



Reading: 1 Kings chapter 5 (and if you like reading, 1 Chronicles chapters 22 and 28).

Key Thought: Building for God is an honour – we should give it our very best.

Context: Solomon's father, King David, had a heart for God. His greatest desire was to build The Temple in Jerusalem, a place for all to worship God and honour His Name. But, because David was necessarily a man of war (fighting for the Kingdom), God told him that he should not be the one to build the Temple. God knew that Solomon was a man of peace and would be the best person for the job. However, it didn't stop David from making plans and preparations. So that firstly, he drew up plans (1 Chronicles 28 verses 11 and 12). And then he began to prepare materials for the building and for the Temple furniture.

In 1 Chronicles 22 verses 14 and 15, David lists what he has already put in place for Solomon to use:

- Vast amounts of gold and silver
- Bronze and iron 'too great to be weighed'
- Wood (cedar) and stone (and he appointed stone masons)
- And from his own personal wealth (1 Chronicles 29 verses 2-4), David gave his vast amount of riches over and above everything else.

David's – and Solomon's desire - was to honour the Lord, and make his kingdom known to the whole world.

Content: The Preparations: Solomon sent a wise and diplomatic message to Hiram, King of Tyre (Sidonia/Lebanon). He reminded Hiram of David's desire to have a Temple built for the honour of The Lord; and he asked Hiram to send cedars so that he could begin the task (the cedars grew to about 100 feet tall and were ideal for spanning long distances – e.g. for roofing).

Note: Although the Israelites were exclusively chosen by God this was never meant to exclude others from God's blessing and service; their special relationship with God was meant to be a witness to the world.

Solomon rewarded Hiram with good wages for the workers (v6), grain, olive oil and wine (v10 and 11). After being cut, the wood was tied into rafts and floated about 100 miles south by sea to Joppa. It would then require thousands of carriers to haul the wood overland to Jerusalem. This was the beginning of a massive work for the Lord. The unemployment rate would have been very low! Solomon used conscripts (30,000, see verse 13); and a further 153,000 men to supervise, cut and carry the large slabs of stone (see verse 15); plus craftsmen for the finer details.

Challenges: Solomon caught David's vision and carried on the work that David had prepared for him. What can we do at church or amongst our friends and colleagues? Since the disruptions of the Covid pandemic there are numerous unfinished tasks, for one reason or another. Churches, and society, are crying out for a helping hand and kindness. This is one way that we can build for God and honour his name. Why not pray about what you could be doing?

Could you be one of the people that can pick up where someone else has left off?

But there is 'another side of the coin'. Although David wanted to build the Temple, God would not let him. We should all be building up God's church, but only when we have sought God and know that the time is right.

Seeking God's will for our lives and for his honour should be our priority.

Do you have a heart to honour the Lord in all that you do for Him? Solomon pushed forward with the preparations because his heart's desire was to bring honour and glory to the Lord. I trust we have that same desire.

Communicate:

Feel free to let us know if you have any questions or comments about this study. Perhaps you have a testimony or word of encouragement that might help others. Or maybe you would like prayer as you begin a new thing for God in your life. We will gladly get back to you.