

1 Kings 5 Commentary

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Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission
[1 Kings Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

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1 Kings 5:1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram had always been a friend of David.

- [Hiram](#): 1Ki 5:10,13 9:12-14 2Ch 2:3, Hiram
- **sent his servants to Solomon**: 2Sa 8:10 10:1,2 Ps 45:12
- **Hiram had always been a friend of David**: 2Sa 5:11 1Ch 14:1 Am 1:9

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 5:11+ Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees and carpenters and stonemasons; and they built a house for David.

1 Chronicles 14:1+ Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees, masons and carpenters, to build a house for him.



Now **Hiram** king of Tyre (rock - city was built on rocky island) sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed ([masah](#)) him king in place of his father, for **Hiram** had always been a friend ([ahab/ahab](#); Lxx = [agapao](#) - loved) of David - Hiram was a Phoenician, a people group who were not worshippers of Jehovah and yet David's godly life had an impact on King Hiram who **had always been a friend of David**. The **ESV** has "Hiram always loved David." David's love had an impact on this king's life and out of love for David, he expressed his love for David's son, Solomon.

THOUGHT - Even though David is dead, his life and love continued to have a "ripple effect." Such is the life of any man or woman about whom it can be said they are a "man (woman) after God's Own heart." (Acts 13:22+). Your life can have an impact on the lives of others far beyond the grave. Consider for a moment how many friends and loved ones have been saved after a godly Christian went home to be with the Lord ([See my eulogy for Akong](#), truly one of the most Christlike believers I have ever met in my 40 years as a follower of Christ.)

NET NOTE - Beginning with 1Ki 4:21, the verse numbers through 1Ki 5:18 in the English Bible differ from the verse numbers in the Hebrew text (BHS), with 1Ki 4:21 ET = 5:1 HT, 1Ki 4:22 ET = 5:2 HT, etc., through 1Ki 5:18 ET = 5:32 HT. Beginning with 1Ki 6:1 the numbering of verses in the English Bible and the Hebrew text is again the same.

Keil - Immediately after the consolidation of his kingdom, Solomon commenced the preparations for the building of a temple, first of all by entering into negotiations with king Hiram of Tyre, to procure from him not only the building materials requisite, viz., cedars, cypresses, and hewn stones, but also a skilled workman for the artistic work of the temple (1 Kings 5:1-12); and, secondly, by causing the number of workmen required for this great work to be raised out of his own kingdom, and sending them to Lebanon to prepare the materials for the building in connection with the Tyrian builders (1 Kings 5:13-18). - We have a parallel passage to this in 2 Chronicles 2, which agrees with the account before us in all the leading points, but differs in many of the details, omitting several things which were not essential to the main fact, and communicating others which are passed over in our account, e.g., Solomon's request that a Tyrian workman might be sent.

Alexander Maclaren - The preparations for so great a work must have taken much time, so that the arrangement with Hiram recorded in this passage was probably made very early in the reign. That probability is strengthened if we suppose, as we must do, that the embassy from Hiram mentioned in 1 Kings 5:1 was sent to congratulate Solomon on his accession. If so, the latter's proposal to get timber and stones from the Lebanon would be made at the very commencement of the reign. Three years would not be more than enough to get the material ready and transported.

THOUGHT - Great designs need long preparation. Raw haste wastes time; deliberation is as needful before beginning as rapid action is when we have begun. (A. Maclaren)

Anointed ([04886](#))([masah](#)) is a verb which basically means to smear something on, to rub with oil, to anoint (as in setting one apart for office or function - Elisha as prophet = 1Ki 19:16, kings for office = 1Sa 9:16 = Saul, 1Sa 16:12 = David, 1Ki 1:39 = Solomon) and by implication to sanctify (set aside for sacred purpose) or consecrate (dedicate for a sacred purpose) (altar = Nu 7:10; vessels for worship - Ex 29:36 = "you shall anoint it to consecrate it;" Ex 30:26, 40:9-10). In the first OT use, Jacob "**anointed** a pillar" and made a vow to God (Ge 31:13; Lxx = aleipho = to anoint by applying a liquid - Jesus' feet were anointed with perfume - Lk 7:38, 46+).

QUESTION - [Who was Hiram / Hiram in the Bible?](#)

ANSWER - Three people in the Bible were named Hiram, and two of them were associated with Tyre, the ancient Phoenician city-state on the Mediterranean coast. In some cases, Hiram is a variant used for the name Hiram. Hiram in Hebrew and its

variant Hiram both mean “brother of the exalted.”

The first Hiram was the king of Tyre who reigned during the time of King David and his son King Solomon. The earliest mention of King Hiram in the Bible is after David conquered Jerusalem and established his capital there. Hiram sent timber, carpenters, and other skilled laborers for David to employ in the building of his palace: “Now Hiram king of Tyre sent envoys to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David” (2 Samuel 5:11). In the books of 1 and 2 Chronicles, he is called Hiram (1 Chronicles 14:1; 2 Chronicles 2:3).

During Hiram's reign, Tyre grew into a dominant and thriving commercial center and the most important port city in the Mediterranean. Hiram engaged in extensive building projects and colonized several Mediterranean islands such as Cyprus and Sicily. He also pursued commercial maritime endeavors.

In the writings of the first-century historian Josephus, we learn that Hiram ruled in Tyre for 34 years and died at age 53. Throughout his lifetime, King Hiram remained David's friend and ally. His long affection for David passed down to King Solomon, with whom he continued friendly relations: “Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram always loved David” (1 Kings 5:1, ESV).

When Solomon built the temple, Hiram sent timber, gold, and craftsmen to help with the construction and assemble the furnishings. In return, Solomon gave grain and oil to Hiram to supply his household. The two kings developed a commercial trading alliance. Solomon also gave Hiram twenty cities in the territory of Galilee, but, when King Hiram surveyed these cities, he was not pleased with them and called the area “the Land of Kabul,” which roughly translates into “the Good-for-nothing Land” (1 Kings 9:10–14; 26–28).

Another man named Hiram worked on Solomon's temple as a metalsmith. He was from Tyre, as was his father, and his mother was from the tribe of Naphtali: “King Solomon sent to Tyre and brought Hiram, whose mother was a widow from the tribe of Naphtali and whose father was from Tyre and a skilled craftsman in bronze. Hiram was filled with wisdom, with understanding and with knowledge to do all kinds of bronze work. He came to King Solomon and did all the work assigned to him” (1 Kings 7:13–14).

Hiram the metalsmith is referred to as Hiram in 2 Chronicles 4:11 but called Hiram-abi in 2 Chronicles 2:13 and 4:16. Abi means “master.”

A third man mentioned in the Bible with the name Hiram was a grandson of Benjamin (1 Chronicles 8:3–5). Scholars believe he may have been the same as Hupham, the Benjamite listed in Numbers 26:39. GotQuestions.org

WIKIPEDIA - **Hiram I** (**Phoenician**: *Hirōm* "my brother is exalted"; **Hebrew**: הִירָם *Hīrām*, Modern **Arabic**: حيرام, also called *Hirōm* or *Huram*)^[1] was the **Phoenician** king of **Tyre** according to the **Hebrew Bible**. His regnal years have been calculated by some as 980 to 947 BC, in succession to his father, **Abibaal**. Hiram was succeeded as king of Tyre by his son **Baal-Eser I**.^[2] Hiram is also mentioned in the writings of **Menander of Ephesus** (early 2nd century BC), as preserved in **Josephus's *Against Apion***, which adds to the biblical account. According to Josephus, Hiram lived for 53 years and reigned 34.

Reign

During Hiram's reign, Tyre grew from a satellite of **Sidon** into the most important of **Phoenician** cities, and the holder of a large trading empire. He suppressed the rebellion of the first Tyrean colony at **Utica**, near the later site of **Carthage** (*Against Apion* i:18).

The **Hebrew Bible** says that he allied himself with **David**, king of **the United Kingdom of Israel** and his artisans built David's palace in **Jerusalem** after his capture of the city.^{[3][4][5]} The palace was built using **Lebanon Cedar**. After David's death, Hiram maintained his alliance with David's son and successor **Solomon**, again as an equal ("חא", meaning "my brother")^{[6][7][8]} Through the alliance with Solomon, Hiram ensured himself access to the major **trade routes** to Egypt, **Arabia** and **Mesopotamia**. The two kings also jointly opened a trade route over the **Red Sea**, connecting the Israelite harbour of **Ezion-Geber** with a land called **Ophir**.^[9] Some schools of thought suggest that this land of Ophir was in the port city of **Sopara** near modern **Mumbai** (Bombay), **India**.^[10]

According to the Bible, both kings grew rich through this trade, and Hiram sent Solomon architects, workmen, cedar wood, and gold to build the **First Temple** in **Jerusalem**. Josephus says that he also extended the Tyrean harbour, enlarged the city by joining the two islands on which it was built, and constructed a royal palace and a temple for **Melqart** (*Against Apion* i:17). **Modern archaeology**, however, has found no evidence for these expansions.^[11]nsions

Hypotheses regarding chronology of reign[edit]



The [Baal Lebanon inscription](#) is thought to mention Hiram.

