

# ***Contemporary Mystic Christianity*** **Bible Self-Study Supplement**

## **Solomon Builds The Temple**

### **Hiram of Tyre**

Tried and purified and full of wisdom, the young King at once set about building the new Temple to Jehovah, the archetypal pattern of which he had received from his father David. This work David could not do, because he was a man of war and Jehovah's Temple was a Temple of the everlasting peace, that peace which was the name of Jerusalem and the watchword of Israel. So far was this ideal of peace to be carried that no iron was to be used in its representative structure and so the "house when it was in building was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer, nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house." Peace reigned there, even while it was building. The work went forward in silence.

Faced with this tremendous task, Solomon turned for assistance to Israel's ancient and traditional friend, rich and cultured Tyre. There an enlightened ruler, Hiram I, son of Abi-baal (970-936 B.C.), was engaged in enriching ancient Phoenician temples and building new ones dedicated to Melkarth (whom the Greeks called Heracles) and Astarte. We recall that there had once been a Temple to Astarte in

Jerusalem itself. Hiram founded the "Feast of the awakening of Heracles."

In the annals of the Christian Eusebius we find the following letters: "Solomon to Hiram, King of Tyre, Sidon and Phoenicia, his friend to his father's friend. Know that by the grace of the great God I have possession of the kingdom of David my father, by whom I am also commanded to build a Temple to the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Now I beseech thee by this letter that thou wilt send me artisans and labourers from thy kingdom to serve me until I bring to an end this work dedicated to God, as I am commanded. I have sent to Galilee, to Samaria, to the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the Gileadites, bidding them provide each month all things that are necessary from their land; that is to say, each month ten thousand ears of corn, and as many of wine; the oil and other things needful will come from Judea.

Hiram sent a reply:

"Hiram to Solomon the great king, greeting! Blessed be God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who hath chosen so noble a man, the son of so noble a father. Thy letters have delighted my heart and I have given thanks to God that thou hast received the kingdom. I have sent thee eighty thousand Tyrians and Phoenicians, and amongst them is an architect, a man of Tyre, whose mother is a Jewess of the

tribe of David. He hath understanding in all manner of building, both in theory and practice of the work. For thy part, it will be thy part to write the governors of the districts, in order that they may be diligent to provide all that is necessary for so great a number of men."

Josephus, whose version of these letters is closer to the Bible account, says that copies of them were preserved in his own day among the Tyrians, and that if anyone would know of them with certainty he had but to go to the keepers of the records and he could read them himself.

The Bible relates (I Kings 7:13,14): "And King Solomon sent, and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. (This Hiram is not the king, but the architect who is mentioned by King Hiram in his letter to Solomon.) He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding and cunning to work all works in brass." In II Chronicles 2:14, however, Hiram is said to be the "son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skillful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue and in fine linen and in crimson, also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be Put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father."

The tribe of Naphtali is Capricorn, sign of the Christed one, the tribe of Dan is Scorpio, sign of the secret Serpent wisdom, of which Christ spoke, saying, "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." This double origin reveals two streams of consciousness merging in Hiram Abiff. As a son of Dan, he was a master workman. We recall how prominent he was in the actual Temple work. Scorpio is the sign of transmutation, and transmutation is the supreme word of the Master Mason. Iron is the element attributed to Scorpio's rulership, the metal of which swords and other weapons of war and bloodshed were made; therefore iron is forbidden, and the work must go forward in silence (Scorpio, sign of secrecy).

David could not build the Temple because he had not yet achieved the supreme gift of wisdom which comes with the blending of the polar opposites within. This attainment was won by Solomon, the highest Initiate of his time, and he was, therefore, worthy to build the Temple.

The Temple has many and varied esoteric meanings, for Truth is many-sided. It was built by three men: King Solomon of Jerusalem, King Hiram of Tyre, and the architect Hiram Abiff, the widow's son. King Hiram represents the intellectual principle, whereas Solomon represents the wisdom of the heart, the devotional principle. Hiram, or Khurum, the Masterbuilder, signifies

"high", "white", "lifted up". He has been described as "the possibility of the race made real". Architecturally, the Temple shows marked similarity to the Egypto-Phoenician temples of Melkarth, or Heracles (the Grecian Samson), representative of the Sun, particularly at the Vernal Equinox. Indeed, we discover throughout that the Temple of Solomon is in fact a likeness of the grand Temple of the Universe, and we shall not be surprised to discover from historical studies that mysterious rites similar to certain Egyptian rituals were celebrated in subterranean chambers under the Temple itself. Nor will it seem strange to us to know that "night watches" were observed there in connection with the stellar pageantry of the seasons.

It is of interest to observe that the ritual cry "Evolie!" (He-vau-be), used in all of the Grecian Mysteries, was also employed in Egypt, Judea, Phoenicia and Asia Minor, Phoenicia being located on the Syrian seaboard. The sacred word is obviously the equivalent of the three letters to which Yod is prefixed to form the Tetragrammaton, "Yod-be-vau-he;" in which the Yod is masculine and He-vau-he (Eve) is feminine.

"So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees, according to his desire." Cedar is feminine, fir, masculine, in esoteric symbology. A tree always represents the aspiration of the spirit soaring heavenward.

"And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food for his household, and twenty measures of pure oil, thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year." Wheat, oil and corn all signify feminine soul attributes and two or twenty is the first feminine number, one (Yod) being masculine. When Solomon wrote to Hiram to procure the cedars of Lebanon to build his wonderful Temple, Hiram replied: "But do thou take care to procure us corn for this timber." In modern Masonry the winding stairs lead to the chamber where corn, wine and oil are delivered to the faithful for their work.

"And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house."

— ***Corinne Heline***