomas Constable:** God blessed Solomon by giving him good relations with King Hiram (Hiram) of Tyre (2Ch 8:2, 18). Hiram evidently returned the cities that Solomon had previously given (or mortgaged) to him (2Ch 8:2; cf. 1 Kings 9:10-14). Then Solomon developed these towns. Solomon also captured more territory and fortified many cities (2Ch 8:3-6).

**Leon Wood** - It seems safe to say that, following this action, Israel controlled more territory than at any other time in its history. In his day, Solomon was probably the most powerful and influential ruler in the Middle East."

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**Paul Apple** - 2Chr 8:1-10 **EXPANDING DOMINION DEMONSTRATED IN CRITICAL BUILDING PROJECTS**

A. (2Chr 8:1-6) Cities Built by Solomon

**John Olley** - Since the northern border of Israelite land was commonly labeled as “Lebo-hamath” (2Ch 7:8) and David had previously controlled the city-states of Hamath and Zobah in northern Syria (1Ch 18:3–10), Solomon’s action was possibly to reassert Israelite hegemony (as Jeroboam II did in 2Ki 14:25). This gave Solomon control along the main trade route to Mesopotamia, while “Tadmor,” 125 miles (200 km) northeast of Damascus, was a major oasis on the shorter desert route, later named Palmyra. The building of “store cities” supported the gathering of revenue (including grain, oil, wine, etc.; e.g., 2Ch 32:28; 1Ch 27:25–31), enabling the maintenance of governmental and defense forces. Another strategic location was along the ridge of the Valley of Aijalon that led to the plateau of the northern approach to Jerusalem, forming the major route linking Jerusalem with the coast. The “fortified cities” of “Upper Beth-horon and Lower Bethhoron,” approximately 10 and 11 miles (16 and 18 km) northwest of Jerusalem, had earlier been settled as pasturelands on the border between Benjamin and Ephraim (1 Chron. 6:68; 7:24; cf. Josh. 10:10–11; 16:5; 18:13–14). The location of “Baalath” is uncertain, contenders being near Gezer (Josh. 19:44) or, less likely, suggested by its association in 1 Kings 9:18 MT with the southeastern “Tamar,” in the land allocated to Simeon in the southeast (Josh. 19:8), or equated with “Baalath,” that is, Kiriath-jearim (1 Chron. 13:6).

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**Matthew Henry:** Though Solomon was a man of great learning and knowledge, yet he spent his days, not in contemplation, but in action, not in his study, but in his country, in building cities and fortifying them, in a time of peace preparing for a time of war, which is as much a man’s business as it is in summer to provide food for winter.

**Andrew Hill:** it may be possible to harmonize the reports in one of two ways. (1) Perhaps Kings and Chronicles refer to two different occasions in which cities are exchanged as a part of agreements arranged between Hiram and Solomon. (2) Chronicles may be the sequel to the Kings’ account in that Hiram held the twenty cities temporarily as collateral for the timber supplied to Solomon until such time as a “cash” payment (of gold) could be made.

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**RON DANIEL - Review** In our last study, we zoomed through chapters two through seven, watching as King Solomon constructed and dedicated the temple. Tonight, we will be covering the final two chapters that the Chronicler devotes to the reign of Solomon.

2Ch 8:1-2 Twenty Cities Of Galilee - Solomon's building projects had lasted 20 years (7 for the temple, 13 for the house - 1Kings 6:38-7:1). As you recall, Solomon had solicited the help of Khee-RAWM, the king of Tyre, for supplies and workers for these projects (2Chr. 2). Solomon's original plan was to pay with huge quantities of wheat, barley, wine, and oil (2Chr. 2:10). However, it would seem that over the course of the project, Solomon went over budget, and became more indebted to Khee-RAWM than he had planned.

It was agreed between them that 20 Israelite cities in the northern region of Galilee would become the territory of Tyre, in exchange for a large quantity of gold which Solomon needed to finish. But then a problem arose. The author of Kings tells us,

1Ki 9:12-13 ...Khee-RAWM came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, and they did not please him. He said, "What are these cities which you have given me, my brother?" So they were called the land of Kaw-BOOL to this day.

"Kaw-BOOL" means "binding." Khee-RAWM obviously was not happy with the arrangement, and felt that he had gotten stuck in an

unfair contract that he couldn't get out of.

In the end, the cities were transferred back to Israelite ownership, either after Solomon paid Khee-RAWM back, or Khee-RAWM simply gave them back.

Solomon had these cities settled by the Jews, and invested in their improvement and expansion.

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**Matthew Henry Notes: 2Chr 8:**

In this chapter we are told,

- I. What cities Solomon built (v. 1-6).
- II. What workmen Solomon employed (v. 7-10).
- III. What care he took about a proper settlement for his wife (v. 11).
- IV. What a good method he put the temple-service into (v. 12-16).
- V. What trading he had with foreign countries (v. 17, 18).

2Chr 8:1-11 This we had 1 Ki. 9:10-24, and therefore shall only observe here,

I. Though Solomon was a man of great learning and knowledge, yet he spent his days, not in contemplation, but in action, not in his study, but in his country, in building cities and fortifying them, in a time of peace preparing for a time of war, which is as much a man's business as it is in summer to provide food for winter.

II. As he was a man of business himself, and did not consult his own ease, so he employed a great many hands, kept abundance of people to work. It is the interest of a state by all means possible to promote and encourage industry, and to keep its subjects from idleness. A great many strangers there were in Israel, many that remained of the Canaanites; and they were welcome to live there, but not to live and do nothing. The men of Laish, who had no business, were an easy prey to the invaders, Jdg. 18:7.

III. When Solomon had begun with building the house of God, and made good work and quick work of that, he prospered in all his undertakings, so that he built all that he desired to build, 2Chr 8:6. Those who have a genius for building find that one project draws on another, and the latter must amend and improve the former. Now observe,

1. How the divine providence gratified even Solomon's humour, and gave him success, not only in all that he needed to build and that it was for his advantage to build, but in all that he had a mind to build. So indulgent a Father God is sometimes to the innocent desires of his children that serve him. Thus he pleased Jacob with that promise, Joseph shall put his hand on thy eyes.

2. Solomon knew how to set bounds to his desires. He was not one of those that enlarge them endlessly, and can never be satisfied, but knew when to draw in; for he finished all he desired, and then he desired no more. He did not sit down and fret that he had not more cities to build, as Alexander did that he had not more worlds to conquer, Hab. 2:5.

IV. That one reason why Solomon built a palace on purpose for the queen, and removed her and her court to it, was because he thought it by no means proper that she should dwell in the house of David (2Chr 8:11), considering that that had been a place of great piety, and perhaps her house was a place of great vanity. She was proselyted, it is likely, to the Jewish religion; but it is a question whether all her servants were. Perhaps they had among them the idols of Egypt, and a great deal of profaneness and debauchery. Now, though Solomon had not zeal and courage enough to suppress and punish what was amiss there, yet he so far consulted the honour of his father's memory that he would not suffer that place to be thus profaned where the ark of God had been and where holy David had prayed many a good prayer and sung many a sweet psalm. Not that all the places where the ark had been were so holy as never to be put to a common use; for then the houses of Abinadab and Obed-edom must have been so. But the place where it had been so long, and had been so publicly attended on, was so venerable that it was not fit to be the place of so much gaiety, not to say iniquity, as was to be found, I fear, in the court that Pharaoh's daughter kept. Note, Between things sacred and things common the ancient landmarks ought to be kept up. It was an outer-court of the temple that was the court of the women.