The beginning date of Hiram's reign is derived from a statement by [Josephus](#) by citing both Tyrian court records and the writings of [Menander](#),^[12] relating that 143 years passed between the start of construction of [Solomon's Temple](#) until the founding of [Carthage](#) (or until [Dido's](#) flight that led to its founding). Josephus also related that Hiram's reign began 155 years and 8 months before that event and that construction of Solomon's Temple began in the twelfth year of Hiram's reign, which would be 143 years before the building of Carthage.

As pointed out by [William Barnes](#) (1801–1886), the date for the start of Temple construction using the Tyrian data is derived "wholly independently" of the way that date is derived by using the Scriptural data.^[13]

"[Tomb of Hiram](#)" Main article: [Hiram's Tomb](#)



The "[Tomb of Hiram](#)", as seen in 2009

The "Tomb of Hiram" (Qabr Hiram) dates from the [Persian period](#), four to six centuries after the presumed time of Hiram.^[14] It is built 6 km southeast of Tyre, near the village of [Hanaouay](#), on the road to [Qana](#)^[14] and has the form of a colossal limestone sarcophagus on a pedestal.^[14]

1 Kings 5:2 Then Solomon sent word to Hiram, saying,

- 2Ch 2:3

Related Passages: Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings

2 Chronicles 2:3+ Then Solomon sent word to [Hiram](#) the king of Tyre, saying, "As you dealt with David my father and sent him cedars to build him a house to dwell in, so do for me."

SOLOMON REPLIES TO HIRAM

Then - **Then** marks progression in a narrative and can be very helpful in prophetic passages (e.g., Mt 24:9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 30+).

Solomon sent word to Hiram, saying - **Hiram** (means noble, high born) was king of Tyre a seaport on the Mediterranean north of Israel. Solomon knew Hiram had befriended David and provided cedar for David's palace (2Sa 5:11+).

Dilday - "According to Josephus, copies of such a letter along with Hiram's reply were preserved in both Hebrew and Tyrian archives and were extant in his day ([Josephus Antiquities 8.2.8](#))."

1 Kings 5:3 "You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the wars which surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet."

- **was unable to build a house for the name of the LORD** 2Sa 7:5-11 1Ch 22:4-6 2Ch 6:6-8
- **because of the wars:** 1Ch 22:8 1Ch 28:3
- **put them under the soles of his feet:** Jos 10:24 Ps 8:6 Ps 110:1 Mal 4:3 1Co 15:25 Eph 1:22

Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 22:2-6+ So David gave orders to gather the foreigners who were in the land of Israel, and he set stonecutters to hew out stones to build the house of God. 3 David prepared large quantities of iron to make the nails for the doors of the gates and for the clamps, and more bronze than could be weighed; 4 and timbers of cedar logs beyond number, for the Sidonians and Tyrians brought large quantities of cedar timber to David. David said, "My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD shall be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all lands. Therefore now I will make preparation for it." So David made ample preparations before his death. 6 Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel

Deuteronomy 12:5+ "But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the LORD your God will choose from all your tribes, **to establish His Name there for His dwelling**, and there you shall come.

Deuteronomy 12:11+ then it shall come about that **the place in which the LORD your God will choose for His Name to dwell**, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to the LORD.

DAVID PROHIBITED FROM BUILDING GOD'S TEMPLE

You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the Name([shem](#); Lxx - [onoma](#)) **of the LORD his God because of the wars which surrounded him** - God clearly stated this prohibition to David. "It is evident that David had not only been busily occupied for a long time with the plan for building a temple, but that he had already commenced negotiations with Hiram on the matter; and with this 1 Chronicles 22:4 agrees." (Keil)

1 Chronicles 22:8 "But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to My name, **BECAUSE** you have shed so much blood on the earth before Me.

1 Chronicles 28:3 "But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name **BECAUSE** you are a man of war and have shed blood.'

[Maclaren](#) - 1 Kings 5:3-1 Kings 5:5 set forth very forcibly the motives which impelled the young king to the work, and may suggest to us the motives which should urge us to diligence in building a better temple than he reared. He begins by reference to his father's foiled wish, and to the reason why David could not build the house. Not only was it inappropriate that a warlike king should build it, but it was impossible that, whilst his thoughts were occupied and his resources taxed by war, he should devote himself to such a work.

[Keil](#) - "**To the Name of Jehovah:**" this expression is based upon Deuteronomy 12:5 and Deuteronomy 12:11 : "the place which the Lord shall choose to put His name there, or that His name may dwell there." The name of Jehovah is the manifestation of the divine nature in **a visible sign as a real pledge of His presence** (see at 1 Kings 12:5),

[NET NOTE](#) - The word "**name**" sometimes refers to one's reputation or honor. The "name" of the LORD sometimes designates the LORD himself, being indistinguishable from the proper name.

[Until](#) (time phrase) **the LORD put them** (David's enemies) **under the soles of his feet** - **Under the soles of his feet** was a symbolic act emphasizing conquest and complete subjugation of one's enemies (see Josh 10:24+, cf Ps 110:1). Note this passage gives us the repeated pattern in Scripture of God's sovereignty (LORD put...) and man's responsibility (David fought). This also reminds us of the same dynamic in Solomon's words in Ps 127:1+.

THOUGHT - Do you understand this crucial dynamic of **God's sovereignty** and **man's responsibility** in your Christian life? We are continually in a spiritual war against our enemies, the [world](#), the [flesh](#) and the [devil](#). 2Cor 10:3-5+ reminds us "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful (GOD'S SOVEREIGN PROVISION) for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." The point is that as followers of Christ we are called to continually wage war against our spiritual enemies, doing so in continual dependence on God's Spirit and Word (and prayer), His sovereign provisions which (alone) can assure victory over our strong adversaries. I like to call this the "[Paradoxical Principle of 100% Dependent and 100% Responsible](#)".

- my God has given me rest: 1Ki 4:24 1Ch 22:9 Ps 72:7 Isa 9:7 Ac 9:31

Related Passages:

2 Samuel 7:1+ Now it came about when the king lived in his house, and **the LORD had given him rest on every side from all his enemies**, (DAVID HAD REST BUT IT WAS NOT PERMANENT BUT WAS INTERRUPTED BY WARS)

1 Kings 4:24+ For he had dominion over everything west of the River, from Tiphshah even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had peace on all sides around about him.

Exodus 33:14+ And He said, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest." (JESUS IS OUR ULTIMATE REST!!!)

Deuteronomy 25:19+ "Therefore it shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget.

Joshua 1:13+ "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God gives you rest and will give you this land.'

Deuteronomy 12:12-14+ (DESTROY THE HIGH PLACES AND WORSHIP WHERE GOD CHOOSES) And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, since he has no portion or inheritance with you. 13 "Be careful that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every cultic place you see, 14 but **in the place which the LORD chooses** in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you.

JEHOVAH'S GIFT OF NATIONAL REST

But now - Term of contrast and time phrase. What is the contrast?

The LORD (**Jehovah**; Lxx - **kurios**) **my God** (**Elohim**) **has given me rest** (**nuach/nuah**; Lxx - **anapauo**) **on every side**; Note Solomon (1) recognizes rest as a gift from Jehovah (we call that GRACE - cf Jas 1:17+), (2) calls Him **my God**, (4 other times - 1Ki 3:7, 1Ki 5:5, 1Ki 8:28, cf 3 times in 2Ch 2:4, 6:19, 40) even as his father David had done ("his God" in 1Ki 5:3, cf Ps 18:1-2+ where David uses first person singular possessive pronoun "my" 8 times!), (3) **every side** means all adjacent countries. Clearly, God's gift of rest from war or even worry about war was so that His Temple could be completed without hindrance or distractions. Solomon had rest on every side of Israel because "he had dominion over everything west of the River, from Tiphshah even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had peace on all sides around about him." (1Ki 4:24+) This fulfilled God's promise to his people in Ex 33:14+ and Dt. 12:10+.

THOUGHT- Notice that God's gift of REST does not condone laziness, but in fact calls for Solomon (and us) to commence with the work He has prepared and called Him (and us - Eph 2:10+, Php 2:12+) to accomplish! And how do we work out our salvation now? By depending on our fleshly, often legalistic efforts? NO!!! But by daily being filled with/controlled by God's Spirit (Eph 5:18+) and relying on His Spirit and Word (See Php 2:13NLT+, Col 3:16+)

Our God (Can you say "my God?") has given us **REST** in Christ - "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you REST. 29 **Take** (**arist imperative** see **our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey**) My yoke (IMPLIES THERE IS WORK TO DO) upon you and **learn** (**manthano** [cognate verb = **matheteuo** = make disciples/learners] **arist imperative** see **our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey**) from Me (INDICATES GROWTH AS A DISCIPLE), for (TERM OF EXPLANATION) I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST (**anapausis**) FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 "For (TERM OF EXPLANATION) My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Mt 11:28-30+)

Maclaren on **HIS GOD** (David)...**MY GOD** - The son had inherited the divine protection and the father's sense of personal relation to Jehovah. That is a better legacy than a throne. Well had it been for Solomon if he had held by the faith of his first days of royalty! Such a sense of a personal bond of love protecting on the one hand, and love trusting and obeying on the other, is the spring of all

true service of God, whether it is busied in temple-building or in anything else.

