–Save This Page as a PDF–

Historical Details Related to First Kings 5:1 to 9:9



Virtually all of the historical details noted in **First Kings Chapters 3** and **4** apply here also; but in addition, the reader will observe the importance of **Tyre** in these accounts. **Chapter 5** says that **Hiram king of Tyre** had enjoyed good relations with **David** and thus sent envoys to **Solomon**, obviously hoping to continue the alliance **(First Kings 5:1)**. **Solomon** sent back a reply that stated **his** plans to build **a Temple** for **ADONAI**, and asked for cedar, some laborers, and suggested payment for those favors **(First Kings 5:3-6)**. Who was **Hiram**, and why should **he** help **Solomon**?

Hiram ruled **Tyre**, the capital of Phoenicia, for over thirty years, from **David's** old age until **he** and **Solomon** were veteran kings.[110] **Tyre** had a mainland base but also occupied an offshore island, which kept it invulnerable to siege warfare up to the time of Alexander the Great in 332 BC (see the commentary on **Isaiah, to see link click Eq – The Timeline for Tyre**). From its Mediterranean port, **Tyre** was able to establish an impressive shipping fleet. **Isra'el** had aided **Tyre's** sailing efforts by defeating the Philistines, the other regional power traditionally involved in sea trade. Therefore, an **Isra'el-Tyre** alliance was a natural, mutually beneficial result of **Isra'el's** newly won prominence. Together, the two countries could create a monopoly by exploiting **Isra'el's** control of the land and **Tyre's** expertise in

shipping.

Besides those natural common interests, **Solomon** and **Hiram** were both aggressive young kings. Both used the historical situation to their advantage. They both expanded their capitals and built central worship centers. Both desired to make their nation wealthy without military conquest, and both suffered when Egypt reasserted its power late in their reigns.

One other historical fact deserves mention. **Isra'el's Temple** was similar to what many other nations were attempting before and during this time period. As already stated, **Hiram himself** built worship centers. **He** set up a golden pillar in the sanctuary of Ba'al Shamen, and built new temples to Melqart and Astarte. Sumeria, Assyria, Babylon, and the Canaanites also constructed temples. So this was common practice during that historical period.

Besides attesting to the accuracy of the biblical accounts, this observation reminds us of the literary nature of **First** and **Second Kings**. **Isra'el** is not portrayed as doing odd, astounding things. Rather, their activities, which appear like those of other nations, are significant because of how **they** displayed (or fail to display) **Isra'el's** faith in **ADONAI**. They also reflect **God** acting in history through a chosen people. Therefore, the uniqueness of the events lies in the inherent meaning that emerges from a people responding faithfully to the one true **God**, **the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**, who alone deserves worship.[111]