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**2 Chronicles 8:2 that he built the cities which Hiram had given to him, and settled the sons of Israel there.**

- the cities (KJV): 1Ki 9:11-18

**that he built the cities which Hiram had given to him, and settled the sons of Israel there.** Solomon and Hiram had evidently

renegotiated their earlier treaty (cf. 1 Ki 9:11, 12).

**Andrew Hill:** it may be possible to harmonize the reports in one of two ways. (1) Perhaps Kings and Chronicles refer to two different occasions in which cities are exchanged as a part of agreements arranged between Hiram and Solomon. (2) Chronicles may be the sequel to the Kings' account in that Hiram held the twenty cities temporarily as collateral for the timber supplied to Solomon until such time as a "cash" payment (of gold) could be made.

## 2 Chronicles 8:3 Then Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and captured it.

- Hamath zobah (KJV): Nu 13:21 34:8 2Sa 8:3 1Ki 11:23-25 1Ch 18:3

**Then Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and captured it** - Solomon rightly wrote "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But victory belongs to the LORD." (Pr 21:31).

**Frederick Mabie:** Solomon's taking of Hamath Zobah and his subsequent building of storage cities (cf. vv. 4-6) indicate a significant expansion of Israelite political control and economic hegemony achieved through the control of trade routes and the receipt of tribute payments and tax revenue. Solomon's geographical hegemony extended north, deep into northern Syria, and bordered the west bank of the Euphrates River to the northeast. The name of this area (Hamath Zobah) suggests that Hamath had gained prominence over the Aramean (or perhaps Neo-Hittite) kingdom of Zobah. David's earlier conflict with Zobah is noted in 1 Chronicles 18:3-6 (2Sa 8:3-8).

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[Paul Apple](#) - (1Chr 8:3-6) Cities for Military and Economic Dominion a. (2Ch 8:3) Hamath-zobah

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**RON DANIEL** - 2Ch 8:3-6 Solomon Builds Cities - 2Chr. 8:3-6 Then Solomon went to Kham-ATH Tso-BAW and captured it. He built Tad-MORE in the wilderness and all the storage cities which he had built in Kham-AWTH. He also built upper Bayth Kho-RONE and lower Bayth Kho-RONE, fortified cities with walls, gates and bars; and Bah-al-AWTH and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the cities for his chariots and cities for his horsemen, and all that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land under his rule.

Solomon had finished the local projects, and now he's expanding the kingdom. This was the largest that the nation of Israel would ever expand before the Millennial Reign of Christ on earth. How was this accomplished? Solomon exercised the proper priorities: start locally, then expand. This basic business and biblical principle is often ignored by new ministries and ministers. Wanting to take the world for Jesus Christ, they try to do everything at once. "We'll have a building project, a radio station, vacation Bible school, a jail ministry, community evangelism outreaches..." But because they do too much too soon, they don't have the finances, the resources, or the personnel to accomplish everything. They get spread too thin and quickly burn out.

I have learned that you've got to plant and water and wait for a long time before even one plant grows successfully. In the parable of the sower, Jesus talked about scattering seed on soil. If the seed falls on good soil, it will grow into a plant, and that plant will produce seeds amounting to 100, 60, or 30 times what was sown (Mark 4:8).

And so you can't expect to successfully farm 100 acres until you've invested your resources in the one acre. If you're doing a ministry, start with the most important thing, then expand and occupy territory as you can. Remember, God didn't give the Promised Land to the Jews all at once. Moses said,

Deut. 7:22 "The LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to put an end to them quickly, for the wild beasts would grow too numerous for you."

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**HAMATH ZOBACH** Possibly a variant of "Hamath," since no other site with this name is known. Otherwise, the compound name may have been used to refer to an extended region including both Hamath and Zobah, an important Aramean kingdom dating from the eleventh century BC, located between Damascus and Hamath. The only biblical reference to Hamath Zobah states that Solomon

captured it and built storage cities in the area (2 Chron. 8:3–4). Solomon's building program indicates that the region was under his control for a period of time. One important LXX manuscript reads "Beth Zobah" ("house of Zobah") instead of "Hamath Zobah." If this reading is correct, the text may simply state that Solomon battled and exerted dominion over the house or kingdom of Zobah. (**BORROW** [The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#))

## 2 Chronicles 8:4 He built Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage cities which he had built in Hamath.

- he built (KJV): 1Ki 9:17-19

He built [Tadmor](#) in the [wilderness](#) and all the storage cities which he had built in Hamath.

**August Konkell:** Upper Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon sit astride a ridge, which rises from the Valley of Ajalon and extends to the plateau north of Jerusalem. Fortifications were important to protect the route that connected Jerusalem to the major coastal trade route. Certain cities served for storage and for military cavalry. Large building complexes at Hazor, Beth Shemesh, and Megiddo consist of a long room, with two rows of pillars dividing it into three sections. They may have been used as stables and storehouses, or may have been barracks for a professional army. Baalath, originally assigned to the tribe of Dan (Josh 15:9), is probably the city also known as Kiriath Jearim, on the western boundary of Judah.

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**TADMOR [ISBE]** - tad'-mor, tad'-mor (tadhmor): A city built by Solomon in the wilderness (2 Ch 8:4), the Roman Palmyra. Tadmor is the native name and is found on inscriptions. It occurs also in the Kere of 1 Ki 9:18, where the Kethibh or consonants read "Tamar" (compare Ezek 47:19; 48:28). It is famous in Arabian as well as in Hebrew literature, and enters Roman history in connection with Zenobia and Longinus. The inscriptions, which belong for the most part to the latter period (266-73 AD), have been published by Dawkins and Wood and also by M. Waddington and the Duc de Luynes. Popular works on the subject are An Account of Palmyra and Zenobia by W. Wright, and The Last Days and Fall of Palmyra by W. Ware.

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**ISBE - Storage Cities** - Fortified towns for stockpiling food. These were selected by Solomon and set aside for stores of victuals, chariots, horsemen, etc. (1 Ki 9:19). Jehoshaphat "built in Judah castles and cities of store" (2 Ch 17:12). Twelve officers were appointed by Solomon to provision his household, each officer being responsible for the supply in one month in the year (1 Ki 4:7). There were also "storehouses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages" (1 Ch 27:25KJV).

**STORAGE CITY** Towns or cities where royal tribute or taxes (paid in kind), provisions, and weapons were stored for use by the government or at the government's discretion, especially in time of famine or war. Storage cities are a hallmark of centralized government, as seen during Israel's monarchy (1000–586 BC). Over thirty-five tripartite pillared buildings have been discovered at over twelve different archaeological sites within the Levant, including Hazor, Megiddo, Tel Beersheba, and Beth Shemesh. These buildings probably were used as storehouses, though other theories exist. Over 150 pottery vessels were recovered in such buildings at Tel Beersheba, and similar buildings uncovered at Beth Shemesh were identified by the Grant excavations as Iron Age storehouses. Pithom and Rameses were two of Pharaoh's storage cities in Egypt (Exod. 1:11). During the united monarchy, Solomon had storage cities throughout Israel (1 Kings 9:19; 2 Chron. 8:4–6). Storehouses in Naphtali were destroyed by Ben-Hadad I (2 Chron. 16:4). Jehoshaphat built storage cities throughout Judah (2 Chron. 17:12), and Hezekiah's storage cities helped him to prepare for ensuing war (32:28). Storage jars with the stamped inscription lmlk ("to/for the king") have been found throughout Judah, likely remnants of the provisions that once filled Hezekiah's storehouses. (**BORROW** [The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#))

