

# CHAPTER 2

## INTRODUCTION TO 2 CHRONICLES 2

Solomon intending to build a temple for God, and a palace for himself, sent to Hiram, king of Tyre, to furnish him with materials and workmen, (<sup><411E></sup>2 Chronicles 2:1-10), to which Hiram returned an agreeable answer, (<sup><421E></sup>2 Chronicles 2:11-16), and for this service Solomon numbered all the strangers in Israel, (<sup><427></sup>2 Chronicles 2:17,18).

**Ver. 1.** *And Solomon determined to build an house for the name of the Lord*, etc.] For the worship and service of God, and for his honour and glory, being directed, enjoined, and encouraged to it by his father David:

*and an house for his kingdom*; for a royal palace for him, and his successors, first the one, and then the other; and in this order they were built.

**Ver. 2.** *And Solomon told out threescore and ten thousand men*, etc.] Of whom, and the difference of the last number in this text from (<sup><105></sup>1 Kings 5:15,16), see the notes there.

**Ver. 3.** *And Solomon sent to Hiram king of Tyre*, etc.] The same with Hiram, (<sup><100></sup>1 Kings 5:1) and from whence it appears, that Hiram first sent a letter to Solomon to congratulate him on his accession to the throne, which is not taken notice of here:

*as thou didst deal with my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein*; (see <sup><340></sup>1 Chronicles 14:1), even so deal with me; which words are a supplement.

**Ver. 4.** *Behold, I build an house to the name of the Lord my God*, etc.] Amos about to do it, and determined upon it, (see <sup><400></sup>2 Chronicles 2:1),

*to dedicate it to him*; to set it apart for sacred service to him:

*and to burn before him sweet incense*; on the altar of incense:

*and for the continual shewbread*; the loaves of shewbread, which were continually on the shewbread table; which, and the altar of incense, both were set in the holy place in the tabernacle, and so to be in the temple:

*and for the burnt offerings morning and evening; the daily sacrifice: on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God*: at which seasons, besides the daily sacrifice, additional burnt offerings were offered, and all on the brasen altar in the court: this is an ordinance

*for ever unto Israel*: to offer the above sacrifices, even for a long time to come, until the Messiah comes; and therefore Solomon suggests, as Jarchi and Kimchi think, that a good strong house ought to be built.

**Ver. 5.** *And the house which I build is great*, etc.] Not so very large, though that, with all apartments and courts belonging to it, he intended to build, was so; but because magnificent in its structure and decorations:

*for great is our God above all gods*; and therefore ought to have a temple to exceed all others, as the temple at Jerusalem did.

**Ver. 6.** *But who is able to build him an house*, etc.] Suitable to the greatness of his majesty, especially as he dwells not in temples made with hands:

*seeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain him?* (see <sup><1027></sup>1 Kings 8:27),

*who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?* since God was an immense and infinite Being, he would have Hiram to understand that he had no thought of building an house, in which he could be circumscribed and contained, only a place in which he might be worshipped, and sacrifices offered to him.

**Ver. 7.** *Send now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron*, etc.] There being many things relating to the temple about to be built, and vessels to be put into it, which were to be made of those metals:

*and in purple, and crimson, and blue*; used in making the vails for it, hung up in different places:

*and that can skill to grave*; in wood or stone:

*with the cunning men that are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David did provide;* (see <sup><1325></sup>1 Chronicles 22:15).

**Ver. 8.** *Send me also cedar trees, fir trees, and algum trees, out of Lebanon,* etc.] Of the two first of these, and which Hiram sent, (see <sup><1150></sup>1 Kings 5:10). The algum trees are the same with the almug trees, (<sup><1101></sup>1 Kings 10:11,12) by a transposition of letters; these could not be coral, as some Jewish writers think, which grows in the sea, for these were in Lebanon; nor Brazil, as Kimchi, so called from a place of this name, which at this time was not known; though there were trees of almug afterwards brought from Ophir in India, as appears from the above quoted place, as well as from Arabia; and it seems, as Beckius <sup>f3</sup> observes, to be an Arabic word, by the article “al” prefixed to it:

*for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon;* better than his:

*and, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants;* to help and assist them in what they can, and to learn of them, (see <sup><1185></sup>1 Kings 5:6).