There is neither adversary ([satan](#); Lxx - epiboulos = plotting against) **nor misfortune** - In context, **rest** is described as no **adversary** or **misfortune**. **Misfortune** is actually 2 Hebrew words (**pega** = something that takes place + **ra'ra'ah** = bad, evil) so literally means "no evil occurrence" or "no evil happening." [Satan](#) was later personalized (cf. 1 Ch 21:1; Job 1:6). Solomon started well with no adversary but ended in national disaster beginning when "the LORD raised up an **adversary** to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite....another **adversary** to him, Rezon" (1Ki 11:14, 23, 25+).

We are often more ready to recognise God's hand in sorrows than in joys...

The effect of blessings should be thankfulness,

and the proof of thankfulness is service

[Maclaren](#) - We note also the grateful recognition of benefits received, and the tracing of peace and outward prosperity to God's care. There was not a cloud in the sky. The horizon was clear all round, and it was 'the Lord my God,' who had made this ease for Solomon. We are often more ready to recognise God's hand in sorrows than in joys. When He smites, we try to say 'It is the Lord!' Do we try to say it when all things are smooth and bright? The effect of blessings should be thankfulness, and the proof of thankfulness is service. So Solomon did not take prosperity as an inducement to selfish luxurious repose, but heard in it God's call to a great task. **If all the rich men and all the leisurely women who call themselves Christians would do likewise, there would be plenty of workers and of resources for Christ's service, which now sorely lacks both.** How many of such 'lay up treasure for themselves, and are not rich toward God!' (Lk 12:21+) How many fritter away their leisure in vanities, having time for any amusement or folly, but none for Christian service! (**WOE!!!**) The man whom Jesus called '**Thou fool!**' not the wise king (SOLOMON), is the pattern for a sad number of professing Christians. 'Thou hast much goods laid up for many years.' What then? 'I purpose to build an house for the name of the Lord?' By no means. 'I will build greater barns, and that will give me something to do, and then I will take mine ease.' (Lk 12:17-20+)

Rest (lay, leave, place/put, set/settle, deposit)([05117](#)) [nuach/nuah](#) means to rest or pause and as noted from the many ways it is translated (see list of words below), nuach has many uses in the OT. **Nuach** essentially conveys a basic sense of absence of movement and of being settled in a particular place with overtones of finality. The first use in Ge 2:15 describes how God "**put**" Adam in the Garden. The next use describes a physical setting down of something (Ge 8:4, cp 2Sa 21:10, Ex 10:14, Josh 3:13).

Adversary ([07854](#)) [satan](#) means adversary, opponent, accuser. Most uses refer to [Satan](#) the adversary of God and thus related to relate to "the cosmic struggle in the unseen world between God and the opposing forces of darkness." In 1 Chronicles 21:1 "Then [Satan](#) (satan) stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel." In the narrative portions of the OT, sātān generally refers to a person's adversary in military and political realms (1Sa 29:4; 1 Ki. 5:4; 11:14, 23, 25). For example, 1 Ki. 11:14 says, "The Lord stirred an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom." In Psalms, sātān takes on the legal sense of verbal accusation by adversaries (Ps. 109:6). Even the angel of the Lord was described as a sātān when he opposed Balaam (Num. 22:22, 32). Throughout history, Satan has been mankind's most noted opponent, called "that old serpent" (Rev. 12:9; cf. Gen. 3:1), in reference to Eve's deception in the Garden. Some of the evil one's other biblical identifications include "son of the morning" (Isa. 14:12), "covering cherub" (Ezek. 28:16), "Satan" (Zech. 3:1; Rom. 16:20), "prince of this world" (John 12:31), "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2).

SATAN - 23V - accuser(1), adversary(8), Satan(18). Num. 22:22; Num. 22:32; 1 Sam. 29:4; 2 Sam. 19:22; 1 Ki. 5:4; 1 Ki. 11:14; 1 Ki. 11:23; 1 Ki. 11:25; 1 Chr. 21:1; Job 1:6; Job 1:7; Job 1:8; Job 1:9; Job 1:12; Job 2:1; Job 2:2; Job 2:3; Job 2:4; Job 2:6; Job 2:7; Ps. 109:6; Zech. 3:1; Zech. 3:2

J Vernon McGee - Friend, only God can give peace, whether it is world peace or peace in the human heart. God alone can give the rest today that the human heart needs. That is why our Lord, when they rejected Him as king, could send out His personal, private, individual invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden" -- that is, burdened with sin -- "and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Only Christ can give that kind of rest. Now God had given Solomon rest from warfare. There was peace on every side. (See [Thru the Bible Vol. 13: History of Israel 1 and 2 Kings](#))

F B Meyer - 1 Kings 5:4 Now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side.

God is the Rest-Giver. When He surrounds us on every side with His protecting care, so that our life resembles one of the cities of the Netherlands in the great war— inaccessible to the foe because surrounded by the waters of the sea, admitted through the sluice — then neither adversary nor evil occurrent can break in, and we are kept in perfect peace, our minds being stayed on God.

Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can enter, never traitor stand.

Have you experienced the rest which comes by putting God round about you, on every side—like the light which burns brightly on a windy night because surrounded by its four panes of clear glass? Ah! what a contrast between the third (1 Kings 5:3) and fourth verse: Wars on every side; Rest on every side. And yet the two are compatible, because the wars expend themselves on God, as the waves on the shingle; and there are far reaches of rest within, like orchards and meadows and pasture-lands beyond the reach of the devastating water.

Out of such rest should come the best work. We are not surprised to find Solomon announcing his purpose to build a house unto the name of the Lord. Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus, anointed Him. Out of quiet hearts arise the greatest resolves; just as from the seclusion of country hamlets have come the greatest warriors, statesmen, and patriots. Men think, foolishly, that the active, ever-moving souls are the strongest. It is not so, however. They expend themselves before the day of trial comes. Give me those who have the power to restrain themselves and wait; these are they that can act with the greatest momentum in the hour of crisis.

1 Kings 5:5 "Behold, I intend to build a house for the Name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spoke to David my father, saying, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he will build the house for My name.'

- **behold:** 2Ch 2:1-4,5-8
- **as the Lord:** 2Sa 7:12,13 1Ch 17:12 22:10 28:6,10 Zec 6:12,13

Related Passages: Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings

2 Chronicles 2:1-6+ Now Solomon decided to build a house for the name of the LORD and a royal palace for himself. (NOTE ORDER - DIFFERENT THAN 1Ki 3:1+) 2 So Solomon assigned 70,000 men to carry loads and 80,000 men to quarry stone in the mountains and 3,600 to supervise them. 3 Then Solomon sent word to Hiram the king of Tyre, saying, "As you dealt with David my father and sent him cedars to build him a house to dwell in, so do for me. 4 **"Behold (hinneh; Lxx - idou), I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, (a) dedicating it to Him, (b) to burn fragrant incense before Him and (c) to set out the showbread continually, and (d) to offer burnt offerings morning and evening, on sabbaths and on new moons and on the appointed feasts of the LORD our God, this being required forever in Israel. 5 "The house which I am about to build will be great, for greater is our God than all the gods. 6 "But who is able to build a house for Him, for the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain Him? So who am I (HUMILITY), that I should build a house for Him, except to burn incense before Him?**

Exodus 20:24+ 'You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; **in every place where I cause My Name to be remembered,** I will come to you and bless you.

Deuteronomy 12:5+ "But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the LORD your God will choose from all your tribes, **to establish His Name there for His dwelling,** and there you shall come (REFERRING TO TABERNACLE AND THEN THE TEMPLE).

2 Samuel 7:12-13+ (**FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE TO DAVID - DAVIDIC COVENANT**) "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 **"He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

SOLOMON'S INTENTION TO BUILD THE TEMPLE

Behold (hinneh; Lxx - idou), I intend to build a house for the Name (shem; Lxx - onoma) of the LORD (Jehovah; Lxx - kurios) my God - The **Name** speaks of the fame as well as the attributes of Jehovah. The **name of the LORD** signifies His reputation, character, and authority. To build a house "for His name" means constructing a temple that honors and brings glory to Him. In a sense, the temple was a physical representation of God's sovereignty. Of course God is omnipresent and cannot be confined to a physical space (1Ki 8:27+, 2Ch 2:6+, 2Ch 6:18+, Acts 7:48, 49+), the temple symbolized His unique presence among His covenant people. Two other aspects of "for the Name" include (1) a place where His great Name could be praised by the Israelites and (2) a place where pagan nations would see the glory of Jehovah which would serve an evangelistic function.

THOUGHT - Believers are His **house** (temple) today (1Co 6:19-20+, cf 1Co 3:16-17+, Eph 2:21+). What is

your highest objective or goal in your short time on earth? Do you seek to build a house for the Name of the LORD, that the lost might be drawn to know His Name? Or do you seek to make a name for ourselves in secular arenas (power, money, sex) or even in Christian work? Paul warns us "Therefore let him who thinks he stands **take heed** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) that he does not fall.." (1Cor 10:12+)

Why do you do what you do in Christian work?