## 2 Chronicles 8:5 He also built upper Beth-horon and lower Beth-horon, fortified cities with walls, gates and bars;

- Bethhoron (KJV): Jos 16:3,5 1Ch 7:24

He also built upper Beth-horon and lower Beth-horon, fortified cities with walls, gates and bars - "he twin cities of Beth-horon controlled a pass NW of Jerusalem that led to Joppa." (Ryrie)

**August Konkell:** Upper Beth Horon and Lower Beth Horon sit astride a ridge, which rises from the Valley of Ajalon and extends to the plateau north of Jerusalem. Fortifications were important to protect the route that connected Jerusalem to the major coastal trade route. Certain cities served for storage and for military cavalry. Large building complexes at Hazor, Beth Shemesh, and Megiddo consist of a long room, with two rows of pillars dividing it into three sections. They may have been used as stables and storehouses, or may have been barracks for a professional army. Baalath, originally assigned to the tribe of Dan (Josh 15:9), is probably the city



also known as Kiriath Jearim, on the western boundary of Judah. (Quoted by [Paul Apple](#))

### **BETH-HORON (Heb. bêt-ḥôrôn) BORROW [Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible](#)**

A leitical city in the tribal territory of Ephraim (Josh. 21:22; 1 Chr. 6:68). The name means “house of Horon” (perhaps a Canaanite deity). Twin cities are indicated: Lower Beth-horon was assigned to Ephraim (Josh. 16:3), while Upper Beth-horon was on the border between Ephraim and Benjamin (v. 5; 18:13–14). The Chronicler attributes their construction to Sheerah, granddaughter of Ephraim (1 Chr. 7:24). Both cities were situated on the “ascent [or descent] of Beth-horon,” down which Joshua chased Amorites fleeing their defeat at Gibeon (Josh. 10:10–11). Their location on the slope leading to the hill country from the coastal plain made the cities strategically important and vulnerable to attack. Upper Beth-horon has been identified with Beit ‘Ur el-Fōqā’ (160143) and Lower Beth-horon with Beit ‘Ur et-Ṭahta (158144).

During the reign of Saul, Philistine raiders attacked Beth-horon (1 Sam. 13:18). Solomon rebuilt Lower Beth-horon (1 Kgs. 9:17; the Chronicler names both cities, calling them “fortified cities, with walls, gates, and bars”; 2 Chr. 8:5–6). The Egyptian pharaoh Shishak names Beth-horon in his list of places conquered in Palestine, recorded on the temple to Amun at Karnak. Later Beth-horon was attacked by renegade Judean mercenaries who rampaged from Samaria to Beth-horon (2 Chr. 25:13). The area remained strategically important in the intertestamental period. Judas Maccabeus won a victory there (1 Macc. 3:16, 24). The Syrians used Beth-horon as a camp (1 Macc. 7:39) and later refortified the site (1 Macc 9:50). DANIEL C. BROWNING, JR

### **2 Chronicles 8:6 and Baalath and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the cities for his chariots and cities for his horsemen, and all that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land under his rule.**

- Baalath (KJV): Jos 19:44 1Ki 9:18
- the store cities (KJV): 2Ch 8:4 17:12 1Ki 9:19
- chariot cities (KJV): 2Ch 1:14 1Ki 10:26
- all that Solomon desired to build (KJV): Heb. all the desire of Solomon which he desired to build, 1Ki 9:19 Ec 2:4,10-26
- and in Lebanon (KJV): 1Ki 7:2 Song 4:8

### **And Baalath and all the storage cities that Solomon had, and all the cities for his chariots and cities for his horsemen, and all that it pleased Solomon to build in Jerusalem, in [Lebanon](#), and in all the land under his rule.**

**Baalath** Store-city built by Solomon, probably west of Gezer in the original territory of Dan (1Kgs 9:18; 2 Chr 8:6).

**Leon Wood** - “It seems safe to say that, following this action, Israel controlled more territory than at any other time in its history. In his day, Solomon was probably the most powerful and influential ruler in the Middle East.” ([Israel's united monarchy](#))

**Ron Daniel:** How was this accomplished? Solomon exercised the proper priorities: start locally, then expand. This basic business and biblical principle is often ignored by new ministries and ministers. Wanting to take the world for Jesus Christ, they try to do everything at once. “We’ll have a building project, a radio station, vacation Bible school, a jail ministry, community evangelism outreaches...” But because they do too much too soon, they don’t have the finances, the resources, or the personnel to accomplish everything. They get spread too thin and quickly burn out. (Quoted by [Paul Apple](#))

**J.A. Thompson:** It is evident also that Solomon controlled the major trade routes to Mesopotamia—the main overland route via Hamath and the shorter desert route via Tadmor (possibly Palmyra). Control of these trade routes was important for Solomon’s commercial endeavors and therefore his wealth. The mention of store cities (2Ch 8:4) would fit this picture of trade. (Quoted by [Paul Apple](#))

**John Olley:** The summary statement portrays blessing, as there is not only a dynasty but a “dominion,” an area and people being ruled. David had been active with “building” in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 11:8–9); now Solomon was “building” throughout the “dominion.” The motif of “building” as a sign of blessing following obedient trust, sometimes after repentance, continues with subsequent kings (2Ch 11:5–23; 17:12; 26:2–10; 27:2–4; 32:5; 33:13–15). (Quoted by [Paul Apple](#))

**Andrew Hill:** The emphasis on store cities and chariot cities (1 Chron. 8:6) highlights the priority Solomon gives to the related activities of trade and military defense. The summary statement (8:6c) lauding Solomon’s achievements indicates he has both the political power and the economic resources to build at will throughout his empire (Quoted by [Paul Apple](#))

### **2 Chronicles 8:7 All of the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites,**

## who were not of Israel,

- As for all (KJV): 1Ki 9:20-22
- the Hittites (KJV): Ge 15:19-21 De 7:1

All of the people who were left of the [Hittites](#), the [Amorites](#), the [Perizzites](#), the [Hivites](#) and the [Jebusites](#), who were not of Israel,

**Paul Apple** 2Chr 8:7-10 Labor Force Enlisted by Solomon

**Jamieson, Fausset and Brown:** The descendants of the Canaanites who remained in the country were treated as war-prisoners, being obliged to "pay tribute, or to serve as galley-slaves" (2 Chron. 2:18), while the Israelites were employed in no works but such as were of an honorable character.

**RON DANIEL** - 2Ch 8:7-10 Foreign Forced Laborers - Solomon did use slaves to build the cities. They were not his fellow Jews, but the Canaanite peoples who had not been removed by the Israelites when they entered the Promised Land.

**2 Chronicles 8:8** namely, from their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel had not destroyed, them Solomon raised as forced laborers to this day.

- whom the children (KJV): Judges 1:21-36 Ps 106:34
- to pay (KJV): 2Ch 2:17,18 Jos 16:10 17:13 1Ki 5:13,14

## FORCED LABOR

namely, from their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel had not destroyed, them Solomon raised as forced laborers to this day.

**FORCED LABOR** - BORROW [Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible](#)

A type of slave labor program, commonly referred to as *corvée* or conscripted labor. It was by means of forced labor that rulers of the ancient Near East carried out their building enterprises, building and rebuilding cities. Also, it was through the use of forced labor that kings maintained control of minority groups in their kingdoms.