**Ver. 9.** *Even to prepare me timber in abundance,* etc.] Since he would want a large quantity for raftering, cieling, wainscoting, and flooring the temple:

*for the house which I am about to build shall be wonderful great;* as to its structure and ornaments.

**Ver. 10.** *Behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat,* etc.] Meaning, not what was beaten out of the husk with the flail, as some; nor bruised or half broke for pottage, as others; but ground into flour, as R. Jonah <sup>f4</sup> interprets it; or rather, perhaps, it should be rendered “food” <sup>f5</sup> that is, for his household, as in (<sup><1151></sup>1 Kings 5:11), and the hire of these servants is proposed to be given in this way, because wheat was scarce with the Tyrians, and they were obliged to have it from the Jews, (<sup><4121></sup>Acts 12:20) (<sup><3217></sup>Ezekiel 27:17),

*and twenty thousand measures of barley;* the measures of both these were the cor, of which (see <sup><1151></sup>1 Kings 5:11),

*and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil;* which measure was the tenth part of a “cor”. According to the Ethiopians, a man might consume four of these measures in the space of a month <sup>f6</sup>.

**Ver. 11.** *Then Hiram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon,* etc.] In which letter he told him he had considered the contents of his, and would grant him all that he desired, (see <sup><1108></sup>1 Kings 5:8)

*because the Lord hath loved his people; he hath made thee king over them;* which are much the same words the queen of Sheba said to Solomon, (see Gill on “<sup><1109></sup>1 Kings 10:9”).

**Ver. 12.** *Hiram said, moreover, blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth,* etc.] Hiram seems to have had some good notions of the divine Being, not only as the God of the people of Israel, in a peculiar sense, but as the Former and Maker of all things:

*who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding;* (see <sup><1100></sup>1 Kings 5:7)

*that might build an house for the Lord, and for his kingdom;* as in (<sup><1101></sup>2 Chronicles 2:1).

**Ver. 13.** *And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding,* etc.] In such things as Solomon required he should, (<sup><1107></sup>2 Chronicles 2:7)

*of Hiram my father's;* a workman of his, whom he employed, and so might be depended upon as a good artificer; though rather Hiram is the artificer's name,

*and Abi,* we render “my father”, his surname, that is, “Hiram Abi”; and this is the opinion of several learned men <sup>f7</sup>, and is very probable; for certain it is, that his name was Hiram or Hiram, (<sup><1073></sup>1 Kings 7:13), and so he is called “Hiram his father, or Hiram Abif”, (<sup><1046></sup>2 Chronicles 4:16).

**Ver. 14.** *The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan,* etc.] Here follows an account of the descent of the artificer, and of his skill in working; of what seeming disagreement there may be in this account, with that in (<sup><1074></sup>1 Kings 7:14).

**Ver. 15.** *Now therefore, the wheat, and the barley, the oil, and the wine, which my lord hath spoken of,* etc.] In his letter to him, (<sup><1120></sup>2 Chronicles 2:10) as for the phrase “my lord”, which some think is used, because Hiram was tributary to Solomon, it may only be a respectful way of speaking:

*let him send unto his servants*; Hiram accepted thereof as a proper reward for the work of his servants.

**Ver. 16.** *And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shall need*, etc.] Both cedar and fir, (<sup><1K18></sup>1 Kings 5:8,10),

*and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa*; a port in the Mediterranean sea, the same that Jonah went down to, (See Gill on “<sup><1K18></sup>1 Kings 5:9”),

*and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem*; in land carriages, about forty miles off.

**Ver. 17.** *And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel*, etc.] Which, according to Kimchi, were the remains of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites, (see <sup><4K18></sup>2 Chronicles 8:8), yet not idolaters, or they would not have been suffered by David and Solomon to have dwelt in the land, but were such as were become proselytes of the gate:

*after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them*; not at the time Israel was numbered by him, but in order to provide workmen for the building of the temple, (<sup><1K18></sup>1 Chronicles 22:2),

*and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand and six hundred*; men able to bear burdens, and hew timber.

**Ver. 18.** *And he set threescore and ten thousand of them*, etc.] Which is repeated from (<sup><4K18></sup>2 Chronicles 2:2), to show how the above number of strangers were disposed of; 70,000 of them bearers of burdens, 80,000 of them hewers of wood, and 3,600 overseers of the workmen, in all 153,600; an emblem of the Gentiles employed in building the spiritual temple, the church, (<sup><4K18></sup>Zechariah 6:15).