Paul adds "Whatever you do, **do your work** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ Whom you serve." (Col 3:23-24+) And finally 1Co 10:31+ says "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

POSB has another **THOUGHT** - Solomon's commitment to build the temple is a strong lesson for us—a lesson on being surrendered to the call of God. No greater call can be given a person than the call of God, for God is the great Creator and Sovereign Ruler of the universe. Therefore, when God calls any of us to do anything, we must respond immediately...There is no excuse for delay, hesitation, reservation, or refusal. When God calls us to any task, a resounding "Yes!" must be the response of our hearts. We must surrender, yield to God's call—no matter what the call is. (The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 Kings)

As the LORD spoke to David my father, saying, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he will build the house for My Name ([shem](#); Lxx - [onoma](#)) - Jehovah's promise to David was not only a son on the throne (fulfilling the [Davidic Covenant](#)) but a son that would build the Temple.

Philip Ryken - Notice Solomon's motivation. He did not build this temple for political reasons, hoping to unify the twelve tribes of his kingdom. He did not build it for financial reasons, thinking that a project of this magnitude would strengthen Israel's economy. He did not build it for personal reasons, desiring to build something that people would remember, bringing glory to his own name. No, Solomon built this temple for the best of all reasons: he did it for the name of the Lord his God. ([King Solomon: The Temptations of Money, Sex, and Power](#))

Maclaren - We note, too, that Solomon was impelled to his great work by the knowledge that God had appointed him to do it. The divine word concerning himself, spoken to his father, sounded in his ears, and gave him no rest till he had set about obeying it {1 Kings 5:5}. The motives of the great temple-builders of old, as they themselves expound them in hieroglyphics and cuneiform, were largely ostentation and the wish to outdo predecessors; but Solomon was moved by thankfulness and by obedience to his father's will, and still more, to God's destination of him. If we would look at our positions and blessings as he looked at his in the fair dawning of his reign, we should find abundant indications of God's will regarding our work. Solomon uses a remarkable expression as to the purpose of the Temple. It is to be '**an house for the Name of the Lord.**' That is not the same as '**for the Lord.**' Pagan temples might be intended by their builders for the actual residence of the god, but Solomon knew that the heaven of heavens could not contain Him, much less this house which he was about to build. We are fairly entitled, then, to lay stress on that phrase, '**the Name.**' It means the whole self-revelation of God, or, rather, the character of God as made known by that self-revelation. The Temple was, then, to be the place in which the God Who fills earth and heaven was to manifest Himself, and where His servants were to behold and reverence Him as manifested. **The Shechinah** was the symbol, and in one aspect was a part, of that self-revelation. However, in common speech the Temple was spoken of as the **house of Jehovah**. The same thought which is expressed in Solomon's fuller phrase underlay the expression, '-He dwelt 'not in temples made with hands' (Acts 7:48+, Acts 17:24+) but His Name was set there, and the structure was reared, not so much for Him as that worshippers might there meet Him.

A House for the Name of the Lord

Behold, I rise to fulfill the decree,
To build a house for God's majesty.
The words once spoken to David of old,
Now unfold as promises foretold.

To my father, the Lord gave a vow,
"Your son will build what I allow.
A house for My Name, a dwelling divine,
A temple of glory, eternal, and fine."

Not walls of stone nor pillars of might,
But a beacon of faith in the world's sight.
A place where prayers and praises ascend,

Where heaven and earth together blend.

In wisdom and strength, the task begins,
For the God of Israel, who forgives sins.
His Name Alone shall dwell in this place,
A testament to His mercy and grace.

Oh, Lord, let this house reflect Your light,
Shining through shadows, dispelling night.
May all who enter, with hearts contrite,
Find peace in Your presence, holy and right.

The throne is Yours, the plan is clear,
Through Solomon's hand, Your glory draws near.
As the cedar and gold take their form,
Your covenant stands through every storm.

Forever this house shall declare Your fame,
A home for the One with the holiest Name.
For generations to come, its story will be,
The temple of God, for eternity.

Behold ([02009](#)) **hinneh** is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) **Hinneh** generally directs our mind to the text, imploring the reader to give it special attention. In short, the Spirit is trying to arrest our attention! And so **hinneh** is used as an exclamation of vivid immediacy (e.g., read [Ge 6:13](#))! **Hinneh** is a marker used to enliven a narrative, to express a change a scene, to emphasize an idea, to call attention to a detail or an important fact or action that follows (Isa 65:17, Ge 17:20, 41:17). The first use of **hinneh** in Ge 1:29 and second in Ge 1:31 - "And God saw all that He had made, and **behold**, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day." **Hinneh** is often used in the idiom "**Here I am**" in Ge 22:1, 7,11 Ge 27:1,18, Ge 31:11, Ge 46:2 Ex 3:4 1Sa 3:4, 3:16, 12:3, 2Sa 1:7, Isa 52:6, Isa 58:9. **Hinneh** is used most often to point out people but also to point out things (Ge 31:41, 17:4). God uses **hinneh** to grab man's attention before He brings destruction (Ge 6:13, 17). God uses **hinneh** when He establishes covenants (Ge 9:9, 15:12, 17 [when Jehovah cut the Abrahamic covenant], Ge 17:4, cp Ge 28:13, 15), when He provided a sacrificial substitute for Isaac (foreshadowing His giving us His only Son!) (Ge 22:13). **Hinneh** marks the "chance (The Providence of God)" arrival of Boaz at the field where Ruth was gleaning (Ru 2:4-[read about this "chance romance" - Indeed, "Behold!"](#)). **Hinneh** is used to announce the Lord's sending of a child as a sign and a prophecy of [Immanuel- Emmanuel](#), the Messiah (Isa. 7:14+). In fact **W E Vine** says that it is notable that when **behold** (**hinneh**) is used in Isaiah, it always introduces something relating to future circumstances.

Spurgeon reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

Hinneh is translated in the Septuagint with the interjection **idou** (strictly speaking a command in the second person [aorist imperative, middle voice](#)) a demonstrative particle (used 1377 times in the Septuagint and NT) which is found especially in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke "and giving a peculiar vivacity to the style by bidding the reader or hearer to attend to what is said: "Behold! See! Lo!" (Thayer) The command is calling for urgent attention. Do this now! Don't delay! It could be loosely paraphrased "Pay attention!" or "Listen up!" to arouse attention and introduce a new and extraordinary fact of considerable importance.

QUESTION - [What is the Davidic covenant?](#)

ANSWER - The Davidic Covenant refers to God's promises to David through Nathan the prophet and is found in 2 Samuel 7 and later summarized in 1 Chronicles 17:11–14 and 2 Chronicles 6:16. This is an unconditional covenant made between God and David through which God promises David and Israel that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever. The Davidic Covenant is unconditional because God does not place any conditions of obedience upon its fulfillment. The surety of the promises made rests solely on God's faithfulness and does not depend at all on David or Israel's obedience.

The Davidic Covenant centers on several key promises that are made to David. First, God reaffirms the promise of the land that He made in the first two covenants with Israel (the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants). This promise is seen in 2 Samuel 7:10, "I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore." God then promises that David's son will succeed him as king of Israel and that this son (Solomon) would build the temple. This promise is seen in 2 Samuel 7:12-13, "I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name."

But then the promise continues and expands: "I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (verse 13), and "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever" (verse 16). What began as a promise that David's son Solomon would be blessed and build the temple turns into something different—the promise of an everlasting kingdom. Another Son of David would rule forever and build a lasting House. This is a reference to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, called the Son of David in Matthew 21:9.

The promise that David's "house," "kingdom," and "throne" will be established forever is significant because it shows that the Messiah will come from the lineage of David and that He will establish a kingdom from which He will reign. The covenant is summarized by the words "house," promising a dynasty in the lineage of David; "kingdom," referring to a people who are governed by a king; "throne," emphasizing the authority of the king's rule; and "forever," emphasizing the eternal and unconditional nature of this promise to David and Israel.

Other references to the Davidic Covenant are found in Jeremiah 23:5; 30:9; Isaiah 9:7; 11:1; Luke 1:32, 69; Acts 13:34; and Revelation 3:7. GotQuestions.org

1 Kings 5:6 "Now therefore, command that they cut for me cedars from Lebanon, and my servants will be with your servants; and I will give you wages for your servants according to all that you say, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians."

- **cut for me cedars from Lebanon:** 1Ki 6:9,10,16,20 2Ch 2:8,10 Ps 29:5
- **I will give you wages for your servants:** Ro 12:17 Php 4:8
- **there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber** 1Co 12:14-21 Eph 4:7
- **Sidonians:** Ge 10:15 Ezr 3:7

Related Passages: Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings

2 Samuel 5:11 Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees and carpenters and stonemasons; and they built a house for David.

1 Chronicles 22:4 and timbers of cedar logs beyond number, for the Sidonians and Tyrians brought large quantities of cedar timber to David.