By the use of forced labor the Egyptian king, at the time of the Exodus, built the cities of Pithom and Raamses (Ex 1:8–14) and at the same time attempted to maintain control of the Hebrews, a minority group in his kingdom. David (2Sa 20:23) and Solomon (1Kgs. 9:15–21) also used forced labor programs. But while Solomon built Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer by means of forced labor, his excessive conscription of workers from among the northern tribes (1Ki 5:13–14) resulted in revolt and the division of the kingdom (1Ki 12:1–19).

Egyptian records refer to rulers like Thutmose III who made campaigns annually into Palestine and Syria as a means of systematically looting those areas and collecting the resources he needed back in Egypt, including the resources of slave labor. Egyptian tomb paintings, such as that of Rameses III bringing back shackled prisoners of war or slaves, provide their own unique record. LAMOINE F. DEVRIES

**2 Chronicles 8:9** But Solomon did not make slaves for his work from the sons of Israel; they were men of war, his chief captains and commanders of his chariots and his horsemen.

- But of the (KJV): Ex 19:5,6 Lev 25:39-46 Ga 4:26,31
- they were men (KJV): 1Sa 8:11,12

**But Solomon did not make slaves for his work from the sons of Israel; they were men of war (SOLDIERS), his chief captains and commanders of his chariots and his horsemen** - "Good jobs" were given to his fellow Hebrews, and menial jobs to the former inhabitants of the promised land who had not been exterminated.

**Paul Apple** - 2Ch 8:9-10 Leaders from the Sons of Israel



**David Guzik:** Israelites were used for the work of building the temple and Solomon's palace, but they were not forced labor (1 Kings 5:13-14). They were often used in the management of the forced labor (who ruled over the people).

**Andrew Hill:** This passage distinguishes clearly between Solomon's treatment of his own countrymen and the subjugated non-Israelite people groups (2Chr 8:8). Vanquished and disposed peoples were commonly used as slave labor for building projects in the ancient Near East. The writer emphasizes how Solomon puts fellow countrymen in positions of leadership (2Ch 8:9-10). The writer of Kings mentions that Solomon also conscripts Israelites as part of the forced labor levy (1 Kings 5:13). These workers are apparently considered another category of "civil servant" since they work only one month in three and are classified as "conscripted laborers" (mas), whereas non-Israelite laborers are classified as "state slaves" (mas 'obed).

**Peter Wallace:** Pattern of Solomon's kingdom expansion Israel benefited greatly from the reign of Solomon. - Their king built up the fortification for their defense. - Their king provided store cities to guard against famine (a sort of social welfare program). - Their king conscripted the idolaters among them for forced labor, but gave positions of power and influence to his fellow Israelites. For centuries, this was viewed as the proper way for a king to function. - The king protects his people from their enemies. - The king provides for the poor, and prepares against the day of trouble. - The king rewards his followers, but keeps potential enemies under his thumb.

**2 Chronicles 8:10 These were the chief officers of King Solomon, two hundred and fifty who ruled over the people.**

- two hundred (KJV): 2Ch 2:18 1Ki 5:16 1Ki 9:23

**These were the chief officers of King Solomon, two hundred and fifty who ruled over the people-** Ruled (Hebrew radah) means to have dominion over or dominate and the Septuagint translates with ergodiokteo which means to be a taskmaster. This action by Solomon was not the wisest move as it caused great difficulty later on. It seems like Solomon is beginning to make unwise decisions as shown by the following verse.

**Ryrie** - One would not expect the number to remain constant throughout Solomon's reign; hence the different number in 1 Kings 9:23.

**2 Chronicles 8:11 Then Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house which he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy where the ark of the LORD has entered."**

- brought up (KJV): 1Ki 3:1, 7:8, 9:24
- holy (KJV): Heb. holiness, Ex 3:5 29:43 Eze 21:2 2Pe 1:18

#### **Related Passages:**

1 Kings 3:1 Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem.

1 Kings 7:8 His house where he was to live, the other court inward from the hall, was of the same workmanship. He also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom Solomon had married.

1 Kings 9:24 As soon as Pharaoh's daughter came up from the city of David to her house which Solomon had built for her, then he built the Millo.



Painting by Peter Paul Rubens of goddess Thetis dipping son Achilles in the River Styx, which runs through Hades.

## THE CHINK IN SOLOMON'S ARMOR A PAGAN IDOL WORSHIPPING WIFE

The idiom "chink in one's armor" refers to **an area of vulnerability**. It has traditionally been used to refer to a weak spot in a figurative suit of armor. The standard meaning is similar to that of **Achilles' heel**. "In Greek mythology, when Achilles was an infant, it was foretold that he would perish at a young age. To prevent his death, his mother Thetis took Achilles to the River Styx, which was supposed to offer powers of invulnerability. She dipped his body into the water but, because she held him by his heel, it was not touched by the water of the river. Achilles grew up to be a man of war who survived many great battles."

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, do you have a "chink in your spiritual armor," a figurative "Achilles heel." If so, you need to destroy it (cf Ro 8:13+), before it destroys you as happened with Solomon's kingdom! "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." (Gal 6:7-8+)

**Then Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house which he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy where the ark of the LORD has entered."** - Solomon's moral compass seems to still be functioning at this time for he is aware of the potential difficulties involved with a marriage outside of Israel, specifically of allowing his Egyptian wife to dwell in the hallowed precincts which his father David had occupied.

**Henry Morris** - This realization by Solomon that the holy should not be compromised with unholy paganism suggests that he felt a measure of guilt about his wedding to the daughter of a pagan king, mainly for political reasons (1 Kings 3:1). He not only built a palace for this Egyptian princess (1 Kings 7:8), but also built a "high place" for the gods of each of his "strange wives" (1 Kings 11:7-10). Compromise for political (or other non-Biblical) reasons inevitably leads to spiritual compromise.

**G Campbell Morgan** - "Compromise is pathetic in that it always witnesses a conviction of what is the high and the true, and attempts to ensure its realization while yielding to the low and the false. It is evil, for its invariable issue is that the low and the false ultimately gain the ascendance and the high and the true are abandoned. To build a house for Pharaoh's daughter outside the Holy City is to open its gates sooner or later to Pharaoh's gods.

**J Vernon McGee** - I notice that an interpretation that one gets in Israel today is that Solomon married these different women from various other countries for political advantage. Your father-in-law is not apt to make war against you. So this was one of the ways in which Solomon brought peace to the land. A man would not come up to fight against a country in which his daughter was the queen. I do not know whether this reason for Solomon's many wives is true or not. I have a notion that it is partly accurate. Under any circumstance, it was against God's command.

King Solomon married a certain 'Pharaoh's daughter' for whom he built a special palace, since she could not live in David's palace 'because the places the ark of the LORD has entered are holy' (1 Kings 7:8; 9; 24; 11:1; 2 Chron. 8:11). Solomon's marriages with this woman and other foreign women were eventually to lead to his downfall. Such intermarriage with other peoples had been forbidden by the Law of God and the wives gradually drew 'his heart after other gods' (1 Kings 11:4-6).

**Paul Apple** - COMPLEXITIES OF MORAL COMPROMISE

**Iain Duguid**: This is the sole mention in Chronicles of Solomon's having a foreign wife, and also the only reference to Pharaoh's daughter. While in Kings this marriage and others are a cause for criticism of Solomon, here it is an opportunity to affirm his piety.

