

SECOND CHRONICLES

Chapter 8

Solomon's Accomplishments

At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house, 2 Solomon rebuilt the cities that Hiram had given to him, and settled the people of Israel in them. 3 And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and took it. 4 He built Tadmor in the wilderness and all the store cities that he built in Hamath. 5 He also built Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon, fortified cities with walls, gates, and bars, 6 and Baalath, and all the store cities that Solomon had and all the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. 7 All the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel, 8 from their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel had not destroyed—these Solomon drafted as forced labor, and so they are to this day. 9 But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves for his work; they were soldiers, and his officers, the commanders of his chariots, and his horsemen. 10 And these were the chief officers of King Solomon, 250, who exercised authority over the people. 11 Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the city of David to the house that he had built for her, for he said, “My wife shall not live in the house of David king of Israel, for the places to which the ark of the LORD has come are holy.” 12 Then Solomon offered up burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD that he had built before the vestibule, 13 as the duty of each day required, offering according to the commandment of Moses for the Sabbaths, the new moons, and the three annual feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths. 14 According to the ruling of David his father, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their offices of praise and ministry before the priests as the duty of each day required, and the gatekeepers in their divisions at each gate, for so David the man of God had commanded. 15 And they did not turn aside from what the king had commanded the priests and Levites concerning any matter and concerning the treasuries. 16 Thus was accomplished all the work of Solomon from the day the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was completed. 17 Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and Eloth on the shore of the sea, in the land of Edom. 18 And Hiram sent to him by the hand of his servants ships and servants familiar with the sea, and they went to Ophir together with the servants of Solomon and brought from there 450 talents of gold and brought it to King Solomon.

Chs 8–9 The building of the temple is the focal point in the account of Solomon's reign. Ch 1 is a prologue, explaining why it was possible for him to undertake the project. The rather detailed report of construction and dedication of the temple is followed by this epilogue. There is a series of more or less unrelated episodes, which make the point that under the temple builder's reign, it was possible for all Israel to worship in the dedicated sanctuary “according to the ruling of David” (8:14). (TLSB)

8:1–2 In 1 Ki 9:10–14 the cities were given to Hiram by Solomon, whereas in Chronicles the reverse is true. Perhaps as part of his effort to idealize Solomon, the Chronicler does not record the fact that Hiram found these cities unacceptable payment (1Ki 9:11–13); he mentions only the sequel to the story, the return of the cities to Solomon and their subsequent improvement. They

may also have served as a kind of collateral against the monies owed Hiram, who returned them when the debt was satisfied. The Chronicler also says nothing about Pharaoh's gift of Gezer to Solomon (1Ki 9:16). (CSB)

8:2 Emphasizes Solomon's control over all Israelite territory and the protection of its borders against possible invaders (vv 2–10). Apparently as the result of negotiations, Hiram returned to him the 20 cities ceded to the king of Tyre to finance the building program in Jerusalem (vv 1–2; cf 1Ki 9:10–13). (TLSB)

8:3–4 The Chronicler records an additional military campaign to the north, not mentioned in Kings. David had also campaigned in the north against Zobah (1Ch 18:3–9; 19:6; 2Sa 8:3–12; 10:6–8; cf. 1Ki 11:23–24). (CSB)

The general impression conveyed throughout is that Solomon was the kind of king who could build whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted. Thus the land enjoyed rest, and the house of the Lord was well protected during Solomon's watch. (PBC)

8:3 *Hamath-zobah*. On the northern frontier, Solomon had to reassert his sway over a territory that had come under David's control (1Ch 18:3–10). (TLSB)

8:4 *Tadmor in the wilderness ... Hamath*. Along the desert road through Palmyra. (TLSB)

8:5–6 Cities of Beth-horon lay on a strategic route from the plains of Philistia up to Jerusalem. (TLSB)

8:5 The two Beth Horons were situated on a strategic road from the coastal plain to the area just north of Jerusalem. (CSB)

8:7–10 Solomon's labor force. Cf 1Ki 9:20–23; 1Ch 22:2; 2Ch 2:17. (TLSB)

8:11 *holy*. Both 1Ki 9:24 and Chronicles record the transfer of Pharaoh's daughter to special quarters, but only Chronicles adds the reason: Not only the temple but also David's palace was regarded as holy, because of the presence of the ark. (CSB)

Pharaoh's daughter. The Chronicler had omitted the earlier reference to Solomon's marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh (1Ki 3:1) but acknowledges it here with his source. He presents his account with different emphases. E.g., it is not Pharaoh's daughter who "went up" as in 1Ki 9:24, but Solomon who "brought Pharaoh's daughter up," emphasizing his royal authority. (TLSB)

My wife. Or, "one of my wives." (TLSB)

ark of the LORD. Located in Zion; perhaps had even been held on David's property. Since she was a Gentile, and perhaps because she was a female (cf Lv 15:19–30), she was not to come near the ark. Such concern was also demonstrated in Herod's temple with the separate court for women. (TLSB)

For those of us who live with a dividing wall of separation between church and state, ideas like this might be a little hard to understand at first. But we must remember that God's people Israel

did not operate with that kind of division into sacred and secular so familiar to us. The king of Israel was very much the spiritual leader of his people. (PBC)

8:12–16 In line with his overall interests, the Chronicler considerably elaborates on the sacrificial and temple provisions made by Solomon. While 1Ki 9:25 mentions only the sacrifices at the three annual feasts, the Chronicler adds the offerings on Sabbaths and New Moons to conform these provisions fully to Mosaic prescription (Lev 23:1–37; Nu 28–29). (CSB)

In his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul gives us a “God’s-eye view” of the church, that holy temple that his Son is in the process of building (Ephesians 2:21–22). We may rest assured that God’s saving plans for it will not fail, since they are rooted in his will from all eternity and established by a covenant signed in the blood of his Son. This high and holy mission is carried out in time by other sons and daughters of the king. To them, in each generation, he entrusts his gospel word. It seems incredible to think that God could give such an important task and a message so precious to poor, frail sinners like you and me. But he does. He has assigned us each to our own particular post. Now he charges us to “Be strong and do the work” (1 Chronicles 28:10), certain of the power of him who will not fail us or forsake us. (PBC)

8:12 *vestibule*. Pillared entryway. The Chronicler retains information depicting Solomon acting as a priestly king. (TLSB)

8:13–16 Unique to 2Ch. While 1Ki 9:25 speaks only of three sacrifices a year, the Chronicler completes the picture of Solomon’s faithful offering of sacrifices throughout the year “according to the commandment of Moses,” including Sabbaths and new moons (Lv 23; Nu 28–29). He oversaw the divisions of priests and Levites for temple service “according to the ruling of David his father” (cf 1Ch 23–27). (TLSB)

8:13 *duty*. Lit, “the word.” (TLSB)

commandment of Moses. Dedicatory sacrifices initiated the observance of all ritual prescriptions for offerings. (TLSB)

8:17–18 Solomon’s maritime venture with Hiram. At the time, open trade routes went to the south of Arabia and the Red Sea. This is important in the queen of Sheba’s visit (9:1–12) and the report of Solomon’s wealth (9:13–28). (TLSB)

8:18 *Hiram sent him... ships*. Presumably ships crafted in Phoenicia and assembled at the port of Ezion Geber after being shipped overland (see 9:21). (CSB)

Solomon’s fleet of ships, built and manned by Hiram’s servants. (TLSB)