2 Chronicles 2:7-9+ **"Now send me a skilled man (As described in 1Ki 7:13-14) to work in gold, silver, brass and iron, and in purple, crimson and violet fabrics, and who knows how to make engravings, to work with the skilled men whom I have in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided. 8 "Send me also cedar, cypress and al gum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants know how to cut timber of Lebanon; and indeed my servants will work with your servants, to prepare timber in abundance for me, for the house which I am about to build will be great and wonderful.**

KING SOLOMON ISSUES A COMMAND TO HIRAM

Now therefore, command that they cut for me cedars from Lebanon - The girth (circumference of the trunk) of a fully mature cedar tree can range from 12 to 40 feet. The immense girth of older cedar trees made them highly valued in antiquity for building ships, temples, and palaces. Their strength and size contributed to their significance. These cedar tree facts help understand the beauty of the Psalmist's words that "The righteous man will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon." (Ps 92:12+)

Keil - It is evident from this request, that that portion of **Lebanon** on which the cedars suitable for building wood grew, belonged to the kingdom of Hiram. The cedar forest, which has been celebrated from very ancient times, was situated at least two days' journey to the north of Beirut, near the northernmost and loftiest summits of the range, by the village of Bjerreh, to the north of the road

which leads to Baalbek and not far to the east of the convent of Canobin, the seat of the patriarch of the Maronites, although Seetzen, the American missionaries, and Professor Ehrenberg found cedars and cedar groves in other places on northern Lebanon (see Rob. Pal. iii. 440,441, and Bibl. Res. pp. 588ff.). The northern frontier of Canaan did not reach as far as Bjerreh (see at Nu 34:8-9).

And my servants (['ebed](#); Lxx - [doulos](#)) **will be with your servants** (['ebed](#); Lxx - [doulos](#)); **and I will give you wages for your servants** (['ebed](#); Lxx - [doulos](#)) **according to all that you say, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians** ([Sidon](#) just north of Tyre on coast) - Equitable pay and willingness to recognize the expertise of the Sidonians are reflections of Solomon's wisdom.

Keil - "**My servants shall be with thy servants,**" i.e., shall help them in the felling of the wood. "And the wages of thy servants will I give to thee altogether as thou sayest." "**For thou knowest that no one among us is skilful in felling trees like the Sidonians**" This refers to the knowledge of the most suitable trees, of the right time for felling, and of the proper treatment of the wood. The expression **Sidonians** stands for Phoenicians generally, since Sidon was formerly more powerful than Tyre, and that portion of Lebanon which produced the cedars belonged to the district of Sidon. The inhabitants of Sidon were celebrated from time immemorial as skilful builders, and well versed in mechanical arts (compare Rob. Pal. iii. 421ff., and Movers, Phoenizier, ii. 1, pp. 86ff.).

Russell Dilday - The **Sidonians** were noted as timber craftsmen in the ancient world, a fact substantiated on the famous [Palmero Stone](#). Its inscription from 2200 B.C. tells us about timber-carrying ships that sailed from Byblos to Egypt about four hundred years previously. The skill of the **Sidonians** was expressed in their ability to pick the most suitable trees, know the right time to cut them, fell them with care, and then properly treat the logs." (See [The Preacher's Commentary - 1 and 2 Kings - Page 44](#))

Cedar Timber: The wood of the cedar has always been highly prized--much more so than the sycamore (1 Ki 10:27; Isa 9:10). David had a house of cedar built for him by Hiram, king of Tyre (2 Sam 5:11), and he prepared "cedar-trees without number" for the temple which his son was to build (1 Ch 22:4). Cedar timber was very much used in the construction of Solomon's temple and palace, the trees being cut in the Lebanon by Sidonians by orders of the king of Tyre--"Hiram gave Solomon timber of cedar and timber of fir according to all his desire" (1 Ki 5:6-10). One of Solomon's most important buildings was known as "the house of the forest of Lebanon" (1 Ki 7:2; 10:17; 2 Ch 9:16), on account of the source of its materials. While cedar was well adapted for beams (1 Ki 6:9; Song 1:17), boards (Song 8:9), pillars (1 Ki 7:2) and ceilings (Jer 22:14), it was suited as well for carved work, such as idols (Isa 44:14,15). It was also used for ships' masts (Ezek 27:5).

1 Kings 5:7 When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, "Blessed be the LORD today, who has given to David a wise son over this great people."

- **Blessed:** 1Ki 10:9 2Ch 2:11,12 9:7,8 Ps 122:6,7 137:6
- **who has:** 1Ki 1:48 Ge 33:5 Isa 8:18 9:6
- **a wise son:** 1Ki 3:9 2Ch 2:11 Pr 10:1 13:1 15:20 23:24

Related Passages: Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings

2 Chronicles 2:12+ Then Hiram continued, "Blessed be the LORD, **the God of Israel, Who has made heaven and earth**, (Ps 33:26, 102:25) **Who has given King David a wise son, endowed with** (literally knowing) **discretion and understanding, who will build a house for the LORD and a royal palace for himself.** (Comment - This is an amazing statement by this apparent pagan! Clearly he did not believe in the [LIE OF EVOLUTION!](#) He knows more about creation than the most brilliant evolutionists of our day! Was Hiram a believer in Yahweh? This may be one of those surprises we will see in heaven! Twice in this verse Hiram calls Him **LORD** [Jehovah]!)

HIRAM BLESSES JEHOVAH

When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, "Blessed be the LORD([Jehovah](#); Lxx - [kurios](#)) today, Who has given to David a wise son over this great people - King Hiram knows God's great Name "Jehovah" and also acknowledges that it was Jehovah Who (1) gave Solomon wisdom and (2) gave Solomon the throne of David. Hiram also acknowledge the Chosen People as a **great people**, presumably because they have a great God!

Stories as that of Hiram should serve to call us to the sense of opportunity and responsibility of revealing God to those with whom we are brought into contact in every walk of life.

-- G Campbell Morgan

Thomas Constable: Hiram's reply (found in more detail in 2Ch 2:11-16) shows that in Solomon's day, Israel was drawing Gentile nations to Yahweh. This was part of God's purpose for Israel and was something that the ideal Son of David would accomplish (cf. Ex 19:5-6; Hag. 2:7; Zech. 8:22-23).

Keil - Hiram rejoiced exceedingly at this proposal on the part of Solomon, and praised Jehovah for having given David so wise a son as his successor (1 Kings 5:7). It must have been a matter of great importance to the king of Tyre to remain on good terms with Israel, because the land of Israel was a granary for the Phoenicians, and friendship with such a neighbour would necessarily tend greatly to promote the interests of the Phoenician commerce. The **praise of Jehovah** on the part of Hiram does not presuppose a full recognition of Jehovah as the only true God, but simply that Hiram regarded the God of Israel as being as real a God as his own deities. Hiram expresses a fuller acknowledgment of Jehovah in 2 Chronicles 2:12+, where he calls **Jehovah the Creator of heaven and earth**; which may be explained, however, from Hiram's entering into the religious notions of the Israelites, and does not necessarily involve his own personal belief in the true deity of Jehovah (**ED: LET'S WITHHOLD FINAL JUDGMENT UNTIL HEAVEN!**)

G Campbell Morgan - Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.—1 Kings 5.7.

These words of the King of Tyre constitute one of the illustrations constantly, if incidentally, occurring in these Hebrew records of the fact that **men outside the actual covenant people had some very definite knowledge of God. This man used the special name or title of God, which was that of the Hebrews, namely, JEHOVAH.** Moreover, he recognized the coming of Solomon to the throne, as the appointment and gift of God. In this case almost certainly this knowledge was directly due to the influence of the people of God (**ESPECIALLY HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH DAVID**). David had obtained timber for the building of his own house from Hiram King of Tyre, and a friendship had existed between them. Whether this was the same man, or his son—for forty years had elapsed between these two events—he "was ever a lover of David." These stories all serve to remind us that men everywhere have capacity for receiving truth about God; and some of them at least suggest that God may make Himself known to men in other ways than those of the more self-evident lines of revelation. Perhaps the case of Melchizedek is the supreme example of this. In any case, all such stories as that of Hiram should serve to call us to the sense of opportunity and responsibility of revealing God to those with whom we are brought into contact in every walk of life. In these words of Hiram, we have not only a recognition of God, and of His government, but a definite act of worship in an ascription of praise to JEHOVAH.

1 Kings 5:8 So Hiram sent word to Solomon, saying, "I have heard the message which you have sent me; I will do what you desire concerning the cedar and cypress timber.

- **timber:** 1Ki 6:15,34 2Sa 6:5 2Ch 3:5

Related Passages: **Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings**

2 Chronicles 2:11, 13-14+ Then Hiram, king of Tyre, **answered in a letter sent to Solomon: "Because the LORD loves His people, He has made you king over them."** 13 **"Now I am sending Hiram-abi, a skilled man, endowed with understanding, 14 the son of a Danite woman and a Tyrian father, who knows how to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone and wood, and in purple, violet, linen and crimson fabrics, and who knows how to make all kinds of engravings and to execute any design which may be assigned to him, to work with your skilled men and with those of my lord David your father.**

SOLOMON'S FAVORABLE RESPONSE

So Hiram sent word to Solomon, saying, "I have heard the message which you have sent me; I will do what you desire concerning the cedar and cypress timber - Hiram responds favorably to Solomon's request by sending him a letter (2Ch 2:11+) From 2Ch 2:13-14+ we learn King Hiram is sending an expert artisan, **HURAM-ABI**, aka **Hiram**, son of a Jewish widow from tribe of Naphtali (1Ki 7:13-14ff+)

1 Kings 5:9 "My servants will bring them down from Lebanon to the sea; and I will make them into rafts to go by sea to the place where you direct me, and I will have them broken up there, and you shall carry them away. Then you shall accomplish my desire by giving food to my household."