**J.A. Thompson:** The Chronicler assumed his readers knew of Solomon's diplomatic marriage with Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kgs 9:16), who lived with him in Jerusalem. Solomon built a palace for her lest her close proximity to the temple while living in the king's palace might somehow defile the temple and the ark.

**Thomas Constable:** Solomon probably should not have entered into a treaty with Pharaoh by marrying his daughter, in view of God's previous warnings about the negative spiritual influence of foreign wives. Building her a house of her own in Jerusalem seems to have been a compromise: having her yet keeping her at a distance.

**J. Wolfendale: (quoted in Biblical Illustrator):** Consider Solomon's marriage with an Egyptian princess--

I. As a matter of policy. It sprang from--

1. A desire to counteract the influence of Hadad (1 Kings 11:14-20).
2. The wish to obtain support for his new dynasty and recognition from one of older fame and greater power.
3. Anxiety to strengthen himself by foreign alliances.

II. As a source of moral perplexity. What must be done with her? Solomon felt that a broad distinction must be made between the worship of Jehovah and idolatry. III. As the beginning of trouble. The policy advantageous at first, but ultimately proved hollow and impolitic. The reign which began so gloriously ended in gross darkness and fetish worship.

**Mark Boda:** The final verse in this section (2Ch 8:11) serves as a segue between the account of Solomon's foreign slaves (2Ch 8:7-10) and that of his support of the Temple services (2Ch 8:12-16). Here the Chronicler expands the short reference to Solomon's construction of a house for his Egyptian wife (1 Kgs 9:24) by adding a statement by the king linking the project to his passion for the holiness of a site associated with the Ark (8:11). This is the only time the Chronicler links a foreign marriage to Solomon, a link that is key to the criticism of Solomon in his source in Kings (1 Kgs 3, 11), and ironically the Chronicler uses this link to present Solomon as a king passionate for ritual purity. This addition aids the transition between 2Ch 8:2-11 and 2Ch 8:12-16, where Solomon's passion for proper worship ritual will be emphasized further. The account in 1 Kings (1 Kgs 3:1-2; 9:16) reveals that Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh and was given the town of Gezer as a dowry. This marriage suggests an alliance between Egypt and Israel, a political dimension that is played down in the Chronicler's account.

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## **RON DANIEL - 8:11 Pharaoh's Daughter**

Early in Solomon's reign, he had formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh, the king of Egypt (1Ki 3:1). This was a common practice among royalty to maintain peaceful relations between kingdoms. After all, there is lots of incentive not to start a war with your neighbor if he's your wife's dad...She had been living in Jerusalem during the building projects, but not in David's palace. Solomon had decided that because the ark of the covenant had been in that place, it was holy. It seems to me that Solomon had to be aware that this was not a marriage he should be getting into. But then again, I'm always amazed at the stories I hear about people getting married. Often, people disappear from church for a long time, and then finally come back months or years later, but now they're married. They are often self-conscious or embarrassed about who they married. "He/she is an unbeliever... we fell into sin... I knew you wouldn't approve... he/she's got problems... my parents told me it was wrong..." Hello? If you're embarrassed or uncomfortable about who you're marrying, maybe there's a problem?

2Cor. 6:14-16 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God...

What was Solomon thinking? She's too unholy to live in David's house? And yet he still married her? Amazing!

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**F B Meyer** - On this account Solomon said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David, king of Israel. What a fatal admission! She was the daughter of Pharaoh, and therefore it was no doubt considered a splendid match for the young king; and yet she could not dwell within the precincts of the old city of David, hallowed by the presence of the Ark. "He brought her out of the city of David, into the house that he had built for her." So from the very outset there was division of interests, making way no doubt for much of the waywardness of Solomon's character in after life, so that we are told "his wives turned away his heart."

One of the first questions that youth and maiden should put in considering the question of marriage is, whether there can be perfect sympathy in the best and deepest things; for how can two walk together except they be agreed?

The blessedness of the marriage tie depends on whether the twain are one in spirit, in a common love for Christ, and endeavor for

His glory. Nothing is more terrible than when either admits in the secrecy of the heart, concerning the other, My husband or my wife cannot accompany me into the holy places where I was reared, and in which my best life finds its home.

All friendship should follow the same law. We must abide together in the secret place of the Most High, if our friends and we are to be friends indeed. All places may be made holy where the Ark of God's covenant comes. Where it goes, love may safely follow; but woe to the love that cannot! Its inability proves its lack of elements of permanence and perfect satisfaction.

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**G Campbell Morgan** - These were the words of compromise. Solomon's marriage with the daughter of the king of Egypt was a purely political act, arising out of the fact that he had made affinity with her father (1 Kings 3.1). There can be no question that such affinity was wrong. God had delivered His people from Egypt; and there was never the slightest need, either military or economic, for such affinity. It was a political seduction which persistently threatened the nation, and which more than once cost them dear. Having made the blunder, and become affianced to this woman, Solomon sought to safeguard against the possible religious danger, by building her house away from the city of David. This compromise was a failure, as compromise invariably is. Let a paragraph in z Kings be read (chapter It, the first eight verses), and it will be seen that presently he built places of idol worship in Jerusalem for "all his foreign wives." Compromise is a pathetic thing, in that it always is a witness to a conviction of what is the high and the true, and an attempt to ensure its realization, while yielding to the low and the false. It is an evil thing, for its invariable issue is that the low and the false ultimately gain the ascendance, and the high and the true are abandoned. It is when the eye is single that the whole body is full of light. The way of uncompromising devotion to the right is the way, and the only way, of ultimate deliverance from evil. To tolerate wrong in any degree is ultimately to become its slave. To build a house for Pharaoh's daughter outside the Holy City is to open the gates of that city sooner or later to Pharaoh's gods.

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**2 Chronicles 8:12 Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built before the porch;**

- on the altar (KJV): 2Ch 4:1 1Ch 28:17 Eze 8:16 Joe 2:17
- before the porch (KJV): Joh 10:23

**Then** - After he had broken the Law and taken a foreign wife! Dt 17:17 had warned "Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself." Woe!

**Solomon offered burnt offerings ([olah](#)) to the LORD on the altar of the LORD which he had built before the porch;**

**RON DANIEL** - 2Ch 8:12-15 Solomon's Offerings -- It seems that Solomon is maintaining his routine of sacrifices and worship. And yet, day by day, his heart is growing more and more distant from the Lord.

**Paul Apple** - 2Ch 8:12-15 ENHANCING WORSHIP VIA PROPER ADMINISTRATION OF THE TEMPLE SERVICE

**Raymond Dillard**: The author expands his source (1 Kgs 9:25) with emphasis on the detailed observance of the Mosaic commands (Lev 23:1–37; Num 28–29) and Davidic prescriptions (1 Chr 23–26); he specifies the three annual feasts mentioned in Kings and adds the observance of weekly sabbaths and the new moon. The text is ambiguous regarding the extent of the king's participation; it could cover any degree of involvement from simply decreeing the observances to personal officiation in the worship.