- **Lebanon** (KJV): De 3:25
- **and I will** (KJV): 2Ch 2:16
- **giving food**: 2Ch 2:15 Eze 3:7 Eze 27:17 Ac 12:20

Related Passage: **Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings**

2 Chronicles 2:15-16+ "Now then, let my lord send to his servants wheat and barley, oil and wine, of which he has spoken. "We will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon and bring it to you on rafts **by sea to Joppa**, so that you may carry it up to Jerusalem."

Rafts from Tyre to Joppa by sea
From Joppa to Jerusalem by land

My servants will bring them down from Lebanon to the sea; and I will make them into rafts to go by sea(bind them into rafts and have them floated) **to the place where you direct me** ([Joppa, Jaffa](#), the nearest harbor to Jerusalem on Mediterranean Sea), **and I will have them broken up** (untie the bundles of logs) **there, and you shall carry them away** - This represents the contents of Hiram's letter to Solomon. Hiram would transport the timber to Joppa and it was Israel's responsibility to take them to Jerusalem.

Then you shall accomplish my desire by giving food to my household - NET has "In exchange you will supply the food I need for my royal court." (1Ki 5:9NET) So here the payment was specifically to provide food for Hiram's palace. Tyre did not have extensive farming like Israel and relied on trade to meet their needs.

1 Kings 5:10 So Hiram gave Solomon as much as he desired of the cedar and cypress timber.

- 1 Kings 4:33, 1 Kings 6:9-10, 2 Chronicles 2:8, Isaiah 60:13

HIRAM'S GENEROSITY TO SOLOMON

So Hiram gave Solomon as much as he desired of the cedar and cypress timber(the wood of evergreens) - **Ryken** comments that "How appropriate, then, for a Gentile king to give cedar trees for the temple. This is a fulfillment of the biblical promise that kings would bear gifts to the temple of God in Jerusalem (Ps. 68:29)." ([King Solomon: The Temptations of Money, Sex, and Power](#))

1 Kings 5:11 Solomon then gave Hiram 20,000 kors of wheat as food for his household, and twenty kors of beaten oil; thus Solomon would give Hiram year by year.

NET 1 Kings 5:11 and Solomon supplied Hiram annually with 20,000 cors of wheat as provision for his royal court, as well as **20,000 baths of pure olive oil**.

CSB 1 Kings 5:11 and Solomon provided Hiram with 100,000 bushels of wheat as food for his household and **110,000 gallons of oil from crushed olives**. Solomon did this for Hiram year after year.

ESV 1 Kings 5:11 while Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food for his household, and **20,000 cors of beaten oil**. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year.

NIV 1 Kings 5:11 and Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand cors of wheat as food for his household, in addition to **twenty thousand baths, of pressed olive oil**. Solomon continued to do this for Hiram year after year.

NLT 1 Kings 5:11 In return, Solomon sent him an annual payment of 100,000 bushels of wheat for his household and **110,000 gallons of pure olive oil**.

- **Kors**, 1Ki 4:22 2Ch 2:10

Related Passages: Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings

1 Kings 4:22 (click to see my attempt to depict the size of this daily ration for Solomon) Solomon's provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour and sixty kors of meal,

2 Chronicles 2:10+ "Now **behold, I will give to your servants, the woodsmen who cut the timber, 20,000 kors of crushed wheat and 20,000 kors of barley, and 20,000 baths of wine** (~116,000 gallons - only estimates) **and 20,000 baths of oil.**" (See comment below by Keil)

Solomon then gave Hiram 20,000 kors of wheat as food for his household (1Ki 5:9), **and twenty kors of beaten oil; thus Solomon would give Hiram year by year.** Note **for his household** probably means for Hiram's court. A **KOR** was a unit of dry measure equivalent to about 6 bushels (~ 220 liters - but this number varies on the source consulted). In any event, that's a "truckload" (as they say) of wheat and barley for Tyre! **20,000 kors of wheat** equals approximately 4.4 million liters, 124,400 bushels, or 3,732 tons (these are only estimates). Note that there is no mention of **barley or wine** to Hiram's household as was mentioned for the servants in 2Ch 2:10+. Also the oil to Hiram's household was specifically **beaten oil** (See Keil's conclusion below).

Keil - the payment for the wood delivered by Solomon to Hiram, which is not mentioned in the Chronicles, is stated here in 1 Kings 5:11....**year by year,**" probably as long as the delivery of the wood or the erection of Solomon's buildings lasted. ...For the circumstance that the quantity of wheat, which Solomon supplied to Hiram for his court, was just the same as that which he gave to the Sidonian workmen, does not warrant our identifying the two accounts. The fellers of the trees also received **barley, wine, and oil** in considerable quantities; whereas the only other thing which Hiram received for his court was oil, and that not common oil, but the finest olive oil, namely 20 cors of שֶׁמֶן, i.e., **beaten oil**, the finest kind of oil, which was obtained from the olives when not quite ripe by pounding them in mortars, and which had not only a whiter colour, but also a purer flavour than the common oil obtained by pressing from the ripe olives.

NET NOTE - The Hebrew text has "twenty cors," but the ancient Greek version and the parallel text in 2 Chr 2:10 read "twenty thousand baths." **ED:** And all the modern translations ([see above](#)) use this larger number for the amount of oil.

Maclaren - How different the uncalculating lavishness of Solomon! He knows no better use for treasures than to expend them on God's service, and 'all for love, and nothing for reward.' That is the true temper for Christian work. He to whom Christ has given Himself should give himself to Christ; and he who has given himself should and will keep back nothing, nor seek for cheap ways of serving the Lord, He who gives all, be it two mites, or a fishing-boat and some torn nets, or great wealth like that which Solomon found in his father's treasuries and devoted to building the Temple, gives much; and he who gives less than he can gives little.

1 Kings 5:12 The LORD gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a covenant.

- **He promised him:** 1Ki 3:12 1Ki 4:29 2Ch 1:12 Jas 1:5
- **two of them made a covenant.:** 1Ki 15:19 Ge 21:32 Am 1:9

Related Passages:

Genesis 21:32 So they (ABIMELECH AND ABRAHAM) made a covenant at Beersheba; and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines.

1 Kings 3:12 Behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you.

1 Kings 4:29 Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore.

2 Chronicles 1:12 Wisdom and knowledge have been granted to you. And I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings who were before you has possessed nor those who will come after you."

Jeremiah 34:19-20 the officials of Judah and the officials of Jerusalem, the court officers and the priests and all the people of the land who **passed between the parts of the calf-** (THIS WAS THE SYMBOLISM OF CUTTING COVENANT SAYING IN ESSENCE MAY IT HAPPEN TO ME AS TO THESE PIECES OF FLESH IF I BREAK OUR COVENANT - IT WAS TO BE SOLEMN AND BINDING) 20 I will give them into the hand of their enemies and into the hand of those who seek their life (BECAUSE THEY BROKE THEIR COVENANT).

And their dead bodies will be food for the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth.

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST! CUTTING A COVENANT OF PEACE

The LORD ([Jehovah](#); Lxx - theos) **gave wisdom to Solomon, just as He promised him** - This passage reflects Jehovah's faithfulness to keep His promises. Solomon manifested his wisdom in his trade and diplomatic prowess.

THOUGHT - God is just as faithful to keep His promises in the New Testament. Peter writes "For by these (2Pe 1:3b) He has granted (perfect tense - given in past with their effect/efficacy enduring) to us **His precious and magnificent promises**, so that (PURPOSE OF HIS PROMISES) by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2Pe 1:4+) Do you believe this dear disciple of Jesus?

Keil - The remark that "the Lord gave Solomon wisdom" refers not merely to the treaty which Solomon made with Hiram, through which he obtained materials and skilled workmen for the erection of the house of God (Thenius), but also to the wise use which he made of the capacities of his own subjects for this work. For this verse not only brings to a close the section relating to Solomon's negotiations with Hiram, but it also forms an introduction to the following verses, in which the intimation given by Solomon in 1 Kings 5:6, concerning the labourers who were to fell wood upon Lebanon in company with Hiram's men, is more minutely defined.

And there was peace ([shalom](#); Lxx - [eirene](#)) **between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made** ([karath](#) - cut; Lxx - [diatithemi](#)) **a covenant** ([beriyth](#); Lxx - [diatheke](#)) - I would submit it was God Who gave this **peace** (even as He gave rest), which allowed Solomon to complete the project of building God's House.

Made (cut) ([03772](#)) [karath](#) literally means to cut, to cut off or to sever an object from its source or cut into parts and implies a violent action. For example, Zipporah "cut off her son's foreskin." (Ex 4:25) or the Jews "cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes." (Nu 13:2-24, cf Dt 19:5, 20:19-20, Jdg 9:48-49, 1Sa 5:4, 17:51, 24:4-5,11, 31:9, 2Sa 10:4, 2Sa 20:22) In another literal use as punishment to Israel for breaking the Mosaic covenant (cf Dt 29:25, 31:16), God says He will "cut down ([karath](#)) your incense altars" (Lev 26:30, cf Jdg 6:25-26, cf 1Sa 28:9). A sacrificial animal was not to be offered if it was "cut" ([karath](#)) (Lev 22:24). [Karath](#) means "chewed" (cutting food with teeth) in Nu 11:33.

Karath is used with [beriyth](#) meaning to "**cut a covenant**" or establish a covenant between two parties, either between God and men (Abrahamic Covenant = Ge 15:18, Mosaic Covenant = Ex 24:8, Dt 5:2-3, 9:9; see [Abrahamic versus Mosaic](#) and [Abrahamic vs Old vs New](#)) or between men (Ge 21:27, 32, 26:28, 31:44, 2Sa 3:12-13, 21, 5:3; 1Sa 18:3, 20:15-16, 22:8, 23:18 between Jonathan and David [[See discussion of their Covenant - Exchanging of Robes](#)]; cutting covenant was prohibited = Ex 23:32, Dt 7:2, Jdg 2:2, a dictum which Joshua disobeyed - Josh 9:6-7,11). In the context of cutting covenant [karath](#) is translated in the Lxx with [diatithemi](#) ([see detailed discussion](#)) which is used in the sense of making "a last will or testament" (Heb 9:16+).

Covenant ([01285](#)) [berit/berith/beriyth](#) means covenant, treaty, compact, agreement between two parties (first use in God's covenant with Noah - Ge 6:18, 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). As discussed more below [beriyth](#) describes a compact made by passing between pieces of flesh. Covenant is a solemn, binding arrangement between two parties and entails a variety of responsibilities, benefits and penalties depending on the specific covenant which is being studied. OT covenants were made between God and man (eg, God with Noah - Ge 6:18, with Abram - Ge 15:18) or between men (Abraham and Abimelech - Ge 21:27, Isaac and Abimelech - Ge 26:28, Jacob and Laban - Ge 31:44) (For summary of covenants see - [Covenant in the Bible](#)).

ISBE says that "In essence a **covenant** is an agreement, but an agreement of a solemn and binding force. The early Semitic idea of a covenant was doubtless that which prevailed among the Arabs. This was primarily blood-brotherhood, in which two men became brothers by drinking each other's blood. (**Ed**: Now that sounds serious to me!) ([See illustration in pagan culture](#)).

THOUGHT - One of the words of Scripture, which is almost going out of fashion, is the word **Covenant**!. There was a time when it was the keynote of the theology and the Christian life of strong and holy men. We know how deep in Scotland it entered into the national life and thought. It made mighty men, to whom God, and His promise and power were wonderfully real. It will be found still to bring strength and purpose to those who will take the trouble to bring all their life (**Ed**: and their marriages) under control of the inspiring assurance that they are living in **covenant** with a God who has sworn faithfully to fulfill in them every promise He has given. ([Two Covenants - Index - Andrew Murray](#))

The meaning of the Hebrew word for **covenant** is illustrated in Genesis 15, the first use of the Hebrew phrase "**cut** (Heb = karath) **covenant** (beriyth)" (often translated in English Bibles by the Hebrew idiom "**make [made] a covenant**").

So He (God) said to him (Abram), "Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. 11 And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. 12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him. And it came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. 18 On that day the LORD **made** (cut = karath) a **covenant** (beriyth) with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates (Ge 15:9-12, 17, 18+)

Comment: This passage illustrates the meaning of an agreement or compact made by passing between the halves of cut flesh. In this case using highly figurative language, Moses records that it was Jehovah alone Who passed between the halves of flesh, indicating God cut an unconditional covenant with Abram. Note that the spillage of blood was part of the cutting of this covenant.

1 Kings 5:13 Now King Solomon levied forced laborers from all Israel; and the forced laborers numbered 30,000 men.

- **levied forced laborers:** 1Ki 4:6
- **the forced laborers:** 1Ki 9:15

Related Passages:

1 Kings 4:6+ and Ahishar was over the household; and **Adoniram the son of Abda was over the men subject to forced labor.**

1 Kings 9:15 Now **this is the account of the forced labor** which King Solomon levied to build the house of the LORD, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer.

1 Kings 9:22 But **Solomon did not make slaves of the sons of Israel;** for they were men of war, his servants, his princes, his captains, his chariot commanders, and his horsemen.

1 Kings 12:4 "**Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us,** and we will serve you."

1 Kings 12:18 Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram (ADONIRAM), **who was over the forced labor, and all Israel stoned him to death.** And King Rehoboam made haste to mount his chariot to flee to Jerusalem.

SOLOMON'S DECISION FOR FORCED LABOR - WISE OR NOT?

Now King Solomon levied forced laborers ([mas](#)) from all Israel; and the forced laborers numbered 30,000 men - This is one of Solomon's decisions which may not have been that wise as alluded to in 1Ki 12:4, 18+ (See [Wiersbe's note below](#)). Regarding the identity of the 30,000 see [Paul House's note](#) concluding that "Forced labor does not necessarily entail slavery. On the other hand, foreign workers were permanently assigned to forced labor."

Warren Wiersbe gives background on the labor force (he feels they were Jewish not aliens) used to build the temple and most of this information is from the account in Kings -

David's incomplete census had revealed that there were 1,300,000 able-bodied men in the land (2Sa 24:9) and Solomon conscripted only **30,000** to labor on the temple, about 2.3 percent of the total available labor force. Ten thousand of the men spent one month each quarter in Lebanon assisting Hiram's men in their work, and then they had two months at home. These men were Jewish citizens and were **not treated like slaves** (1Ki 9:22; see Lev. 25:39-43). Solomon also took a census of the **non-Israelite aliens** in the land and drafted **150,000** of them to cut and transport stones for the temple (1Ki 5:15-18; 1Ki 9:15-23; 2Ch 2:17-18; 8:7-10). Of

this group, 70,000 carried burdens and 80,000 cut limestone blocks from the hills. In charge of this group were 3,000 overseers and 300 supervisors who were aliens, and over the entire group were 250 Jewish officers. The stone blocks had to be cut carefully so they would fit together perfectly when assembled at the temple site (1Ki 6:7), and that would demand careful planning and expert supervision. Even though the conscription involved a very small portion of the male citizens, the Jewish people resented Solomon taking 30,000 of their men to work in Lebanon four months out of the year ([see note on forced laborers below](#)). This critical attitude helped to strengthen the people's revolt against Rehoboam and to precipitate the division of the nation after Solomon's death (1Ki 12:1-21). Indeed, when it came to labor and taxes, Solomon did indeed put a heavy yoke on the people. (Compare Samuel's warning in 1Sa 8:5-22) ([OT Commentary](#))

Keil - The 30,000 Israelitish tribute-servants are "to be thought of as free Israelites, who simply performed the less severe work of felling trees in fellowship with and under the direction of the subjects of Hiram (see 1 Kings 5:6), according to the command of the king, and probably not even that without remuneration" (Thenius).

Paul House writes that "Scholars disagree about the identity of the **thirty thousand Israelite laborers** mentioned in 5:13. Part of the problem stems from 1Ki 9:20–22, which describes Solomon's forced labor, then states, "**But Solomon did not make slaves of any of the Israelites**" (1Ki 9:22). Gray, Skinner, Matheny, and others think these two references (1Ki 5:13–18 and 1Ki 9:20–22) contradict each other. (Gray, 1 and 2 Kings, 148; Skinner, I and II Kings, 102; M. P. Matheny, "1 Kings," BBC Nashville: Broadman, 1970 3:172.) Keil, Patterson and Austel, and Jones disagree. (Keil, "I and II Kings," 62–63; Patterson and Austel, "1, 2 Kings," 59; Jones, 1 and 2 Kings, 1:157–58.) Linguistic analysis may help explain the perceived contradiction, since the text uses different terminology to describe the laborers in 1Ki 5:13–18 and 1Ki 9:20–22. In the former text they are called simply "laborers" ([mas](#)) while in the latter they are called "servant [slave] laborers" ([mas abad](#)). Apparently, the Israelite workers were required only to toil four months of the year until the task was done. Forced labor does not necessarily entail slavery. On the other hand, foreign workers were permanently assigned to forced labor. (Borrow [1.2 Kings page 124](#))

Forced laborers ([04522](#)) [mas/mac or mis/mic](#) masculine noun designating forced labor or service, tribute. It refers to labor forced on someone or service demanded, usually by the state (Gen. 49:15; Deut. 20:11; 1 Kgs. 5:14; Isa. 31:8); usually overseen by a foreman or task-master (Ex. 1:11; 1 Kgs. 4:6, 12:18). A person not willing to work or a lazy person may be put to forced labor (Pr 12:24).

"MAS" refers to labor forced on someone or service demanded. The noun is used seven times to refer to the reduction of the former inhabitants of the Promised Land to **forced laborers** by the invading Israelites (Josh. 16:10; 17:13; Judg. 1:30, 33, 35; 1 Kings 9:21; 2 Chr. 8:8). All citizens were subject to the levy for **forced labor** for public works (1 Kings 9:15) as well as the Canaanite classes who were consigned to this status in perpetuity.