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**MATTHEW HENRY - 2Chr 8:12-18**

**I. Solomon's devotion.** The building of the temple was in order to the service of the temple. Whatever cost he was at in rearing the structure, if he had neglected the worship that was to be performed there, it would all have been to no purpose. Assisting the devotion of others will not atone for our own neglects. When Solomon had built the temple,

1. He kept up the holy sacrifices there, according to the law of Moses, 2Chr 8:12, 13. In vain had the altar been built, and in vain had fire come down from heaven, if sacrifices had not been constantly brought as the food of the altar and the fuel of that fire. There were daily sacrifices, a certain rate every day, as duly as the day came, weekly sacrifices on the sabbath, double to what was offered on other days, monthly sacrifices on the new moons, and yearly sacrifices at the three solemn feasts. Those are spiritual sacrifices that are now required of us, which we are to bring daily and weekly; and it is good to be in a settled method of devotion.
2. He kept up the holy songs there, according to the law of David, who is here called the man of God, as Moses was, because he was both instructed and authorised of God to make these establishments; and Solomon took care to see them observed as the duty of every day required, 2Chr 8:14. Solomon, though a

wise and great man and the builder of the temple, did not attempt to amend, alter, or add to what the man of God had, in God's name, commanded, but closely adhered to that, and used his authority to have that duly observed; and then none departed from the commandment of the king concerning any matter, 2Chr 8:15. He observed God's laws, and then all obeyed his orders. When the service of the temple was put into this good order, then it is said, The house of the Lord was perfected, 2Chr 8:16. The work was the main matter, not the place; the temple was unfinished till all this was done.

## II. Solomon's merchandise.

He did himself in person visit the sea-port towns of Eloth and Ezion-geber; for those that deal much in the world will find it their interest, as far as they can, to inspect their affairs themselves and to see with their own eyes, 2Chr 8:17. Canaan was a rich country, and yet must send to Ophir for gold; the Israelites were a wise and understanding people, and yet must be beholden to the king of Tyre for men that had knowledge of the seas, v. 18. Yet Canaan was God's peculiar land, and Israel God's peculiar people. This teaches us that grace, and not gold, is the best riches, and acquaintance with God and his law, not with arts and sciences, the best knowledge.

**2 Chronicles 8:13 and did so according to the daily rule, offering them up according to the commandment of Moses, for the sabbaths, the new moons and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths.**

- every day (KJV): Ex 29:38-42 Lev 23:1-17 Nu 28:1-29:40 Eze 45:17 46:3-15
- three times (KJV): Ex 23:14-17 De 16:16 1Ki 9:25

### THE THREE APPOINTED FEASTS

**and did so according to the daily rule, offering them up according to the commandment of Moses, for the sabbaths, the new moons and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths.**

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the Feast of Tabernacles / Booths / Sukkot? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the Feast of Weeks? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What was the Feast of Firstfruits? | GotQuestions.org](#)

**2 Chronicles 8:14 Now according to the ordinance of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their duties of praise and ministering before the priests according to the daily rule, and the gatekeepers by their divisions at every gate; for David the man of God had so commanded.**

- the courses (KJV): 2Ch 5:11 23:4 31:2 1Ch 24:1-19 Lu 1:5,8
- the Levites (KJV): 2Ch 35:10 1Ch 6:31,32-48 15:16-22 16:4-6,42 23:1-32 24:20-31 1Ch 25:1-31 Eze 40:47
- the porters (KJV): 1Ch 9:17 26:1-19
- so had David the man of God commanded (KJV): Heb. so was the commandment of David the man of God, De 33:1 2Sa 23:2 1Ki 13:1 1Ch 28:19 Ac 13:22,36

**Now according to the ordinance of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their duties of praise and ministering before the priests according to the daily rule, and the gatekeepers by their divisions at every gate; for David the man of God had so commanded.**

**L. M. Grant:** Priesthood has to do with worship, which is too often neglected amongst God's people while they use the word "worship" for any kind of Christian activity. But true worship is heart adoration of the Father and the Son and it is important that definite time should be taken for this most precious feature of Christian life. The Levites were servants, so this emphasizes the service of obedient activity as to the Lord. Christians too often make service more important than worship so that, worship becomes practically side-tracked. But both are of great value in their place. The gatekeeper's picture the genuine care that is so necessary in keeping out of the assembly what ought to be out and allowing in what ought to be in. This proper care has been ignored in

the great majority of churches today, so as to have believers and unbelievers mixed together, and sinful practices not only tolerated but justified. If one seeks to be a true gatekeeper, he is accused of being intolerant, legal minded and unloving. But God appreciates the genuine care that His saints show for the true welfare of the Church of God and for the honour of His name

**Andrew Hill:** The report of the perpetual offerings made to Yahweh as part of the worship of the Jerusalem temple expands the reference to Solomon's observance of the pilgrimage festivals three times a year (cf. 1 Kings 9:25). The Torah required a burnt offering morning and evening with incense (Nu 28:1–8). The burnt offering symbolized God's gift of atonement for sin and the consecration of Israel wholly to God. Burning incense represented the prayers of God's people (Ps. 141:2; Rev. 5:8). Solomon's obedience to the law of Moses legitimizes the Jerusalem temple and the new altar opposite its portico as the primary location for the worship of Yahweh (as was the case formerly for the altar in Gibeon, cf. 2 Chron. 1:3–5).

**2 Chronicles 8:15 And they did not depart from the commandment of the king to the priests and Levites in any manner or concerning the storehouses.**

- they departed (KJV): 2Ch 30:12 Ex 39:42,43
- the treasures (KJV): 1Ki 7:51 1Ch 9:29 26:20-26

**And they did not depart from the commandment of the king to the priests and Levites in any manner or concerning the storehouses.**

**2 Chronicles 8:16 Thus all the work of Solomon was carried out from the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.**

- 1Ki 5:18 6:7

**Thus all the work of Solomon was carried out from the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed.**

**RON DANIEL** - 2Ch 8:16-18 Bringing Gold To Solomon - Solomon begins to engage in international commerce and trade on both land and sea.

**Paul Apple** - 2Ch 8:16 SUMMARY -- ALL BUILDING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE PREEMINENCE OF THE TEMPLE

**Mark Boda:** The expansions in 2Ch 8:12-16 (as with the one in 2Ch 8:11) are all related to the construction of the Temple and the institution of its services. Thus, even when the Chronicler finally does move out of the realm of the Temple project, as he does in 2Ch 8-9, he cannot help but mention the Temple and its services. This is a reflection of his agenda not only to highlight their importance in the life of Israel but also to remind his readers that all the success Solomon experienced in the "secular" realm is to be traced to his exhaustive and enduring attention to the "sacred" realm symbolized by the Temple and its services.

**Andrew Hill:** The emphasis of 2 Chronicles 8 is Solomon's faithfulness in following through on all of David's preparations and seeing the temple building project to completion (cf. 2Ch 8:16).

**John Olley:** This is the sole mention in Chronicles of Solomon's having a foreign wife, and also the only reference to Pharaoh's daughter. While in Kings this marriage and others are a cause for criticism of Solomon, here it is an opportunity to affirm his piety.

**J.A. Thompson:** This verse represents an important literary mark in the story of the Chronicler, concluding the long section that began at 2:1. A similar phrase to "so the temple of the Lord was finished" occurs in 2Ch 29:35, as the Chronicler concluded his account of the restoration of the temple service under Hezekiah.

**Matthew Henry:** Solomon, though a wise and great man and the builder of the temple, did not attempt to amend, alter, or add to what the man of God had, in God's name, commanded, but closely adhered to that, and used his authority to have that duly observed; and then none departed from the commandment of the king concerning any matter, 2 Chron. 8:15. He observed God's laws, and then all obeyed his orders. When the service of the temple was put into this good order, then it is said, The house of the Lord was perfected, 2 Chron. 8:16. The work was the main matter, not the place; the temple was unfinished till all this was done.