Gilbrant - Occurring over twenty times in the Hebrew Bible, **mas** has cognates attested in Tell el-Amarna, Akkadian, Old South Arabian and Ethiopic. It also appears in Middle Hebrew and Targumic. The noun denotes a government-enforced taxation, filled by labor or material goods. The latter usage is only attested in Esther 10:1, which records King Ahasuerus' empire-wide tax.

The noun is used seven times to refer to the reduction of the former inhabitants of the Promised Land to forced laborers by the invading Israelites (Josh. 16:10; 17:13; Judg. 1:30, 33, 35; 1 Kings 9:21; 2 Chr. 8:8). There was the equivalent of a cabinet post for the person in charge of forced labor. The same name appears under the reigns of David, Solomon, Rehoboam and Adoram (2 Sam. 20:24; 1 Ki. 4:6; 12:18; 2 Chr. 10:18). It is logically possible that the same individual filled this post for Solomon's reign and an overlapping portion of the others. There were lower officials involved with the implementation of the taskmasters (Exo. 1:11). All citizens were subject to the levy for forced labor for public works (1 Kings 9:15) as well as the Canaanite classes who were consigned to this status in perpetuity.

The permanent status of **mas** was a risk of war. In the instructions for how to pursue holy war, Yahweh instructs the population that they must offer peace and the status of **mas** to the inhabitants of certain besieged cities before destroying the city and killing the inhabitants (Deut. 20:11). The eventual fall of Assyria, the rod of Yahweh's vengeance against Israel, is assured by the promise that they will "fall with the sword, not of a mighty man... and he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited" (Isa. 31:8). The Book of Lamentations begins with the imagery of Jerusalem, a former princess, now reduced to an antithetical status of forced labor, imagery of defeat in war (1:1).

Forced labor could also have been the result of laziness, of unwillingness to work extra hours to produce a surplus. In the Blessing of Jacob, Issachar is accused of having strength but lacking interest in working hard for himself, preferring the lack of anxiety about his labors at the end of the day, willingly becoming a laborer (Gen. 49:15). Likewise, an aphorism in Prov. 12:24 declares, "The hand of the diligent shall bear rule, while the slothful will be put under tribute." ([Complete Biblical Library - Incredible Resource](#))

Strong's - 1) gang or body of forced labourers, task-workers, labour band or gang, forced service, task-work, serfdom, tributary, tribute, levy, taskmasters, discomfited 1a) labour-band, labour-gang, slave gang 1b) gang-overseers 1c) forced service, serfdom, tribute, enforced payment

MAS - 23X/22V - forced(2), forced labor(13), forced laborer(1), forced laborers(5), laborers*(2), men subject to forced labor(1), taskmasters*(1), tribute(1). Gen. 49:15; Exod. 1:11; Deut. 20:11; Jos. 16:10; Jos. 17:13; Jdg. 1:28; Jdg. 1:30; Jdg. 1:33; Jdg. 1:35; 2 Sam. 20:24; 1 Ki. 4:6; 1 Ki. 5:13; 1 Ki. 5:14; 1 Ki. 9:15; 1 Ki. 9:21; 1 Ki. 12:18; 2 Chr. 8:8; 2 Chr. 10:18; Est. 10:1; Prov. 12:24; Isa. 31:8; Lam. 1:1

1 Kings 5:14 He sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in relays; they were in Lebanon a month and two months at home. And Adoniram was over the forced laborers.

- **a month:** 1Ki 4:7-19 1Ch 27:1-15
- **Adoniram:** 1Ki 4:6

Related Passages:

1 Kings 9:20-21 As for all the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who were not of the sons of Israel, 21 their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel were unable to destroy utterly, from them **Solomon levied forced laborers** ([abad](#) = slave + [mas](#) = laborer), even to this day.

SOLOMON SENDS SHIFTS TO WORK IN LEBANON

He sent them (the 30,000) **to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in relays; they were in Lebanon a month and two months at home. And Adoniram was over the forced laborers** (see 1Ki 4:6+). One month the Israelite workers were on Lebanon doing tribute work, then they were two months at home looking after the cultivation of their own ground.

G Lloyd Carr on **forced laborers** ([mas](#)) - The subjugation of the Canaanites by Israel after the Conquest was by means of mas (e.g. Deut. 20:11; Joshua 16:10; Joshua 17:13). Under David there was an organized government department charged with keeping the mas functioning (2 Samuel 20:24). During Solomon's reign, mas was extended to include Israelites as well as foreigners and war prisoners (1 Kings 5:13-14 and the parallels in Chr; but cf. 1 Kings 9:22) in the labor force necessary to carry out Solomon's extensive building programs (1 Kings 9:15). **This unpopular measure, and Rehoboam's refusal to moderate it, was the immediate cause of the secession of the ten tribes and the establishment of the northern kingdom.** (See online [TWOT](#) page 516) ([See note below](#) for additional explanation of "forced laborers.")

1 Kings 5:15 Now Solomon had 70,000 transporters, and 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountains,

- 1Ki 9:20-22 2Ch 2:17-18 8:7-9 Ezr 2:58 Ne 7:57,60

Related Passages: **Words in this color in parallel passages in 2 Chronicles give additional details not found in 1 Kings**

2 Chronicles 2:17-18+ **Solomon numbered all the aliens who were in the land of Israel, following the census which his father David had taken; and 153,600 were found.** 18 He appointed 70,000 of them to carry loads and 80,000 to quarry stones in the mountains and 3,600 supervisors to make the people work. (NOTE: 70K + 80K + 3.6K = 153, 600).

ALIEN LABOR

Now Solomon had 70,000 transporters (lit - "carriers of loads"), **and 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountains,** These were all aliens, non-Israelites, presumably Canaanites who were still dwelling among the Israelites. Remember in Judges, the tribes failed to obey God and totally eradicate the Canaanites!

Keil - The hewing and preparing of the wood were amply provided for by 30,000 Israelites. That the 150,000 bearers of burdens and hewers of stone were not taken from the Israelites, is evident from the fact that they are distinguished from the latter, or at all events are not described as Israelites. We obtain certainty on this point from the parallel passages, 1 Kings 9:20-21; 2 Chronicles 2:16-17, and 2 Chronicles 8:1-9, according to which Solomon pressed the Canaanites who were left in the land to this bond-service.

In addition, note that although the English is identical in 1Ki 5:14 and 1Ki 9:20-21 ("forced laborers"), the Hebrew is different, for in 1Ki 5:14 there is only one Hebrew word **mas** describing the Israeli workers, but in 1Ki 9:20-21 there are two Hebrew words (**abad** = slave + **mas** = laborer) the latter apparently emphasizing the fact that the aliens (2Ch 2:17+ the Canaanites who had not been eradicated by Joshua) were treated as slaves and forced to do stone cutting and transport (1Ki 5:15). The conclusion is that the transporter and hewers in 1Ki 5:15 were "slave laborers" for Solomon, not Israeli citizens (as was the case with the 30,000 conscripted to procure the cedar and cypress timber 1Ki 5:13,14). 1 Ki 9:22 makes it clear that "Solomon **did not make slaves** (**'ebed** derived from verb **abad**) **of the sons of Israel**; for they were men of war, his servants, his princes, his captains, his chariot commanders, and his horsemen."

1 Kings 5:16 besides Solomon's 3,300 chief deputies who were over the project and who ruled over the people who were doing the work.

- **3,300 chief deputies** 1Ki 9:23 2Ch 2:2

Related Passages:

2 Chronicles 2:2 So Solomon assigned 70,000 men to carry loads and 80,000 men to quarry stone in the mountains and 3,600 to supervise them.

besides Solomon's 3,300 chief deputies who were over the project and who ruled over the people who were doing the work

- In the parallel passage of 2 Chronicles 2:2 it has 3,600 which is also the reading of the Septuagint.

1 Kings 5:17 Then the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house with cut stones.

- **great stones:** 1Ki 6:7, 7:9 1Ch 22:2 Isa 28:16 1Co 3:11-12 1Pe 2:6-7 Rev 21:14-21

Related Passages:

1 Kings 6:7 The house, while it was being built, was built of stone prepared at the quarry, and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any iron tool heard in the house while it was being built.

1 Kings 7:10 The foundation was of costly stones, even large stones, stones of ten cubits (15 ft) and stones of eight cubits (12 ft).

1 Corinthians 3:11-12+ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

1 Peter 2:6-7+ For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,"

FOUNDATION LAID WITH COSTLY STONES

Then the king commanded, and they quarried great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the house with cut stones - This recalls the words in 1Pe 2:6-7 where Jesus Christ is the precious corner stone. 1Ki 7:10 gives the size of these stones as 15 ft and 12 ft. A 15 ft. A 15 foot stone of **Limestone** would weigh about 22,275 pounds (11.14 tons). Imagine the human labor necessary to transport these heavy stones! Little wonder that 70,000 transporters were necessary for this task.

Henry Morris writes that "These huge stones were cut out of an extensive quarry deep under the city, rediscovered in the mid-nineteenth century."

1 Kings 5:18 So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the Gebalites cut them, and prepared the timbers and the stones to build the house.

- **the Gebalites** Jos 13:5 Ps 83:7 Eze 27:9

So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the Gebalites cut them, and prepared the timbers and the stones to build the house.