**2 Chronicles 8:17 Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Elath on the seashore in the land of Edom.**



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- Ezion Geber (KJV): 2Ch 20:36 Nu 33:35 1Ki 9:26,27 22:48
  - Eloth (KJV): De 2:8 2Ki 14:22 16:6, Elath

### **Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Eloth on the seashore in the land of Edom.**

**Believer's Study Bible** - Ezion Geber is a site on the northern end of the eastern arm of the Red Sea. It is mentioned as early as the time of the Exodus, when the Israelites encamped there just prior to their march into the Wilderness of Zin (Num. 33:35, 36). During his reign, Solomon sent the merchant ships to Ophir every three years (2Ch 9:21) for gold and other valuable goods. Ophir was probably either in lower Arabia or in east-central Africa. The difference between the 450 talents of gold (2Ch 9:18) and the 420 talents mentioned in 1 Kin. 9:28 appears to be the result of a confusion of numerical symbols in the transmission of the biblical text (see 1 Chronicles 1:1, "Book note: The Historical Reliability of Chronicles").

**Andrew Hill:** This entire chapter (2Ch 9) balances the opening chapter (ch. 1) in that God has honored Solomon's obedience in giving the wealth accumulated by David to the building of the temple by restoring wealth to the monarchy through trade and gifts from other nations. The story also illustrates the key themes of the larger literary unit (2Ch 1–9), namely, Solomon's wisdom, wealth, and fame—all gifts from God. For example, Solomon petitioned God for wisdom and was blessed with promises of wealth and fame as well (2Ch 1:11–12). As a result of her visit with King Solomon, the Queen of Sheba testifies of Solomon's unsurpassed wisdom (2Ch 9:5) and contributes to Solomon's wealth with lavish gifts of gold, spices, and gemstones (9:9). Beyond this, the queen bears witness to the fact that Solomon's wisdom and wealth are the result of God's blessing on the king and his love for the nation of Israel (2Ch 9:8).

**Martin Selman:** This section concludes the record of Solomon's achievements (2Ch 8-9) by concentrating on Solomon's international relationships, in contrast to the Israelite setting of the previous one. Two striking examples of Solomon's dealings with foreign rulers, one from the north and the other from the south, introduce a more general account of Solomon's reputation among the kings of the earth (cf. v. 23).

**John Olley:** The Chronicler's narrating of the reigns of David and Solomon has highlighted the importance of the temple and its worship as the foundation for God's people to enjoy security and prosperity. While the Kings account portrays some of the ambiguities of Solomon's reign, including his material prosperity (in keeping with an overall narrative that addresses reasons for the exile and the way forward), Chronicles provides a vision of what God intends for his people when they follow him wholeheartedly. It illustrates God's desire to bless, with lasting blessing inseparable from loyal worship. It foreshadows the words of Christ, who, after summarizing what "the Gentiles ["nations"] seek"—matters of food, drink, and clothing (and all that is required to provide these)—proclaims, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (Matt. 6:31–33; cf. Luke 12:29–31). Some believers may experience foretaste of material blessings in this present life (although NT passages more often warn of opposition and persecution), but the vision of the new creation is one of luxurious plenty, a place "in which righteousness dwells" (Revelation 21–22; 2 Pet. 3:13).

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**EZION GEBER** A town located at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqabah. The Bible locates it "near Elath in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea" (1 Kings 9:26). However, the precise location is debated. Many scholars associate it with Tell el-Kheleifeh, which lies between modern Elath and Aqabah, about five hundred yards from the shore, but others identify it with the island of Jezirat al-Faraun, about fifteen miles south along the western coast of the Gulf of Aqabah. Still others speculate that it lies undiscovered under modern Aqabah.

The ruins of Tell el-Kheleifeh contain a citadel and storehouses surrounded by double casemate walls. The ruins do not predate the ninth century BC, so references to Ezion Geber in the itinerary of the wilderness wandering (Num. 33:35–36) and Solomon's naval activities there are problematic. Jezirat al-Faraun offers a small natural harbor and contains evidence of Midianite pottery as early as the thirteenth century BC. Whatever the precise location, Ezion Geber represents the southernmost extent of Judean political and economic control, for it served as the gateway to Red Sea trade and stood near land routes to Arabia.

From David to the end of the monarchy, control over Ezion Geber oscillated between Judah and Edom. David may have first captured it when he subdued Edom (2 Sam. 8:13–14). With the help of the Phoenicians, Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion Geber that brought immense wealth into Israel (1 Kings 9:26–28). After Solomon's death, it may have been destroyed during Pharaoh Shishak's invasion (1 Kings 14:25–26). Edom reasserted control over it until Jehoshaphat, in alliance with Ahaziah, built at Ezion Geber a fleet of merchant vessels, which God destroyed because of Ahaziah's wickedness (2 Chron. 20:36–37). This is the

last time Ezion Geber is mentioned by name.

From this point onward, nearby Elath is the focus of events in the area. Uzziah's father defeated the Edomites, allowing Uzziah to build up Elath (2 Kings 14:22; 2 Chron. 26:1–2). The Syrians briefly controlled the area, but the Edomites reclaimed control until the Babylonian period (2 Kings 16:6). Elath was abandoned in the fourth century BC, and a Nabatean site developed farther east near Aqabah. (**BORROW** [The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#))

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**ELATH; ELOTH [ISBE]** - e'-lath, or e'-loth ('eloth, 'elath; Ailon (Dt 2:8), Ailath (2 Ki 16:6)): A seaport on the Red Sea in the territory of Edom. It is named along with Ezion-geber in the account of Israel's journey round the land of Edom (Dt 2:8). It appears as Ailath, and Alion in the Septuagint, and in Josephus as Ilanis (Ant., VIII, vi, 4), while Eusebius (Onomasticon) has Aila. From this we may gather that the Aramaic Ilan or Ilana was in use as well as the Hebrew 'elath or 'eloth. The name, "grove," was doubtless derived from the presence of certain sacred trees. It may be identical with El-paran of Gen 14:6, and Elah of Gen 36:41. When David conquered Edom, Elath passed into the hands of Israel (2 Sam 8:14). It was a position of great importance in connection with the trade with South Arabia. Here the merchant fleets of Solomon and Jehoshaphat were fitted out, and hence, they sailed (1 Ki 9:26; 2 Ch 8:17; 1 Ki 22:48). In the reign of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, Edom shook off the hand of Judah (2 Ki 8:20), but under Amaziah and Uzziah it was again subdued (2 Ki 14:7,10,22). Finally it was taken from Ahaz by Rezin, king of Syria. The Jews were driven out and the Syrians (Edomites?) took permanent possession (2 Ki 16:6). It is identical with the modern `Aqaba, at the head of the gulf of that name. W. Ewing

**2 Chronicles 8:18 And Hiram by his servants sent him ships and servants who knew the sea; and they went with Solomon's servants to Ophir, and took from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon.**

- 1Ki 9:27,28 10:22, Hiram
- Hiram (KJV): 2Ch 9:10,13
- Ophir (KJV): Conjectures respecting the situation of Ophir are endless. Grotius conjectures it to be a part of Arabia called Aphar by Arrian; while Bochart and others have placed it in the island of Ceylon. Calmet supposes it to have been situated in Armenia; but his late editor places it at the head of the Indus. Josephus says that Ophir is the Indies, called the Gold country; by which he is supposed to mean Chersonesus Aurea, now Malacca, opposite Sumatra; and Lev Poivre observes that the inhabitants of these places call their gold mines {ophirs.}
- took thence (KJV): Ec 2:8

**And Hiram by his servants sent him ships and servants who knew the sea; and they went with Solomon's servants to Ophir, and took from there four hundred and fifty talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon.**

**Wikipedia - Ophir** (<sup>[1]</sup>[/ˈɒfɪər/](#); **Hebrew**: אופיר, **Modern**: *ʿŌfir*, **Tiberian**: *ʿŌp̄ir*) is a port or region mentioned in the **Bible**, famous for its wealth. Its existence is attested to by an **inscribed pottery shard** found at **Tell Qasile** (in modern-day **Tel Aviv**) in 1946, dating to the eighth century BC,<sup>[2][3]</sup> which reads "gold of Ophir to/for Beth-Horon [...] 30 **shekels**"<sup>[4]</sup> The location of Ophir is unknown, though the find confirms it as a real place from which gold was imported.<sup>[5]</sup>

**J.A. Thompson:** Solomon and Hiram engaged in a joint maritime venture. Hiram provided ships and personnel although Solomon was the initiator of the venture. Even though Solomon had mastery over the land routes to the north, he apparently was able also to tap into the trade with Africa. The ships referred to in v. 18 sailed to Ophir and brought back four hundred and fifty talents of gold for Solomon's use. The location of Ophir is a subject of debate. It has been identified variously with India (Josephus, Ant. 8.164), Punt (Somaliland on the coast of Africa), and West or South Arabia. According to 2Ch 9:21 and 1 Kgs 10:22, the voyages took three years.

**Albert Barnes:** Skillful sailors. Solomon probably bore the expenses and his friend, the Tyrian king, furnished him with expert sailors; for the Jews, at no period of their history, had any skill in maritime affairs, their navigation being confined to the lakes of their own country, from which they could never acquire any nautical skill. The Tyrians, on the contrary, lived on and in the sea.

**Andrew Hill:** The Phoenicians were well known in the ancient world for their shipbuilding technology and seamanship, so Solomon's alliance with Hiram of Tyre for the purpose of maritime trade is a natural one (cf. Isa. 23:1–4; Ezek. 27:4, 8–9). These joint Israelite-Phoenician maritime expeditions are three-year trading junkets; in addition to the gold, algumwood (ebony?), gemstones, silver, ivory, and exotic animals are among the goods returned to port at Ezion Geber (cf. 2 Chron. 9:10, 21). It is unclear what Solomon's

merchants trade for the gold and other products, but cedar timber from Phoenicia was always in demand for royal building projects, and the Israelites probably traded surplus grain, olive oil, and other foodstuffs (since famine and crop failure has always been a part of the lifecycle on the fringes of the Mediterranean basin).

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## ISBE - OPHIR

At all times the geographical position of Ophir has been a subject of dispute, the claims of three different regions being principally advanced, namely (1) India and the Far East, (2) Africa, (3) Arabia.

(1) India and the Far East.

All the wares mentioned are more or less appropriate to India, even including the fuller list of 1 Ki 10:22. "Almug"-wood is conjectured to be the Indian sandal-wood. Another argument is based on the resemblance between the Septuagint form of the word (Sophera) and the Coptic name for India (Sopfir). A closer identification is sought with Abhira, a people dwelling at the mouths of the Indus. Supara, an ancient city on the west coast of India near the modern Goa, is also suggested. Again, according to Wildman, the name denotes a vague extension eastward, perhaps as far as China.

(2) Africa.

This country is the greatest gold-producing region of the three. Sofala, a seaport near Mozambique on the east coast of Africa, has been advanced as the site of Ophir, both on linguistic grounds and from the nature of its products, for there all the articles of 1 Ki 10:22 could be procured. But Gesenius shows that Sofala is merely the Arabic form of the Hebrew shephelah. Interest in this region as the land of Ophir was renewed, however, by Mauch's discovery at Zimbabwe of great ruins and signs of old Phoenician civilization and worked-out gold mines. According to Bruce (I, 440), a voyage from Sofala to Ezion-geber would have occupied quite three years owing to the monsoons.

(3) Arabia.

The claim of Southeastern Arabia as the land of Ophir has on the whole more to support it than that of India or of Africa. The Ophir of Gen 10:29 beyond doubt belonged to this region, and the search for Ophir in more distant lands can be made only on the precarious assumption that the Ophir of Ki is not the same as the Ophir of Gen. Of the various products mentioned, the only one which from the Old Testament notices can be regarded as clearly native to Ophir is the gold, and according to Pliny and Strabo the region of Southeastern Arabia bordering on the Persian Gulf was a famous gold-producing country. The other wares were not necessarily produced in Ophir, but were probably brought there from more distant lands, and thence conveyed by Solomon's merchantmen to Ezion-geber. If the duration of the voyage (3 years) be used as evidence, it favors this location of Ophir as much as that on the east coast of Africa. It seems therefore the least assailable view that Ophir was a district on the Persian Gulf in Southeastern Arabia and served in old time as an emporium of trade between the East and West. A. S. Fulton

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## PAUL APPLE - DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How does this political dominion and geographical expansion compare to the ultimate eschatological fulfillment of the ultimate borders of the Promised Land?
- 2) Why such a distinction in how Solomon treated subjugated foreigners and native Israelites when it came to employing them in various roles for his building projects?
- 3) Why does this account of Solomon's marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh appear in this context?
- 4) Why does the Chronicler gloss over some of the weaknesses and moral failures of Solomon?

## QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

**J. Parker:** (Quoted in Biblical Illustrator) -- Solomon was great in burnt offerings. Do not men sometimes make up in burnt offerings what they lack in moral consistency? Is not an ostentatious religion sometimes the best proof of internal decay? It ought not to be so. The outward and inward should correspond. The action should be the incarnation of the thought. It is beautiful to look upon the Church engaged in much church-building and in strenuous endeavours against public sin; yet we must never forget that all this may possibly coexist with internal loss, decay, corruption. All action does not spring from life. Sometimes we try to make up by complex mechanism what is wanting in real vitality. It is often easier to offer burnt offering than to do some deed of moral heroism.

**August Konkell:** The petition of Solomon for Israel and all peoples makes the temple the place of prayer from which they call to the Creator of the universe. The dedication prayer expresses the condition under which prayer may be made efficacious. In seeking the face of God, it is necessary to be humble; earthly citizens are in every way subservient to the Creator. But petitions made with such

an attitude of trust have an unfailing response: God will hear from heaven and will heal (2 Chron 7:14). The eyes of the Lord are ever open to the place that makes confession of his dominion in all the earth.

**Eugene Merrill:** Solomon's spiritual devotion, evidenced by the many sacrifices he gave at the dedication of the temple (7:5), was typical of his religious commitment, in the view of the chronicler. True, 2 Chronicles does not mention Solomon's introduction of pagan shrines and worship, a point stressed in 1 Kings 11:1-13. But the chronicler, though he surely knew those things, did narrate what must have been Solomon's general practice of fulfilling Mosaic sacrificial requirements (2 Chron. 8:12-13). Solomon also maintained the priestly and Levitical divisions established by his father (vv. 14-15). Last but not least, Solomon had begun and had completed the temple, his highest religious achievement.

**Andrew Reynolds:** The Greatness of Solomon (8-9)

1. Political (8:1-11) -- Building cities
2. Religious (8:12-16) – Sacrifices -- Temple personnel
3. Economic (8:17-9:31) -- Queen of Sheba

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